

# **Text and Context in International Trade Communication: A Case Study of Email Business Communication among Professionals in the Asia-Pacific Region**

Thesis submitted to meet the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

**School of Communication, Culture & Languages  
Faculty of Arts, Education & Human Development**

**Victoria University  
Melbourne, Australia**

*Compol Swangboonsatic*

2006

# Declaration

"I, Compol Swangboonsatic, declare that the PhD thesis entitled Text and Context in International Trade Communication: A Case Study of Email Business Communication in the Asia-Pacific Region is no more than 1000,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no materials that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

Signed .....

Dated.....

# Acknowledgement

This study has enabled me to learn not just how to conceptualise international trade email communication practices from a language and communication perspective, but also how to do research in a courageous way. Courage to me is to stand up and fight when facing whatever hurdles that might come in the way during the course of the study. Courage to me is to be independent, to voice my opinions, to think critically, and to welcome and evaluate alternative suggestions.

This study also became a journey for me in appreciating the friendship and support that have been offered to me by a number of people while I have been in Australia. I am writing this acknowledgement first to my supervisor, Associate Professor Helen Borland, who has played a major role in my study by providing me with guidance and encouragement. My second supervisor Dr Imogen Chen has also supported me with her advice.

Thanks also from my cohort of postgraduate students to Jane Trewin for keeping the clock ticking and for her assistance with coordination. Thank you as well to Vicki Kapetanakos for entertaining and enlivening our spirits.

The Thai Royal Government have funded my study through the Faculty of Language and Communication at the National Institute of Development Administration. This work was part of my staff training so that I can go back to work enabled to use the skills and the knowledge I have acquired.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the many international trade business people who contributed their time and commitment in participating in this study. I wish to thank some participants whom I have never met in person. We developed our friendships through our interactions using email and in phone conversations.

A special friend who always made sure that I had enough rest and relaxation from my study is Mr. Peter McGregor.

# Abstract

The study employs an innovative interdisciplinary research methodology to investigate text and context in international trade email communication. The approach combines analysis of communicators' email texts with conceptual analysis of their introspections while they are engaged in communicative situations and their retrospective reflections on their interactions. The study uses a series of simulated tasks and scenarios designed to reflect actual international trade email communication in the Asia Pacific region. Although the study does not start with a pre-determined view of static ethnic or national culture-based traits, participants with similar sociolinguistic and national cultural backgrounds are grouped and assigned the same task and scenario. This provides the possibility of considering their possible shared behavioural characteristics, whilst also exploring a number of other dimensions impacting on their communicative behaviour.

The interdisciplinary theoretical framework combining insights and concepts from the disciplines of genre studies, pragmatics and cognitive message production has enabled the study to claim that there is a genre of international trade email communication in the Asia Pacific based on the established communication conventions evident in the shared communicative purposes, textual structures, and contextual knowledge, and distinctive generic characteristics. The shared communicative purposes and textual structure are demonstrated in a number of similar moves and acts from the analysis of email texts written by the four groups of participants who have different socio-cultural and socio-linguistic backgrounds in the six tasks. The similar communicative purposes are also recognized in participants' introspections related to the main business goal and their emphasis on certain goals across the five identified goal types in each task. These common communicative purposes are posited to shape the email generic structure and the email compositional conventions of professionals of the international trade discourse community.



The semantic content, and the hybrid and dynamic nature of the texts are common distinctive characteristics of the international trade email communication. The common semantic content of moves and acts stem from the specific type of international trade business. The hybrid characteristic is evident in the variability in acceptable syntax in the linguistic realisation of some moves and acts, with full sentences right through to sentence fragments composed of various lengths, and the inconsistent and variable usage of the formulaic moves of the **Addressing**, the **Expressing gratitude/respect/etc.**, and the **Signing** moves. The dynamic nature is evident in the similarities and differences in the usage of moves and acts and in the inconsistent usage of formulaic moves in the international trade email. It is contended that shared contextual knowledge of international trade email communication operates in the configuration of context that leads to common realization of moves and acts in the generic structure and communicative purposes of this email communication.

The findings from the study have also led to a conceptualized model of these email communication practices. The model posits that contextual factors, goals and email texts relate dynamically and interactively. The professional business culture, the virtual culture and the formulaic interpersonal compositional conventions interact through the contexts of culture, situation, and text and determine potential meanings to be communicated in the overall environment of this communication. The interaction of these contextual factors leads to communication conventions in the generic realisation of moves and acts and the format of email to achieve collective communicative purposes among members of the electronic international trade discourse community. Variations in the generic structure of the email communication are postulated to stem from several contextual factors that are specific to individual trade transactions. In these transactions national/regional cultures, business relationship, traders' roles, counterpart, number of tasks in the email, turns in email exchanges have been shown to be important in contributing to the variability in how the genre of international trade email communication is realised in different specific international trade scenarios.

# Table of Contents

Declaration

Acknowledgement

Abstract

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures

List of Abbreviations

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	....	1
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>Literature review</b>	....	14
2.1	Computer-Meditated Communication	....	14
2.1.1	Nature of Computer-Mediated Communication		
2.1.2	CMC Discourse and Text		
2.2	Genre Studies	....	20
2.2.1	General Background		
2.2.2	Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach to Genre		
2.2.2.1	Conceptual Model of Context		
2.2.3	Social Constructionist Approach to Genre		
2.2.3.1	Social Constructionism		
2.2.3.2	Swales' Approach to Genre		
2.2.4	Genre Studies in Business Communication		
2.2.4.1	Business Letters		
2.2.4.2	Business Faxes and Emails		
2.3	Pragmatics	....	40
2.3.1	General Background		
2.3.2	Key Concepts		
2.3.2.1	Speech Acts		
2.3.2.2	Face and Politeness		
2.3.3	Pragmatics and Business Communication		
2.4	Message Production	....	54
2.4.1	General Background		

2.4.2	Key Concepts		
2.4.2.1	Concept of Goals		
2.4.2.2	Strategies vs. Tactics		
2.4.2.3	Plans & Planning		
2.4.2.4	Multiple Goal Achievement		
2.4.2.5	Message Design		
2.4.3	Factors		
2.4.4	Models of Goals		
2.4.4.1	Hierarchies of Goals		
2.4.4.2	Taxonomies of Goals		
2.4.5	Critiques		
2.5	Synthesis of Literature	....	67
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	....	71
3.1	Research Aims	....	73
3.1.1	General Aims		
3.1.2	Specific Aims		
3.2	Research Methodology	....	74
3.2.1	Towards Developing a Methodology for Data Collection		
3.2.2	Development of the Simulation		
3.2.3	Participants and Recruitment		
3.3	Data Analysis	....	90
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Move and Act Analysis</b>	....	92
4.1	Swales' rhetorical movement analytical approach	....	93
4.2	Lewin, Fine, and Young's discourse unit analysis approach	....	96
4.3	Towards an Analytical Framework for the Analysis of Moves and Acts	....	100
4.3.1	Hierarchy in communicative purposes and discourse units		
4.3.2	A Refinement to previous analytical approaches		
4.3.3	List of Moves and Acts in the email text corpus		
4.4	Conclusion	....	112

<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Analysis of Email Texts</b>	....	113
5.1.	Task 1 – Enquiring about trade	....	113
5.1.1.	Analysis and Discussion of Moves		
5.1.2.	Analysis and Discussion of Acts		
5.1.2.1.	Analysis of Acts in the Establishing Confidence Move		
5.1.3	Discussion of structure of Moves and Acts		
5.1.4	Usage preference of each group		
5.2.	Task 2 – Answering a trade enquiry	....	129
5.2.1.	Analysis and Discussion of Moves		
5.2.2.	Analysis and Discussion of Acts		
5.2.2.1.	Analysis of Acts in the Establishing Confidence Move		
5.2.2.2	Analysis of Acts in the Answering a Trade Enquiry Move		
5.2.3	Discussion of structure of Moves and Acts		
5.2.4	Usage preference of each group		
5.3.	Task 3 – Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment	....	145
5.3.1.	Analysis and Discussion of Moves		
5.3.2.	Analysis and Discussion of Acts		
5.3.2.1.	Analysis of Acts in the Negotiating Trade Term(s) Move		
5.3.3	Discussion of structure of Moves and Acts		
5.3.4	Usage preference of each group		
5.4.	Task 4 – Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment	....	161
5.4.1.	Analysis and Discussion of Moves		
5.4.2.	Analysis and Discussion of Acts		
5.4.2.1.	Analysis of Acts in the Negotiating Trade Term(s) Move		
5.4.3	Discussion of structure of Moves and Acts		
5.4.4	Usage preference of each group		
5.5.	Task 5 – Dealing with problem 1	....	174
5.5.1.	Analysis and Discussion of Moves		
5.5.2.	Analysis and Discussion of Acts		
5.5.2.1.	Analysis of Acts in the Negotiating Problems Move		
5.5.3	Discussion of structure of Moves and Acts		
5.5.4	Usage preference of each group		

5.6.	Task 6 – Dealing with problem 2	....	188
5.6.1.	Analysis and Discussion of Moves		
5.6.2.	Analysis and Discussion of Acts		
5.6.2.1.	Analysis of Acts in the Negotiating Problems Move		
5.6.3	Discussion of structure of Moves and Acts		
5.6.4	Usage preference of each group		
5.7	Conclusion	....	202

## **Chapter 6 Analysis of Introspection** .... 203

6.0	Application of Goal Model in the Analysis of Introspections	....	203
6.1.	Task 1 – Enquiring about trade	....	207
6.1.1	Key Findings		
6.1.2	Conclusion		
6.2.	Task 2 – Answering a trade enquiry	....	211
6.2.1	Key Findings		
6.2.2	Conclusion		
6.3.	Task 3 – Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment	....	218
6.3.1	Key Findings		
6.3.2	Conclusion		
6.4.	Task 4 – Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment	....	224
6.4.1	Key Findings		
6.4.2	Conclusion		
6.5.	Task 5 – Dealing with problem 1	....	231
6.5.1	Key Findings		
6.5.2	Conclusion		
6.6.	Task 6 – Dealing with problem 2	....	238
6.6.1	Key Findings		
6.6.2	Conclusion		

<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>Analysis of Context</b>	....	247
7.1.	Analysis of context of email texts across the six tasks	....	249
7.1.1	Enquiring about trade task		
7.1.2	Answering a trade enquiry task		
7.1.3	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment task		
7.1.4	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment task		
7.1.5	Dealing with problem 1 task		
7.1.6	Dealing with problem 2 task		
7.2	Conclusion	....	278
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<b>Discussion and Conclusion</b>	....	279
8.1	International Trade Email Communication as a Genre	....	279
8.1.1	Evidence of shared communicative purposes and textual structures		
8.1.2	Distinctive characteristics of international trade email communication		
8.1.3	Evidence of shared contextual knowledge		
8.2.	Context of international trade email texts	....	288
8.3.	Limitations and Recommendations for future research	....	306
<b>Bibliography</b>		....	310
<b>Appendix</b>		....	340

# List of Tables and Figures

## Tables

Table 2.1 Comparison of taxonomies, typologies, and patterns of moves and steps in the sales promotion letters in the studies of Bhatia, Hiranburana, and Chakorn

Table 2.2 Comparison of taxonomies, typologies, and patterns of moves and steps in the business invitation letters in the studies of Hiranburana and Chakorn

Table 2.3 Summary of taxonomies of goals from selected literature in message production theory

Table 3.1 Outline of communicative event sequence and trade transactions in the simulations of each group participating in the simulation

Table 4.1 Swales' identification of moves and steps in the introductory section of a research article

Table 4.2 Swales' analytical framework of communicative purposes

Table 4.3 Lewin, Fine and Young' analytical framework of discourse units

Table 5.1 Distribution of moves in the Enquiring about trade task

Table 5.2 Distribution of acts in the Establishing confidence move

Table 5.3 Distribution of acts in the Enquiring about trade move.

Table 5.4 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Enquiring about trade task.

Table 5.5 Distribution of moves in the task of Answering a trade enquiry

Table 5.6 Distribution of acts in the Establishing confidence move

Table 5.7 Distribution of acts in the Answering a trade enquiry move

Table 5.8 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Answering a trade enquiry task

Table 5.9 Distribution of moves in the task of Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment

Table 5.10 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating trade term (s) move in the task of Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment

Table 5.11 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the task of Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment

Table 5.12 Distribution of moves in the task of Answering requests for a price reduction & a deferred payment

Table 5.13 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating trade term (s) move in the task of Answering requests for price reduction and deferred payment

Table 5.14 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Answering requests for a price reduction & a deferred payment task.

Table 5.15 Distribution of moves in the task of Dealing with problem 1

Table 5.16 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating problem (s) move in the Dealing with problem 1 task

Table 5.17 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the task of Dealing with problem 1

Table 5.18 Distribution of moves in the task of Dealing with problem 2



Table 5.19 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating problem (s) move in the Dealing with problem 2 task

Table 5.20 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the task of Dealing with problem 2

Table 6.1 Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals in the task of Enquiring about trade

Table 6.2 a & b Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals in the task of Answering a trade enquiry

Table 6.3 a & b Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals in the task of Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment

Table 6.4a & b Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals in the task of Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment

Table 6.5 a & b Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals in the task of Dealing with problem 1

Table 6.6 Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals in the task of Dealing with problem 2

Table 7.0 Moves and Acts used > 80% by Participants across all groups

Table 7.1 Summary of analysis of participants' introspections in the five goals in the task of Enquiring about trade

Table 7.2 Summary of analysis of participants' introspections in the five goals in the task of Answering a trade enquiry

Table 7.1 Summary of analysis of participants' introspections in the five goals in the task of Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment

Table 7.4 Summary of analysis of participants' introspections in the five goals in the task of Answering requests for a price reduction & a deferred payment

Table 7.5 Summary of analysis of participants' introspections in the five goals in the task of Dealing with problem 1

Table 7.6 Summary of analysis of participants' introspections in the five goals in the task of Dealing with problem 2

Table 8.1 Summaries of similarities and differences in the usage preferences of moves and acts across the six tasks

Table 8.2 Summary of analysis of context

Table 8.3 Attribution of differences in moves and acts between groups in relation to contextual factors

Table 8.4 Ranges of differences in relation to frequencies of attribution of contextual factors across the six tasks

Table 8.5 Attribution of usage differences in moves and acts between Australian and non-Thai Asians in relation to group preferences

## Figure

Figure 2.1 Leckie-Tarry' s Conceptual model of context

Figure 2.2 Brown and Levinson' s politeness strategies  
(adapted from their original diagram and Tracy' s (1990) suggested figure)

Figure 2.3 Proposed model of international trading business email communication

Figure 4.1 Swales' abstract hierarchical structure of intentions in relation to the overall communicative purposes

Figure 4.2 Lewin, Fine and Young' abstract hierarchical structure of discourse units in relation to textual organisation

Figure 4.5 Abstract structure of communicative intentions and textual organisation

Figure 7.1 Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Enquiring about trade task

Figure 7.2 Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Answering a trade enquiry

Figure 7.3 Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment task

Figure 7.4 Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Answering requests of a price reduction and a deferred payment task

Figure 7.5 Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Dealing with problem 1 task

Figure 7.6 Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Dealing with problem 2 task

Figure 8.6 Revised conceptual model of international trade email communication

# List of Abbreviations

CMC = Computer-Mediated Communication

FtF = Face-to-Face

Aus = Australian participants

NTA = Non-Thai Asian participants

Th1 = Thai participants interacting with Australian counterpart

Th2 = Thai participants interacting with Thai counterpart

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

International trade within the Asia Pacific region has surged in the last decade despite several crises in the region, including the Asian currency turmoil in 1997, the international terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 and its effects on stricter trading and cargo freighting in the region, and the spread of Bird Flu in Thailand and neighbouring ASEAN countries in 2004. Trade flows between Australia and Asian countries, such as Japan, China, India, the ASEAN countries, and the Asian Newly Industrialising Countries (NIC), comprising Hong Kong SAR, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan, have risen exponentially from 1991 to 2001 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). For example, Japan, Australia's largest trading partner, despite its own economic difficulties, experienced a growth rate in Australian exports of 61%, while the value of Australia's exports to the Republic of Korea have almost trebled (174% rise) to \$9.2 billion and to China have quadrupled (370% rise) to \$6.9 billion in the same period (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). Over the same period the ASEAN countries have also become increasingly important for Australian exports, increasing by 116% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). Similarly, the export values of Asian countries themselves increased greatly in the 1990s (Das, 2000), with massive growth in exports having been witnessed among members of the NIC (Tan, 2004). With the rise of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) replacing the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) in 1995, and the emergence and rapid expansion of Asia Pacific bilateral free trade agreements from the late 1990s, intra-regional free trade flows within the Asia Pacific can be expected to increase further. Significantly, Australia and Thailand signed a bilateral free trade agreement in 2003, and this agreement came into operation in January 2005, and is expected to lead to enhanced trade between Australia and Thailand.

The revolution in communication and information technologies and the development of new telecommunication infrastructure throughout the Asia Pacific region have acted as a catalyst for the increase in international trade in the region.

Almost a quarter of the 304 million business people worldwide (estimated in mid-2000) who have access to the Internet are in the Asia Pacific region (US Department of Commerce, 2000, as quoted in Harcourt, 2000). Increasing numbers of business people are communicating via the Internet suggesting the influence of the development of communication technologies on the expansion of businesses and their communication. Australian businesses using the Internet have grown steadily from 29% in 1998 to 74% in 2004 and businesses with websites from 6% in 1998 to 25% in 2004 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003; 2005). In Japan, the use of the Internet by large size corporations has increased from 11.7% in 1995 to 80 % in 1999 and the usage in small to medium Japanese businesses is also increasing rapidly (Mori & Phoha, 2002). Other studies report similar exponential growth in countries across the Asia Pacific region, including in websites in India (Rao, 2002), Singapore (Ang & Lee, 2002) and Taiwan (Panol & Rao, 2002), and in e-commerce and online shopping in Hong Kong SAR (McIntyre, 2002), and Korea (Kang, 2002).

The advances of new communication and information technologies have tremendously (re)shaped the means and nature of business communication. Development in communication technologies enables business people to correspond much faster than through traditional business letters. Mobile telephony and fax are relatively recently available communication technologies for speedy business correspondence, while telex and swift are rapidly becoming obsolete, although they are still retained in some areas of business, such as the finance industry where high security in coding messages and confidentiality for monetary correspondence is required. The introduction of the Internet has brought particularly momentous changes to business communication over the last two decades. A message can now be sent via e-mail from one company to another located within the same country or overseas within a few seconds. Business negotiation is possible via email with the attachment of word documents, images, website linkages, etc. Business communication is practiced increasingly using the Internet via e-mail (Sillince, McDonald, Lefang & Frost, 1998; Sintupong, 1997; Case, 1996), computer conferencing or teleconferencing (Dodd, 2000; Sullivan, 1998; Munter, 1998), and e-commerce (Harkins, 2000; Markarian, 2000; Subramanian, 1999). Furthermore, these changes have happened not only to general business communication, but also, increasingly, in international trade communication. International trade professionals

can now swiftly engage in transactions and negotiations via e-mail with the attachment of a company profile, financial figures, images of products, details of price and products, charts of trading networks, trade agreements or contracts, company websites, drastically reducing both the time and cost (eg for travel etc) involved in business negotiation and transaction.

As postmodern theorists, such as Harvey (1989), have demonstrated, the development of electronic communication technologies has distorted traditional understandings of space and time. From a practical perspective the diminution of the barriers of time and space has brought changes to business communities. New communication and information technologies may also have some impact on how business people manage their identity online as Turkle (1984) has mentioned in her discussion of the influence of computer technologies on our liberation of self and identity. Hearn, Mandeville and Anthony (1998) contend that the diffusion of information through the new communication technologies has facilitated new places and times for consumption, thereby increasing consumption and accelerating the consumerist economy (1998 p. 110). From a social constructionist perspective they also posit that cyberspace provides business people with another sphere for exchanges of information and interactions, hence accelerating an alignment of values and traits between members of a business organisation in relation to the dominant corporate institution and facilitating the formation of virtual communities. Not only do the changes affect individual business people according to Hearn et al (1998, p.32), but also business organisations change as they seek to achieve an alignment of organisational values and efficiency in communication (1998 p. 32).

From a linguistic perspective, Baym (1995) contends that virtual cultures are formed through emerging new discourse practices. From a distinctive, but not dissimilar perspective, Lennie, Hearn, Stevenson, Inayatullah, and Mandeville (1996) postulate that such a new virtual cultural context emerges through cyclical and mutually interactive processes. Danet (2001 p. 4) argues that the new virtual cultural context provides communicators with a site to 'play' with many other aspects of communication such as language, identity, frames of interaction, and the conventions of pre-digital genres of communication through digital texts, images, and sounds. The virtual context offers communicators an opportunity to experiment in their use of

language, varying from traditional linguistic conventions as Gibbs (2000), amongst others, has outlined, with the virtual environment favouring speed and convenience in communication over correctness in language use as is evident in the tolerance and flexibility in spelling, use of abbreviations & acronyms, and even in grammatical rules. The virtual environment also engenders possibilities for the use of new forms of hypertext and hyperlinks to other texts, graphics, sounds and websites, generating possibilities for deviating from traditional text structures (Gibbs, 2000 p. 22-23). Gibbs argues that the virtual cultural context enables communicators to develop new interactional conventions, such as email conventions, through their confidence and familiarity with the new practices. Through these processes, new electronic literacies are argued to emerge.

There have been efforts to study and capture the nature of language use in the context of virtual reality. One of the recent approaches by Danet (2001) is to categorise the digital linguistic features based on the concept of attenuated and enhanced characteristics. An attenuated characteristic represents a reduction in forms, feedback, storage, rules etc. while the enhanced characteristic suggests an extension in these qualities (see Danet, 2001 p. 12 for further details). However, most of the linguistic research in digital texts still adopts the binary linguistic distinction between speech and writing. For example, Crystal (2001 p. 17) identifies the linguistic variations in the virtual world's 'Netspeak' as an alternative to 'interactive written discourse,' which was proposed by Ferrara, Brunner, and Whittemore (1991). Whilst Crystal (2001) sees the linguistic features of virtual reality as a type of language unique to and arising from the Internet, he classifies variations in linguistic features in the virtual environment based on whether the communication is synchronous or asynchronous and relates this to the distinction between speech and writing. He finds that web pages contain the most written language features while email tends to be written with more speech characteristics. He comments that the structural elements of email are similar to the bipartite structure of traditional letters and memos with a preformatted heading on the upper area and a body of text on the lower area, and observes that there is some flexibility and variations in the greeting or salutation and the farewell or signature in email texts. Acknowledgment is sometimes omitted due to the inclusion of the full text of the previous email exchanges.



In his investigation of email messages, Crystal finds that although the body of email texts are generally relatively short, there are some differences in the length of email according to its type of correspondence. Institutional emails, such as business emails, contain more paragraphs and higher paragraph length (in lines) than personal emails (see Crystal 2001, p. 114-115). Danet (2001 p. 58) also reports on the differences in formal/informal styles between personal and business emails, and suggests that whilst a transition of informal personal letter norms to personal emails seems a little problematic, the formal business letter conventions seem to conflict with the informal practices of the email medium in business emails. These studies suggest that there is a need for further investigation of email discourse in business communication from the perspectives of communication and sociolinguistics.

In the past 50 years, English has increasingly become used as an international language. According to Crystal (2003 p. 4), English has become so widely used as a first language, official second language, and foreign language that it is becoming a global *lingua franca*. Zhenhua (1999) attributes the globalisation of economic activities, development of regional free-trade agreements, and increasing use of advanced technology such as the Internet to the rise of English. Importantly, it is also predicted that non-native speakers of English will outnumber native speakers by the year 2050 (Graddol, 1999), with associated implications for norms and functional usage.

The use of English by non-native speakers has brought many changes to English as international language. Local and regional varieties of English are now recognised, for example Singlish (Platt, 1994; Brown, 2000), Indian English (Kachru, 1986), and Malaysian English (Lowenberg, 1994), as well as non-native varieties (Cheshire, 1994). In Asia, English is used as a second language in a number of countries and it has a significant role in people's social lives and careers. It is a tool for economic and social advancement, as well as providing access to the extensive information resources available in English (Chew, 1999; Zhenhua, 1999). English has been well recognised as an international vehicle for people in this region to communicate not only with the rest of the world, but also among their neighbours (Graddol, McArthur, Flack & Amey, 1999).

In international business, English has become the key international lingua franca (Crystal, 1997; St John, 1996). Although it is preferred as an international language for business communication (Lundelius, 1997; Barbara, Celani, Collins & Scott, 1996), the fact that many international business transactions in English involve non-native speakers of the language has been shown to contribute to problems in communication in these business interactions (St John, 1996; McLaren, 1998; Hilton, 1992). St John (1996) argues that even for English native speakers, the use of English in international business communication is not an easy task due to the absence of an established 'common-core' of business English. In addition, some native speakers tend to develop and cling to the idea that there is a particular style of business English, while others are confused about the discourse (Eustace, 1996). Recently, Brogno (1999) researched the nature of international English used in international business organisations in South East Asia and has reported that as yet new standards of international English for use in the region have not been developed.

English is the prime language of communication using new technologies (Crystal, 2003), and is used extensively in electronic mail. In some recent studies into the e-mail genre written in English, it has been found to contain elements of both written and spoken communication discourses (egs. Baron, 1998; Callot & Belmore, 1996; Holmes, 1995; Lee, 1996; Wignall, 1993). Lee (1996) has also found that whilst the rhetorical form of e-mail resembles the standardised format of typewritten memorandum, incomplete sentences, incorrect grammatical structures and wrong spelling are better accepted in e-mail.

Recognition of and research on use of English as an international business lingua franca, and, more generally, as a global lingua franca is relatively recent. To date there has been only limited research into the use of English as an international language in interaction between different native; native and non-native; and different types of non-native English speakers (eg. second language vs. foreign language) in international business and international trade communication, especially in the environment of computer-mediated communication and, specifically, e-mail.

Research in intercultural business communication has investigated business negotiation and communication quite extensively and tends to attribute national/ethnic

cultural influences to account for different priorities in communicative styles. For example, Australians have been found to favor direct answer and compliance, while Japanese prefer indirect answer and compliance with details in the written communication channel (Marriott, 1990, 1995, 1997; Enomoto, 1993; Enomoto & Marriott, 1994). These indirect communicative styles in business negotiation of the Japanese have also been observed among the Chinese (Bilow, 1997; Sheer, 2000), Korean and Vietnamese business people (Mulholland, 1997). A number of studies have claimed that Chinese cultural values of harmonious face and social relations influence business negotiation (Woo and Prud'homme, 1999; Sheer, 2000; Pye, 1992; Zhao, 2000). National/ethnic cultures have also been purported to affect differences in focus on goals and priority of goals in the discourse of business negotiation and meetings. American, Canadian, and German professionals are found to focus on task-oriented goals, while Japanese, Chinese, and Norwegians are reported to emphasise relationship-oriented goals in their discourses (Yamada, 1997; Ma, Wang, Jaeger, Anderson, Wang, and Saunders, 2002; Neumann, 1997).

Variations in the communicative styles have also been reported in intercultural communication via email in English and the observed divergences have been attributed to national/ethnic cultures. However, there are some contradictory views about the explanatory power of national/ethnic cultures. Swangboonsatit (2000) reports some differences in the email communicative styles of Australian and Thai students in expressing agreement and disagreement and making requests in English. Similarly, Chang and Hsu (1998) report differences in the request styles in English via email between Chinese and the American students. While requests made by the Americans are direct in the structural ordering and composition and indirect in linguistic forms, requests made by the Chinese are direct in forms, but indirect in the structure. Both these studies claim that the differences stem from national/ethnic cultural distinctions. However, Ulijn, Lincke, and Karakaya (2001) investigate business negotiation via email between three groups of negotiators of Anglo (U.S. & Canada), Nordic (the Netherlands, Sweden, & Finland), and Latin (France & Colombia) backgrounds and report that no influence of ethnic culture can be found on the choice of negotiation strategies between the three groups. Contradictory findings such as this demonstrate that explicating variation in language use in the virtual context is not straightforward and warrants further investigation.

Assigning national/ethnic culture as an explanatory variable in studies is increasingly recognised as being theoretically and methodologically problematic because of issues with the interpretation, categorisation and application of the concept of national/ethnic culture. Bond, Zegarac and Spencer-Oatey (2000 p. 52) argue that the theoretical concept of ethnic culture in relation to the nation state poses problems in categorisation, as in the example of which Chinese nation will represent Chinese culture when there are several Chinese political entities (eg. Mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan). They also question whether a nation can be a culture or whether there can be a collective single culture of a nation, when there are obviously many cultural groups in a nation. In many cases, a characteristic of a culture may reside only at the social level, but not at the individual level, as a member of a particular ethnic group may not hold to the ingroup cultural values, beliefs, or behaviours. This suggests that it is then methodologically problematic to predetermine, measure and attribute culture as an explanatory variable for differences in communication behaviours. Putnis (1992) also comments on the flaws and problems of using ethnic cultural generalisations as a variable in communication research, arguing that the existing flaws arise from problematic attribution of individual traits to cultural traits, inefficient and inaccurate methodological measure of culture, inappropriate description of cultural variability, and static research scope or framework. Furthermore, he contends that such cultural trait approaches are grounded in a static, culturally determined view of human behaviour which leads to the simplistic, dichotomous and mistaken prediction of individual communication behaviour according to ethnic cultural characteristics.

Growing interest in finding other possible factors which influence communication behaviour has yielded research findings as well as introducing several new theoretical perspectives. For example, Hamada (1980) researched the concept of business or organisational culture, and has demonstrated how such culture/s influence their members' communication behaviours. In international business transactions where members of different organisations communicate and interact, there may be an exchange or a merger of different organisational or business cultures as reported by Suzuki (1994, 1997) and Stage (1996). From this we can assume that the previous and/or newly adopted organisational cultures may influence communication behaviours of communicators who interact in international trade transactions.

Another significant and already highlighted factor that has received increasing attention in computer-mediated communication research is the electronic medium itself, particularly e-mail. Because e-mail is highly asynchronous without temporal effect on communicators' mindfulness and pressure to read and respond immediately, communicators can opt to respond to messages at their choice (Pratt, 1998; Pratt, Wiseman, Cody & Wendt, 1999; Cook, 1997). It has also been found that e-mail and communicators' perception of the medium influences their usage, expression of ideas, structure of messages and communicative styles (see Baym, 1996; Chang & Hsu, 1998; Kim, 1994), and to the simplifications, incoherence, and interactional disjunctions evident in some email texts (Hale & Scanlon, 1999; Crystal, 2001).

Studies have also found that language competence and usage have an influence on communication. Because English is used as the lingua franca in international business communication, linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of English by its native and non-native users can determine how they communicate (Zegarac & Pennington, 2000; Marschan-Piekkari, Welch & Welch, 1999). Different communicative styles, different ways of structuring information, and different linguistic features of various languages all have been proved to influence communication behaviours between English native and non-native speakers (see Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Beal, 1992, 1997; Young, 1994; McCreary, 1984; Chang & Hsu, 1998).

Other factors that have been suggested to exert influence on communication behaviours include relationship, identity, and role. The business relationship, which is considered loose among business professionals but which develops through different stages of interactions, has been found to influence discourses in international business negotiation (Sheer & Chen, 2003; Charles, 1996). In particular, development of a virtual relationship has been found to be possible through interactions via email exchanges, and influences email texts (Bertacco & Deponte, 2005). For example, a virtual personal relationship has been found to contribute to the use of emphatic instead of inflammatory language in arguments via email (Yates & Orlikowski, 1993). Cassel and Tversky (2005) contend that a virtual relationship is formed through linguistic interactions over time and supersedes different national

cultural, sociolinguistic and socio-economic backgrounds in a virtual discourse community as evident in similar linguistic style, voice, topics, goals, and strategies.

As demonstrated above, language use is always situated in a certain context. This means that studying email communication behaviours of international trade business professionals needs to be combined with an investigation of the environment of their communication. Whilst email communication is now being extensively practised in international trade and the communication enables business people to interact and to form new virtual communities and professional cultures, the nature of the communication through which international trade professionals interact and negotiate via the electronic medium is little understood. In the Asia Pacific region, there is a diversity of international trade professionals with differing socio-cultural and sociolinguistic backgrounds using English as native language, second language and foreign language while communicating via email using English as an international language. Currently, very little is known or understood in a systematic way about the forces that shape these communications and the texts that result. Yet, it can be argued that an important starting point in enhancing the quality of such communication is an understanding of the process and structuring of this new and important form of business communication. In achieving this, as this brief outline of some of the key issues has demonstrated, it will be important to consider all the elements that constitute the environment of international trade business email communication practices.

Recent research has proposed that the communication transaction needs to be studied within its overall context of discourse, rather than separating all the involved elements or focusing on only particular predetermined variables in relation to linguistic form (Chang & Hsu, 1998). The overall communication transaction can be studied as one construct integrating all different elements (see Lovitt, 1999; Varner, 2000). According to this position, the interaction of the four elements - the international trade realm, the individual with their sociocultural and sociolinguistic formations, e-mail as an electronic medium, and English as a lingua franca - can be investigated for their effect on communication.

To explain further, we can think of a group of business people involved in international trade communication via CMC as forming a specific speech or discourse community with its communication dynamics and norms of interaction. The business people in this discourse community bring with them experiences as members of other discourse communities and have expectations about how international trade email communication operates. According to this concept, a discourse community is a group that shares some common characteristics in language use and knowledge of rules for interaction and communication (Gumperz, 1986). Swales (1990) identifies a discourse community as composed of members who share a set of communicative purposes. The concept of discourse community has been applied to CMC (Wick, 1997), genre (Swales, 1990), and also in studying the use of English as a second language by non-natives (Graddol, 1999). Close to this concept is that of 'professional community' that posits such a community is a group with a distinctive set of beliefs, values, symbols, roles, norms, patterns of relation and patterns of interaction. Such a professional community can be formed via CMC (see for example, Breazeale, 1999). These two concepts are helpful in framing this study of international trade email communication in English and in considering how communication behaviours are influenced by the four elements defined above and become shared within a virtual professional discourse community created by people engaging in international trade.

Accordingly, the main aim of this study is to investigate communication behaviour via email in English of professionals in international trade in the Asia Pacific in order to determine whether it can be claimed that their texts constitute a genre. Related to this are a number of specific aims:

- a. To document the commonalities and differences in communication of the international trade professionals as evident in their email textual structures and introspection reports.
- b. To identify and define elements that may be considered to constitute a genre of electronic international trade communication based on the commonality in the textual structure.
- c. To identify factors that influence the common and different email texts.

- d. To explore how factors interact to exert influence on the production of email texts.

To undertake this study of international trade email communication, it is proposed to adopt an interdisciplinary perspective, combining insights and concepts from the disciplines of genre studies, pragmatics and cognitive message production. The sociolinguistic discipline of genre studies will be adopted to explicate the communication practices evident in the linguistic units of moves and acts of the email textual structure. Genre is a study of regularities or commonalities in text production and reception (Freedman & Medway, 1994). The theory has been applied in genre studies of business letters and faxes. Recent expansion of the theory has contributed to insights into communication conventions, particularly of the current communication practices via new media. Pragmatics, the study of interactional meanings in messages beyond words and their production process (Yule, 1996; Wierzbicka, 1991), will be used to complement genre analysis. Pragmatic theory has been employed in studies of intercultural business communication and has been valuable in uncovering factors that contribute to variation in the linguistic behaviours of business people from different sociolinguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Message production is a study of the psychological structure and process of the message output system (Greene, 1997), and has proved valuable in the study of message features in relation to the cognitive concept of goals in communication interactions. The particular focus of the theory is on the structure of the communicator's goals and their effects on messages produced. These three disciplines also enable tracing of the influence of context on textual production. Genre studies emphasise elements contributing to the establishment of communication conventions. Pragmatics focuses on explicating impacts of different contextual factors such as cultures, activities, events, interactants, media in relation to principles and maxims of language use. Message production projects the influence of goals onto message features. Genre theory will be used to form the main conceptual framework of the study with explanation supported by pragmatics and message production theory. The literature review related to these theories is discussed in detail in the next chapter, Chapter 2.



The study employs an interdisciplinary methodology in its approach to research design, and data collection and analysis that combines textual analysis of communicators' emails with conceptual analysis of their introspections while they are engaged in communicative situations and interactions. The study does not start with a pre-determined view of static ethnic or national culture-based assumption, but is designed in such a way that participants with similar sociolinguistic and national cultural backgrounds are grouped and assigned the same task and scenario. Whilst this enables for the possibility of considering their possible shared behavioural characteristics, ethnic/national culture is only one of a number of dimensions considered in examining communicative behaviour. The methodology is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The remaining chapters of the thesis deal with the analysis of the data: email texts and introspections of international trade professionals. Chapter 4 outlines the approach adopted in the move and act analysis of email texts. Chapter 5 and 6 deal respectively with the analysis of moves and acts in the professionals' email texts and their introspections in the process of composing their texts. Chapter 7 brings together the material from these analyses to provide a closer analysis of context and how it impacts on international trade email communication, highlighting similarities, and explicating differences in the moves and acts in international trade professionals' texts. Finally, Chapter 8 concludes the analysis and discussion by making the case for why international trade email can be considered to be a genre, as well as reflecting on the outcomes of the study and possibilities for further investigation.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Computer-Mediated Communication

Internet accessed via the computer has been used for personal and business communication for at least two decades. This new medium has led to an increasing number of studies into computer-mediated communication (CMC). The following literature covers the nature of CMC and, particularly, concentrates on the linguistic aspects of discourse and text in English in this medium of communication.

#### 2.1.1 Nature of Computer-Mediated Communication

Early studies of CMC from Media Richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) and Social Presence theory (Short, Williams & Christie, 1976) claimed disadvantages for CMC in comparison with non computer mediated forms of communication. CMC is found to be a medium lacking social context cues and nonverbal cues to embellish meanings regarding gender, age, or status, emotions, language use or feedback immediacy (Kiesler, Siegel, and McGuire, 1984; Siegel, Dubrovsky, Kiesler, and McGuire, 1986; Sproull & Kiesler, 1991), causing CMC to be less socially oriented, less personal, less socio-emotional, more task-oriented, higher on hostile or profane speech acts (Kiesler et. al, 1984; Siegel et. al, 1986; Sproull & Kiesler, 1991; Gotcher & Kanervo, 1997), consuming a longer time in comprehension and discussion (Bordia, 1997), and less authentic in human dialogue than face-to-face (FtF) communication (Shoham & Pinchevski, 1999).

However, contemporary research in CMC adapting Social Information Processing theory (SIP) (Walther, 1992) makes a more positive appraisal claiming that the meagre social context cues available in CMC and the lack of nonverbal cues prompt communicators to build impressions of their interlocutors and to provide

information about their own personality, social status, attitudes and respect for others through content and linguistic strategies, chronemic, typographic, text-based cues, and context cues (Walther, 1993, 1994, 1996; Walther and Tidwell, 1995; Walther and D'Addario, 2001). Similarly, Social Identity and Deindividuation theorists (SIDE), such as Postmes, Spears & Lea (1998) argue that the lack of nonverbal cues and interpersonal cues in CMC encourage interactants to form impressions based on their social identity. Hence, CMC fosters impression development (Tidwell and Walther, 2002) and relational communication (Walther, 1997). On-line friendship and romance (Park & Floyd, 1996; Baker, 1998; Park and Roberts, 1998; Hian, Chuan, Trevor, and Detenber, 2004), on-line communities/groups (Shaw, 1997; Giese, 1996; Postmes, Spears, and Lea, 2000; Matei, 2005), on-line work teams (Brochet, 1991; Beck, 1995; McInerney, 1998), and self liberation (Turkle, 1995; Hultin, 1993) have all been found possible through CMC. CMC has also been found to create higher task communication, more ideas, more equality of participation, and more process effectiveness (Sproull & Kiesler, 1991; Dubrovsky, Kiesler & Sethna, 1991; Straus, 1997; Gotcher & Kanervo, 1997; Baron, 1998; Bordia, 1997).

There are two main types of CMC: synchronous and asynchronous. Examples of synchronous CMC are two-party chat and multiple-party chat. Email and discussion groups where participants post online messages are examples of asynchronous CMC (Danet, 2001 p. 14). The most common form of asynchronous CMC is electronic mail (Kraut, Mukhopadhyay, Szczypula, Kiesler, and Scherlis, 1999). Recent research on the use of email, in comparison with other media such as letter, fax, memo, telephone, and face-to-face encounters, has pointed to both advantages and disadvantages. Compared with telephone, email is preferred due to its flexibility in facilitating communication across time and space (Dimmick, Kline, and Stafford, 2000). Compared with other written media, email encourages higher participation rates, generates more ideas, involves higher level of social interaction, and increases the speed of decision-making processes (Neufeld, Dyck & Brotheridge, 2001). Although email is not synchronous CMC, it engages users in higher involvement and immediacy than other writing media (Danet, 2001).

The positive aspects of email include further observed advantages. Both Anton (2000) and Strauss and Hill (2001) explain that email has been used for

customer service due to its reliability, responsiveness, access, personalisation, convenience, collaboration, and costs savings. Although email may take the place of a letter, it is found that effectiveness in gaining compliance via email lies in the email message contents and persuasive strategies (Hill & Monk, 2000; Gueguen, 2002).

In contrast, email has disadvantages in comparison to other media, specifically in business communication. In a review of studies in the business negotiation via email (e-negotiation) compared with FtF, Thompson and Nadler (2002) conclude that negotiation via email lacks the establishment of interpersonal rapport that develops cooperation, trust, and a relationship to facilitate agreements. Such disadvantages of email result from the meagre exchange of information through physical and social contacts. Thompson and Nadler posit a set of four assumptions that undermine e-negotiation: negotiators' ignorance of the asynchronous aspect of negotiation via email; their social distance due to a lack of rapport and temporary relationship; their use of negative emotional style to achieve negotiation goals, and their perception of the counterpart as a group outsider.

### **2.1.2 CMC Discourse and Text**

In reviewing literature on the linguistic nature of CMC texts using English as the language of communication, Reed (2001) outlines three main conceptions. The first views CMC textual features as part written and part spoken (Murray, 1996; Davis & Brewer, 1997; DuBartell, 1995; Baron, 1998; Callot & Belmore, 1996; Holmes, 1995; Lee, 1996; Wignall, 1993). The second focuses on its development processes and conceives its linguistic nature as evolving in the new medium like other language forms, such as the creolization of language (Baron, 1998, 2000), and the third conception argues that it is a new linguistic form. Baron (2001) comments that the first conception predominated during the introduction of CMC and still remains a widely held view, although recent linguistic studies of CMC have focused on the second and third conceptions.

Danet (2001) suggests that it is not useful to classify digital texts of CMC based on the two modes of speaking and writing. Moving away from the notion of orality and literacy (Ong, 1982), she conceptualises CMC text as a new medium, 'paradoxically both doubly attenuated and doubly enhanced (2001 p. 11). She explains that CMC text is doubly attenuated because it is intangible, dynamic, interactive, ephemeral, and deficient of nonverbal and paralinguistic cues, and doubly enhanced because it can be restored, re-examined, traceable, and dialogic. Crystal (2001) also claims that CMC text can be considered a 'third medium' or third mode distinct from spoken and written modes and that it is more than just a hybrid between the two because CMC does things that neither speech nor the written mode can do (p. 47-48). For example, a chatterer can communicate with up to 20 other interactants simultaneously, which a person may not be able to do even at a party. However, Devis and Brewer (1997) contend that the CMC medium might be too immature to distinguish its linguistic nature due to the continuing changes in the electronic medium. Baron (1998) notes that there is some difficulty in constructing linguistic generalisations of e-mail owing to technological transition, its increasing diversity of users with various levels of English competence, differing age groups as well as gender, and due to its being too premature linguistically with less than three decades of usage to form a unified grammar.

The three conceptions of CMC's linguistic nature are based on consideration of different types of discourse, such as messages on discussion groups, chats, emails, etc. For example, CMC texts in newsgroups are found to imitate human speech, using sound imitations, letter repetitions, capitalisations and can have many grammatical and spelling mistakes due to poor editing (Climent, Mor, Oliver, Salvatierra, Snchez, Taul, and Vallmanya, 2003). However, this literature review will focus on only discourses and texts related to email. Email text has been proposed to resemble a hybrid between a conversation and a letter written in a colloquial style of speech (Hale & Scanlon, 1999; Tella, 1992; Yates & Orlikowski, 1993). Gimenez (2000) views email discourse as resembling unplanned spoken discourse more than planned written discourse, and the transmission mode regulates its written features. Study of the textual structure and features of email with a genre perspective also claims that email is a mixed genre between written and oral genres (Gruber, 2001). Email is found to contain a more flexible, informal and personalised register and style than

letters (Gimenez, 2000). Email contains more contextual topic-related background information than word-processed texts, despite virtually equal use of textual cohesive devices (Biesenbach-Lucas & Waesenforth, 1997, 1998, 2001; Biesenbach-Lucas, Meloni, & Waesenforth, 2000). Gimenez (2000) argues that informality and personalisation is shown in the choice of lexis, simple and straightforward syntactic structures, short sentences, elliptical forms, contracted forms, abbreviations, use of only first name at the end of the email message instead of full name, no salutation or friendly greeting, etc.

Several factors have been attributed to these linguistic features of email discourses. Lexical and syntactic simplifications, incoherence, and interactional disjunctions in the email texts are due to time and space constraints in the electronic systems (Hale & Scanlon, 1999; Crystal, 2001). The electronic medium is also attributed to direct agreements and disagreements (Baym, 1996; Yates & Orlikowski, 1993). Mallon and Oppenheim (2000) attribute these email textual features to a lack of clear writing guidelines for the new medium of email. Devis and Brewer (1997) also view email as a new medium that continues to change by incorporating hypertext, audio, visual, and web linkage. Herring (1999, 2001) argues that these email linguistic features are overridden by users' adaptability to the new technology of electronic medium and the advantages of loose coherence that are cognitively manageable. Based on the concept that the electronic technology in CMC reflects social change, Baron (2001) asserts that the ephemeral, informal, personal, straightforward, and speech-like linguistic nature of email stems from revolutions in American education and a decline in 'public face' concern over the five decades (p. 6). A change from teaching formal to informal writing to encourage self-expression and a change in social attitudes towards self-exposure to public are given as examples that resonate in the diminishing public-face concern of conversational linguistic behaviours in CMC. However, these linguistic features of email can derive from different 'specific context of the situation' of the emails. As Murray (1988 p. 370) contends, the context of situation in which an email is written determines the tendency towards oral or literate discourse of that email. In a business communication context, particularly during the first few email exchanges when interactants are not familiar with each other, it is possible for email users to adopt the formal written style of business letters.

The relationship that develops through a continuation of interaction via email exchanges has been found to influence email texts although the relationship may not be formed as effectively as via media such as letter, telephone, or FtF interactions (Bertacco and Deponte, 2005). Cassel and Tversky (2005) study the formation of an intercultural virtual community through linguistic interactions and find that over time participants of different national cultural, sociolinguistic and socio-economic backgrounds develop a community and converge their linguistic style, voice, topics, goals, and strategies. Yates and Orlikowski (1993) also report that the personal relationship of interactants contributes to the use of emphatic instead of inflammatory language in arguments via email.

Identity-related elements such as status, role, and gender that are culturally determined have also been attributed to shaping email texts. Email texts are argued to demonstrate social cues of power and status differences between interactants (Panteli, 2002). In email styles, women are engaged more in social involvement and maintenance of rapport and intimacy than men (Colley and Todd, 2002), and have expressive styles (Boneva, Kraut, and Frohlich, 2001). However, a comparative study applying politeness theory of requests via email between men and women in Dutch shows no gender differences in the linguistic realisation, topics, and purpose of requests (Redeker and van Ingen, 2003).

Emotion is another element. Interlocutors' emotional involvement with an issue of argument is reported to be a significant factor in their argumentative discourse via CMC (Mabry, 1997). Mabry finds that making references to and quotes from previous messages is used as framing tactic in the argumentative discourse via CMC and conciliatory, apologetic message are used to neutralise the dispute.

There are some studies reporting contradictory findings, which suggest that factors may exert influence on email discourses and texts at different linguistic levels. For example, Chang and Hsu (1998) study the request styles in English via email of Chinese and the American students and find that while requests made by the Americans are direct in their structural ordering and composition and indirect in linguistic forms, requests made by the Chinese are direct in their forms but indirect in their structure. This divergence has led Chang and Hsu to conclude that there are

cultural differences in requests between the two cultures in email. In contrast, in Ulijn, Lincke, and Karakaya's (2001) investigation of business negotiation via email between three groups of Anglo (U.S. & Canada), Nordic (the Netherlands, Sweden, & Finland), and Latin (France & Colombia) negotiators, they report no influence of national culture on negotiation strategies.

Some studies suggested the interplay of several factors on email discourses and texts, such as interactions of task, email medium, national culture, etc. Yates and Orlikowski (1993) find that a negotiation task with complex and high controversy via email can restrain interactants to use simple, strong and direct agreements and disagreements instead of emotional language. Biesenbach-Lucas and Waesenforth (1997) purport that the use of English textual cohesive devices in email essay writing of non-native students may stem from a complex interplay of medium, task, audience, native language, English proficiency, and familiarity with email. Arguing against the contradictory notions that CMC converges and diverges national cultural differences, Hanna and Nooy (2004) analysed messages of online discussion groups posted by French and English correspondents. They found some communication and linguistic behaviours that could manifest national cultural characteristics, yet not the general and main national characteristics of the French or the English. They note that these behaviours could neither be rendered as collective CMC traits. Therefore, they contend that CMC interactions are influenced by the interplay of national culture and virtual culture and suggest tensions between the two existing in CMC. It is possible that a set of new group norms emerge through CMC over time, as Postmes, Spears & Lea (2000) have observed.

## 2.2 Genre Studies

There are several approaches to the study communication interaction via the media of CMC. One approach involves textual analysis of the content, form and function of text in relation to context. Such an approach is known as genre study. To understand the fundamental principles of this approach, its general background will be briefly outlined prior to a discussion of the two selected perspectives of the Systemic



Functional linguistics and the Social Constructionists, which have been adopted by studies to identify genres of communication. Following these two perspectives are discussions of genre studies in business communication, in particular the two types of business letters, sales promotion letters and business invitation letters. Genre studies of business communication via recent media of faxes and emails are also discussed.

### **2.2.1 General background**

The concept of genre has been applied in areas of linguistic study, such as folklore, literature, linguistics, and rhetoric (Swales, 1990). From the literature on the linguistic study of genre and Swales' review of the genre concept, two theoretical aspects of the concept are the focus of current interest in genre studies: communication conventions, and social and cultural practices. A genre is identified by established communication conventions in similar linguistic forms, textual structures, or communication styles. Campbell and Jamieson (1978) suggest this quite clearly in their definition of genre:

‘A genre is a group of acts unified by a constellation of forms that recurs in each of its members. These forms, in isolation, appear in other discourses. What is distinctive about the acts in a genre is a recurrence of the forms together in constellation.’  
(p. 20)

Bazerman (1994) also reflects on the communication conventions in his explanation that:

‘Genre theory ...has been concerned with the development of single types of texts through repeated use in situations perceived as similar. That is, over a period of time individuals perceive homologies in circumstances that encourage them to see these as occasions for similar kinds of utterances. These typified utterances, often developing standardized formal features, appear as ready solutions to similar appearing problems. Eventually the genres sediment into forms so expected that readers are surprised or even uncooperative if a standard perception of the situation is not met by an utterance of the expected form’ (p. 82).

Another theoretical aspect of the genre concept is the notion that a genre constitutes social and cultural practices through the collective purposes and linguistic acts of members of a community as suggested in Campbell and Jamieson's definition above and also in Martin and Rothery's (1986) definition that genre 'refers to the staged purposeful social processes through which a culture is realised in a language' (p. 243). As Martin (1985) highlights in this definition:

'Genres are how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them. They range from literary to far from literary forms: poems, narratives, expositions, lectures, seminars, recipes, manuals, appointment taking, service encounters, news broadcasts and so on. The term genre is used here to embrace each of the linguistically realized activity types which comprise so much of our culture' (p. 250).

In other words, genre constitutes social and cultural practices by accommodating the accomplishment of social purposes through communication. These two aspects of the concept are shown vividly in Miller's (1984, 1994) discussion of genre:

'Genre refers to a conventional category of discourse based in large scale typification of rhetorical action; as action, it acquires meaning from situation and from the social context in which that situation arose' (1994 p. 37).

Also in her postulation that:

'Genre serves as the substance of forms at higher levels; as recurrent patterns of language use, genres help constitute the substance of our cultural life' (1994 p. 37).

The traditional perspective of genre study is to identify conventions of a literary work defined according to its form and content (Freedman and Medway, 1994 p. 1). Current genre study has also been extended to adopt perspectives of other disciplines such as rhetorical studies, social constructionism, systemic functional linguistics, pragmatics, thus facilitating the establishment of a connection between

communication conventions and social and cultural practices, and the explication of the influence of social and cultural environment on the written texts.

Among genre scholars, Freedman and Medway (1994) distinguish two disciplinary traditions: the Australian Sydney school and the North American school. Based on the ideological and analytical foundations of the two schools, Freedman and Medway argue that although both approaches are based on linguistic analysis of regularities in text production and reception and trace the influence of social, cultural, and institutional practices on such processes, the Australian Sydney school applies the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics pioneered by M.A.K. Halliday and focuses on analysing textual features in its contents (semantic) and forms (syntactic) while the North American school applies social constructionism theory and aims at revealing the role of text (speech act, rhetorical action) and social practices in the construction of social actions. Though both approaches share one similarity in the recognition of the influence of text environment on text production and reception, there are some subtle similarities and differences in the principles of the two schools. Both schools view genre as related to collective or cultural practices of communities or institutions, which exert influence on the textual conventions or recurrences of individuals' text production and interpretation. While the Australian Sydney school conceptualises genre as the cultural context of text, the North American school views genre as a cultural product of social actions achieved through text. Both schools see genre arising from a context of situation, but the Australian Sydney school calls such context a register. Another departure point between the two schools is the proposition of the North American school that genre has motives or communicative purposes to achieve. In identifying a genre, the Australian Sydney school's approach is based on the common cultural conventions of language use in text, but the North American school emphasises common communicative purposes and social actions of a discourse community. The following section outlines in greater details the different principles of the two schools, including examples and discussions of studies adopting the two approaches.

### 2.2.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach to Genre

The Australian Sydney school develops the concept of social context of text and explicates this in detail. It conceptualises the social context of text as being composed of the context of situation called 'register' and context of culture called 'genre'. According to Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1978), these two contexts interrelate and influence the production and interpretation of text. Register defined as 'the configuration of semantic resources that the member of the culture associates with a situation type,' (Halliday, 1978 p. 111) is composed of three components: 'field,' 'tenor,' and 'mode'. 'The field, tenor, and mode act collectively as determinants of the text through their specification of the register; at the same time they are systematically associated with the linguistic system through the functional components of the semantics' (p. 122). Genre or context of culture is composed of numerous organisations of linguistic signs that have meanings for its members.

However, there has been some critique of the lack of clear explanation of register and genre, particularly of their relations and influences on text by genre theorists (see for details - Leckie-Tarry, 1995 p. 6-8). Revisions of the concept and further accounts of the relations and influences of register and genre have been made. Couture (1986) postulates register as constraining language use at the levels of vocabulary and syntax and genre as imposing constraints on the level of discourse structure. She further distinguishes register and genre in that register specifies codes in the text, but genre specifies conditions for beginning, continuing and ending of a text and genre. Examples of Couture's distinction between register and genre: register demonstrates stylistic choices such as the language of scientific reporting, the language of newspaper reporting, bureaucratic language etc; but genres are structured texts such as a research report, a news article, a business annual report, and so on.

Martin (1986, 1992, 1997) refers to register as a semiotic system constituted by the contextual factors of field, mode, and tenor and proposes the relationship between register and genre as between two semiotic planes. Genre is at a higher plane of semiotic abstraction than register and controls the organization of the semiotic systems of register, while register is at the lower plane and regulates the organization of lexico-grammar and phonology of language. Register mediates between genre and

the lexico-grammar and phonology of language. Similarly, Leckie-Tarry (1995) views register as an abstract construct, intermediating between form and function of language, configuring contextual factors and realized through the choice of lexical, syntactic and textual structure. Lewin, Fine, and Young (2001) see field as referring to the realised event in which the text is situated. The tenor refers to the type of relations between the text producer and receptor. The mode refers to the type of text - its channels, such as written or spoken, and its rhetorical category, such as narrative or persuasive.

An example of a study adopting systemic functional linguistics is Thomas' (1997) genre study of executive letters in annual financial reports. His analysis focuses in detail on the choices of words and their functions in meaning making according to the concepts of transitivity structure, thematic structure, cohesion, and condensation. He concludes that passive verb structure and verbs of 'being' are used more often with negative information in the management letter, and non-human subjects and contextual cohesion and condensations are used to avoid human responsibility of negative outcome.

As the example of Thomas' study shows the analytical approach of systemic functional linguistic theory focuses on linguistic features, functions, and influences of context on these feature and functions in the text. Individual words, syntax, and their functions in the text are studied in relations to their context of usage. The following is a model that shows influence of the two types of context, context of culture and context of situation, on the process of meaning making and textual production.

#### ***2.2.2.1 Conceptual model of context***

Leckie-Tarry (1995) offers a conceptual model of context that shows the relationship between context and the realisation of text. Her process-oriented model covers a wide range of contextual factors that have been suggested to affect the processes of textual realisation and the model consequently has explanatory strength among those in the current literature of genre studies. The model is based on several concepts of context, such as those of Hymes (1974) and Rubin (1984), and those

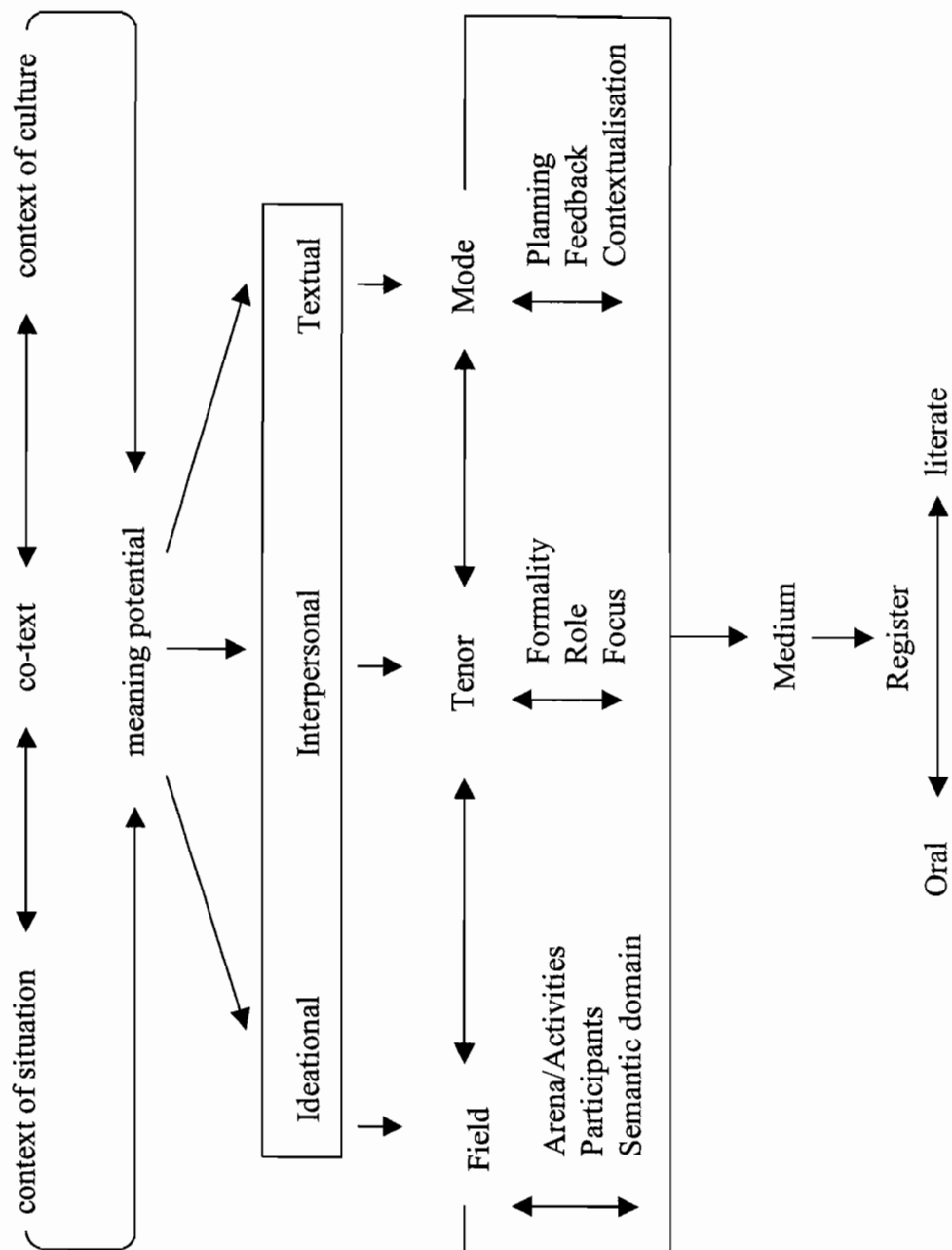
proposed in genre studies, such Bakhtin (1986), Halliday (1978), Hasan (1985), and Frow (1986). In Leckie-Tarry's dynamic and process-oriented model, she claims to demonstrate:

- a. the process of textual realisation in relation to three levels of context
- b. the dynamic interaction of contextual elements
- c. the role of the schemata
- d. field, tenor and mode as variables represented by some specific value(s) in the context of situation
- e. conventions in the realisation of text

According to her model (Refer to figure 2.1: Leckie-Tarry's Conceptual Model of Context), meanings are generated and communicated through language functions based on a threshold of three main sets of knowledge: knowledge in interaction (context of situation), knowledge of institution and ideology of a community (context of culture), and linguistic knowledge (context of text). Leckie-Tarry contends that these three sets of knowledge or the three kinds of context interact in a two-way relationship in which the knowledge determines potential meanings and the communicated meanings shape the knowledge that governs future generation of meanings. These three sets of knowledge are held and organised in the cognitive structure of schemata, which are activated during textual production. Adopting Halliday's concept of situation, Leckie-Tarry views field, tenor and mode as variables in the context of situation or register and defines register as "an abstract construct, intermediate between language function and language form, and hence implicit in the configuration of contextual factors and made explicit by means of the lexical, syntactic and textual structures selected to give substance to the text" (p. 31).

The **Field** is where ideational meanings are communicated through the choice of words governed by its elements. Building on Halliday and Hasan's broad definition of field as 'the total event in which the text is functioning' (1976, p. 22) and Martin's elaboration of it as inherent features of the situation and the event which cover areas, activity, and purpose of the interaction, Leckie-Tarry (1995) proposes field as composed of three elements: **arena/activities, participants, and semantic domain**. She sees these elements of the field as the origin of events that have

**Figure 2.1 Leckie-Tarry' s Conceptual model of context**



influence on each other as well as on elements of the tenor and the mode.

Arena/activities element refers to the inherent features and social institution of the interaction where activities take place. She sees the arena element as a dynamic setting for action. The participants element includes inherent features of text producers that they bring into the setting and events and exert influence on their course of interaction. These features are physical attributes, mental attributes, and knowledge. She elaborates these features to cover race, gender, age, appearance, social class, levels of education and cognition, occupation, cultural knowledge, linguistic knowledge, textual knowledge, situational knowledge, etc. She asserts that text producers' linguistic choice is relative to these characteristics and meanings that are suggested and governed by the norms of a particular kind of interaction. She refers the semantic domain element to the subject matter of a specific event where language is used. The semantic domain is determined by the arena/activities and the participants.

Leckie-Tarry bases her concept of the **Tenor** on Halliday and Hasan's definition that it is the 'type of role interaction, the set of relevant social relations, permanent and temporary among the participants' (1976, p. 22). She explains that tenor is not inherent and varies with the social interaction. She proposes the tenor to contain three elements: **formality**, **role**, and **focus**. The degree of formality depends on the arena. She explains that when the setting is institutionalised, the formality tends to be higher than when it is interpersonally socialised. The role of text producers is socially assigned and the focus is determined by the content of the message concentrating on either interpersonal relations or information of the matter. She explains that the tenor is related to the field in that participants construct social relations according to their perception of the arena and activities and their linguistic choice is thus influenced by their judgement of these elements in the tenor.

**Mode** as proposed by Halliday and Hasan is the function of text that includes the 'channel', spoken or written, extempore or prepared (according to Halliday and Hasan, 1976) and rhetorical nature (narrative, didactic, persuasive, etc). Leckie-Tarry interprets the mode as composed of four elements: **planning**, **feedback**, **contextualisation**, and **medium**. She defines the planning element as a degree of spontaneity or preparedness in thinking, organising, and designing of discourse to



communicate meanings. She explains that the degree of planning is based on the text producers' judgement of elements in the field and tenor. The feedback element refers to the relative configuration of distance in terms of space or time for an interaction between the addresser and the addressee. The configuration of feedback can be at the presence or absence of the addressee. The contextualisation is explained as the degree to which the subject matter of a text constitutes and reflects the activities or events. It is the degree to which language constructs the event. High contextualisation normally results in spoken texts because language constructs immediate event or the actual time between the occurrence of the event and the use of language is close. Low contextualisation means that language is used to reflect the event as the subject matter is removed from actual time of the event and represented with high abstraction in text. This normally results in written texts. Level of contextualisation depends on the configuration of subject matter, focus of the message, and other elements. The medium is the channel through which language is produced and the choice of medium is determined by all other elements such as subject matter, focus on the interpersonal relations or information, level of planning, feedback, and contextualisation. Mode is where language is realised into a text and it establishes a connection between elements of context and linguistic structure. The linguistic realisation of a text involves all the elements in mode to different degrees.

Hence, the model describes the interaction of the field, tenor, and mode (vertically) and the interaction of elements within each category of field, tenor, and mode (horizontally). The interactions of these categories and elements lead to the configuration of register in relation to the configuration of institutional and ideological knowledge of culture of a community and the configuration of linguistic knowledge. The interaction of the three levels of knowledge then results in a choice of linguistic realisation (lexico-grammatical features), organisation of text or textual structure (coherence and cohesion, order of information and speech acts, etc), and text types (oral or literate).

### 2.2.3 Social Constructionist Approach to Genre

The North American school also conceptualises genre as related to culture, but bases its principles on the perspectives of social constructionism and sociolinguistics.

#### 2.2.3.1 *Social Constructionism*

According to the social constructionist perspective, genre is composed of social acts, dynamic and interacting with its changing socio-cultural context (Freedman and Medway, 1994). Genre is influenced by and influences its environment. Research in this tradition tends to focus on the fluidity of genre and to prove how genre can shape and be shaped by its context. For example, Miller (1994) posits that genre creates social actions that communicators achieve through text when participating in a discourse that establishes communal rhetorical "acting together" (p.36). Miller further explains in his later publication that these acts are learned from precedents to conform to 'the conventions of a discourse that a community has established as ways of participating in the activities of a community and these acts constitute a genre' (p. 67).

Orlikowski and Yates (1992, 1994) define a genre as 'a set of communicative actions enacted by members of a community to realise particular social purposes' (1994 p. 542). They postulate that genre is not only structured by social communication actions, but also structures communication practices and organizes communities. Bazerman (1994) asserts that genre is 'a system of complex located literate activity constructed through typified actions' (p. 79). He views participants as sharing a set of functional meanings and relations and shaping the two elements through linguistic acts in a genre. The use of language as actions then maintains social activities and relations. All these researchers have a common core view of genre that stem from the social constructionist perspective.

An example of the use of this perspective to analyse business communication is in Jameson's (2000) study in the genre of annual financial reports. Based on the social constructionist perspective, Jameson argues that shareholder reports have a

genre with a common social purpose in the investment community and textual elements shaped by legal requirements, company tradition, industry norms and reader expectations.

### *2.2.3.2 Swales' Approach to Genre*

The most widely referred to analytical approach adopting this broad perspective is that of Swales (1990). Swales bases his definition of genre on Campbell and Jamieson's (1978) (see Section 1.2.1). He views a genre as 'a class of communicative events in which language and/ or paralanguage plays both a significant and an indispensable role' (1990, p.47). This means that the use of language is an integral part of communicative events and incidental talk that happens without goals cannot be considered communicative events.

Similar to other researchers that adopt this social constructionist perspective of genre, Swales posits that a genre is categorised by its sets of shared communicative purposes rather than by similar forms or content of language use, and that it is a communicative vehicle for the achievement of purposes. These shared purposes are realised by members of the same discourse community and provide rationales for constraints in compositional conventions. Swales argues that these conventions are changeable and having influence on the generic structure.

In his genre studies, Swales applies the concept of discourse community and he uses this for identifying a group of individuals as a discourse community. He conceptualises a discourse community as having 'a broadly agreed set of common public goals,' 'mechanisms of intercommunication among its members,' using 'its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback,' utilizing and hence possessing 'one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims' having 'some specific lexis' and 'a threshold level of members with suitable degree of relevant content and discursal expertise' (p.25-27). He further argues that when members participate in a discourse community, they do not assimilate the community's worldviews. Particularly interesting is his suggestion that individuals

may hold membership of several discourse communities; henceforth, they command several genres of the communities they belong to. Swales explains that individuals' involvement in a community and their use of relevant discourse conventions may be instrumental for the achievement of their common communicative purposes.

As Swales summarises:

‘A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, examples of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience...’ (p.58).

Swales further suggests that genres vary in aspects of complexity of rhetorical purpose, textual construction, medium, anticipation and expression of the relationship between the audience and the producer, tendency of language use on global or local levels, variety of languages and their specific rhetorical structure, activity, and institution. His genre analytical approach is based on the identification of linguistic moves and steps, which he defines as discourse units that contain communicative purposes. Discourses of steps are realised to form discourses of moves, both of which constitute the structure of a text. Swales’ approach will be discussed in greater details in Chapter 4.

#### **2.2.4 Genre studies in Business communication**

The various approaches to genre presented above have been applied in the investigation of diverse types of texts, and textual production and reception, including since the mid-1980s research into business texts (Zachry, 2000). To date, the investigations have extended to cover only some types of business communication, such as letter, fax, telex, annual report, and email. Most of the genre study in business

communication has dealt with written business discourse, particularly business letters, adopting sociolinguistic perspectives and specifically Swales' move and step analysis. Only a few genre studies of business faxes and emails have been located. Some examples of these studies will be discussed in the following section.

#### *2.2.4.1 Business letters*

Sales promotion and business invitation letters are the two types of business letters that have been discussed as examples of genre studies in business communication. Bhatia (1993), Hiranburana (1996), Chakorn (2002), and Zhu (2000) have all investigated sales promotion letters studies, but only these last three studies also include consideration of business invitation letters. As Zhu's study involves contrastive analysis of letters written between two periods in China, and letters written in Chinese and English, it will be discussed separately.

Bhatia (1993) adopted a sociolinguistic perspective in investigating sales promotion letter in English written by local Singaporean businessmen. Hiranburana (1996) examined several types of business letters, faxes and telexes in international trade in English written by business people with different sociolinguistic backgrounds, including English native speakers, Thai native speakers, and non-English native and non-Thai native speakers. Recently, Chakorn (2002) has investigated sales promotion and business invitation letters in general business in English written by English native speakers, Thai native speakers, and non-Thai native speakers. The three studies aim at applying findings in generic structure of business letters for teaching purposes.

Using an analytical framework based on Swales' (1990) move and step analysis, these studies report on taxonomies, typologies (obligatory vs. optional), and patterns or sequences of moves. Factors having influences on the use of the identified moves in business texts are also suggested. However, their findings tend to be restricted by the context of letters that are determined by specific business activities, types of businesses, professional communities, communicative events, interactants'

roles. Their findings of move and step taxonomies, typologies, and patterns in sales promotion and business invitation letters are summarized for comparison purposes in Table 2.1 and Table 2.2.

Comparison of their findings in the table shows that there are some differences and similarities in their move and step patterns, names and numbers of moves and steps in the taxonomies, and classification of moves and steps in the typologies of the three studies. Differences in the use of some moves are attributed to national culture. For example, Asian culture is suggested to affect the use of the Offering incentives move in sales promotion letters (Bhatia, 1993). Bhatia elaborates that the move is usually realised with sales conditions such as an offer of price bargain, discount or special rebate, and other special offers. Hiranburana (1996) and Chakorn (2002) claim that the use of the Establishing a link or Opening a link is influenced by the Asian culture's desire to establish a relationship. Similarly, Chakorn reasons that Thais avoid using the Using pressure tactics move because of the need to show respect and harmony in the Thai culture. Both Hiranburana and Chakorn also attribute the Asian cultural value of maintaining balanced interpersonal relationships to the indirect and face-saving linguistic realisation of moves and steps of the Thai native speakers and the Non-native English and native Thai speakers in business invitation letters. However, these differences are minimal compared to the similarities across the three studies and the variations may stem from the distinct context of letters, such as tasks and related activities, organizations and types of businesses, levels of relationship, interactants that situate each letter in the three studies as the letters are collected from several business organizations and the analysis does not include these contextual factors. Chakorn's (2002) report of the context-dependence of the letters having an influence on the difficulty in identifying a common pattern of moves and steps supports this argument. It is also reflected in Bhatia's (1993) investigation that the sequences of moves and steps in his corpus of sales letters are rather flexible. For example, Bhatia reported that either the Establishing credentials move or the Introducing the offer move can appear at the beginning of the letter. Moreover, the differences may result from a lack of clear analytical approach of moves and steps within Swales' methodology. There is also a possible lack of consistency in the application of the approach in the three studies due to differences in their letter corpuses.

**Table 2.1 Comparison of taxonomies, typologies, and patterns of moves and steps in the sales promotion letters in the studies of Bhatia, Hiranburana, and Chakorn**

Corpus	Bhatia' s (1993)	Hiranburana' s (1996)	Chakorn' s (2002)
<b>Sociolinguistic backgrounds</b>	English Singaporean speakers	English native speakers, Thai native speakers, Non English native & non Thai native speakers	English native speakers, Thai native speakers, Non Thai native speakers
<b>Taxonomies, Typologies, and Patterns of Moves &amp; Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing Credentials - OB</li> <li>2. Introducing the offer - OB <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i). <i>Offering the product or services</i> - OB</li> <li>(ii). <i>Essential detailing of the offer</i> - OB</li> <li>(iii). <i>Indicating value of the offer</i> - OB</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Offering incentives - OP</li> <li>4. Enclosing documents - OP</li> <li>5. Soliciting response - OB</li> <li>6. Using pressure tactics - OP</li> <li>7. Ending politely - OP</li> </ol>	<p>Opening salutation (Not classified as a move)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing a Link <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i). <i>Acknowledging source of contact information</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Establishing Confidence <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i). <i>Emphasizing company's credentials and/or</i></li> <li>(ii). <i>Making good impressions</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Introducing Offer (s) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i). <i>Offering product (s)/services (s) and/or</i></li> <li>(ii). <i>Detailing offer (s) and/or</i></li> <li>(iii). <i>Indicating the value of offer (s) and/or</i></li> <li>(iv). <i>Offering incentives</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Inviting Further Contact <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i). <i>Encouraging pursuit of further information and/ or</i></li> <li>(ii). <i>Expressing expectation of future reply/ custom</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Closing salutation (Not classified as a move)</p> <p>- Typology of Obligatory &amp; Optional moves was not discussed</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening a link - OB</li> <li>2. Introducing the offer - OB <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i). <i>Offering the product or services</i> - OB</li> <li>(ii). <i>Essential detailing of the offer</i> - OB</li> <li>(iii). <i>Enclosing documents</i> - OP</li> <li>(iv). <i>Indicating value of the offer</i> - OP</li> <li>(v). <i>Offering incentives</i> - OP</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Soliciting response - OB</li> <li>4. Using pressure tactics -OP</li> <li>5. Ending politely - OP</li> </ol>

\* OB = Obligatory, OP = Optional

**Table 2.2 Comparison of taxonomies, typologies, and patterns of moves and steps in the business invitation letters in the studies of Hiranburana and Chakorn**

Corpus	Hiranburana' s (1996)	Chakorn' s (2002)
<b>Sociolinguistic backgrounds</b>	English native speakers, Thai native speakers, Non English native & non Thai native speakers	English native speakers, Thai native speakers, Non Thai native speakers
<b>Taxonomies, Typologies, and Patterns of Moves &amp; Steps</b>	<p>Opening salutation (Not classified as a move)</p> <p>1. Establishing a Link</p> <p>(i). <i>Acknowledging the visit message</i> and/or</p> <p>(ii). <i>Referring to previous contact</i></p> <p>2. Arranging the Visit</p> <p>(i). <i>Giving details of the invitation/ Requesting/ Confirming details of the visit</i> and/or</p> <p>(ii). <i>Offering hospitality/ Inviting</i> and/or</p> <p>(iii). <i>Accepting or Declining an invitation</i></p> <p>3. Encouraging Further Contact</p> <p>(i). <i>Requesting/ Expressing an expectation of reply/visit</i> and/or</p> <p>(ii). <i>Expressing gratitude/ appreciation</i></p> <p>Closing salutation (Not classified as a move)</p> <p>- Typology of Obligatory &amp; Optional moves was not discussed</p>	<p>1. Inviting - OB</p> <p>2. Establishing the context (i.e. giving background information, raising the issue, and/or stating purpose - OP</p> <p>3. Detailing - OB</p> <p>4. Soliciting response or</p> <p>5. Anticipating acceptance - OP</p> <p>6. Expressing thanks - OP</p>

\* OB = Obligatory, OP = Optional



As the Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 show, there are some similarities in the findings of the three studies. These similarities may stem from the strong influence of business culture rather than the sociolinguistic background of the communicators as proposed by Hiranburana (1996). Hiranburana found that the samples of both types of letters written by the three groups of different sociolinguistic backgrounds are quite similar in the rhetorical structure of moves and steps, and linguistic realisation of speech acts. She attributed these similarities to the influence of business discourse community (with certain econocultural norms and conventions). She argues that business people pursue a set of objectives and adopt communication norms and conventions of their business discourse community when interacting with other members in order to meet their expectation. These communication norms and conventions are expressed in rhetorical structure and language use.

In a contrastive genre study of sales letters written in Chinese by the Communist government trade officers in Mainland China between the two periods of 1949 to 1978 (before economic reform) and after the year 1978 to 2000 (during the economic reform), Zhu (2000) found the use of the Offering incentives, the Using pressure tactics, and the Introducing the product moves only in the latter period and suggested the influence of marketing strategies in economic reform after 1978 in China. However, Zhu (2000, p.7) found that letters of invitation to trade fairs written in Chinese during the economic reform appear to have very similar move patterns to those written in English except that the Chinese letters have a repeated move of inviting. Zhu attributes the repetition of the Inviting move to the Chinese cultural value of showing respect and sincerity to the reader, and says that this value is also reflected in the use of honorifics to refer to the reader. It is evident in Zhu's study that while changes in the socio-economic context and business ideology of the business letters may affect its genre, a possible transfer of writing style from English to Chinese may contribute to modification in the genre of Chinese business letters during the economic reform when there is an increase of contact situations between Mainland China and the Western countries. However, the findings in the repetition of the inviting move and the use of honorifics show that the Chinese writers still maintain their writing practices despite the change in socio-economic context and the influx of English business writing.

As the analysis of the two kinds of business letters have shown, there are variations and similarities in the taxonomy, typology and patterns of moves and steps of the selected studies presented. Variations seem to arise from the context of letters and the variant application of Swales' analytical approach of moves and steps. Similarities seem to stem from the types of letters, language in use, and the dominance of the business culture over the sociolinguistic background. Although cultures related to ethnicity, nationality, region, and native language are suggested to affect differences in the use of some moves and steps, the attribution is arguable as these studies fail to consider other related contextual factors in their analysis. There is no consideration of individual participants' practices. Swales and these studies acknowledge the communicative purposes or goals, but the role and function of these goals particularly on the generic structure and realisation of moves are not discussed in these studies. Zhu's findings of changes in the business letters in Mainland China suggests that genre is dynamic.

#### ***2.2.4.2 Business faxes and emails***

Genre study of business faxes has suggested an influence of medium on the generic structure and realisation of moves and steps. Louhiala-Salminen (1997) investigated business faxes in the English of international business. Based on a social constructionist perspective, Louhiala-Salminen contends that business fax is a genre constituted and constitutive of social practices of a professional discourse community. The study emphasises the influence of the context of the fax on the generic structure and linguistic realisation of moves and steps, such as the roles of interactants and power relations in the relationship between interactants, language of use in relation to native and non-native, culture of discourse community, medium, etc. Louhiala-Salminen proposes that these contextual elements define the norms of practices in communication.

While there are increasing studies in computer-mediated communication of business email, only limited research into this genre has been located. Orlikowski and

Yates's (1994) study of the email of a group of professionals in an inter-organisational and longitudinal setting adopting a social constructionist perspective offers further insight into the concept of genre. Based on the principle that genre is a constellation of communicative acts of a discourse community with socially recognised purposes and reoccurrence of common forms, they argue that genre changes through a process by which members modify their conventions in communication practices, either deliberately or unintentionally. When changes via communicative actions happen repeatedly and are accepted in the community, variations in genre or new genres emerge either to co-exist with the established genres or to replace them.

Orlikowski and Yates (1994) elaborate that members of a discourse community reinforce changes in the new context based on their judgement of expectations of the community and knowledge of the established genre rules. Therefore, when business people communicate via another medium such as fax, the new genre of business fax emerges with some format and textual structures and linguistic features similar to its predecessors. They contend that communicative actions involve multiple genres and suggest that a professional discourse community may use several genres in their complex communication practices. They conclude that the inter-organisational emails in their study are composed of three genres: memo, proposal, and dialogue, which are incorporated in the email messages. It seems that their classification of the three generic types is based on format and textual features rather than on the medium.

As Orlikowski and Yates' study has shown, business email is currently used to transmit texts with different functions, such as information distributions and circulations, memos, reminders, invitations, reservations, claims for payment, proposals, negotiations, complaint lodgements, etc and some even contain images. It is arguable that these types of texts incorporated in emails should be categorised in the same fashion as their traditional media, such as letter, invoice or memo. There is evidence of some changes in the form, structure and linguistic features of these texts when composed and delivered via email, such as in the register and the use of emoticons as discussed in Section 2.1. It is possible that there are combinations between the old elements of these texts as transmitted through their traditional media

and the new elements arising from the email medium. Moreover, email format has also been modified from its predecessor memo.

Louhiala-Salminen's and Orlikowski and Yates' studies demonstrate the dynamic nature of genre and the process by which media may exert influence on the evolution of a genre.

Studies of the genre of business letters, faxes and emails adopting sociolinguistic disciplinary approaches such as the Social Constructionist and the Systemic Functional linguistics have contributed to our understanding into the communication conventions and the influence of social and cultural practices on these conventions in the genre of business communication. These disciplines offer distinctive analytical approaches in identifying elements that constitute a genre and have particular strength in different aspects of their approaches. The Social Constructionist's approach to genre suggests linguistic acts in business communication as an important element in constituting a genre. The approach significantly demonstrates the dynamic nature of the genre. Swales' focus on move and step in his analytical approach shows how textual structure can be investigated in relation to common purposes of a discourse community. The concept of genre and register of the Systemic Functional theory illustrates stylistic conventions in writing in relation to business communication context. In particular, Martin's proposition of the relationship between genre, register, and lexicogrammar features of language and the intermediation of register between genre and lexicogrammar, and Leckie-Tarry's conceptual model of context profoundly explicate how social and cultural practices (genre and register) affect communication conventions (language use) and the influence of contextual factors in the textual production processes.

## **2.3 Pragmatics**

While genre study aims at identifying elements that constitute communication conventions, pragmatics study emphasizes the mechanisms and established rules of communication practices. Although there might be an overlap in the unit of discourse

and textual analysis between the two disciplines, such as speech acts, which will be elaborated in Chapter 4, a general background on pragmatics and its key concepts will be provided before a discussion of findings and examples of pragmatic studies in business communication in this section.

### **2.3.1. General background**

There has been a considerable amount of work on the linguistic philosophy of pragmatics since what Ferrara (1985 p. 137) claims to be the first use of the term by Morris (1938 p. 30) to refer to 'the science of the relation of signs to their interpreters'. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as a 'study of meanings as intended in communicators' utterances and unuttered messages beyond words, as well as their production process in relation to context' (p.5). Wierzbicka (1991) sees these communicators' meanings as 'interactional meanings' (p.5). Pragmatics focuses on rules, maxims, and conventions of interaction in relation to psychological concepts such as background knowledge, beliefs, and expectation beyond interaction that are shown in the forms and structure of each discourse text (Leech, 1983; Yule, 1996). Pragmatics studies also seek to identify factors having influence on these rules and conventions. Key concepts in pragmatics include speech acts, face, politeness, and universal interactional principles, and these are discussed further below.

### **2.3.2. Key Concepts**

Studies within the disciplinary approach of pragmatics adopt several concepts in investigating communication conventions and language use. These concepts are Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) concept of speech act, and universal interactional principles such as Grice's cooperative principles, Lakoff's (1973) politeness principles, Leech's (1983) politeness maxim, and Brown and Levinson's (1987) face concept and politeness universal principle.

### *2.3.2.1 Speech act*

According to Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), an utterance performs an activity and the minimal unit of utterance that performs an activity is defined as a 'speech act', meaning that utterances can be viewed as acts. Speech acts are performed under a situation or conditions from which meanings are derived and within conventions in order to appropriately communicate the utterer's intentions to the addressee. Speech acts can be classified into three kinds of acts: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts (Austin, 1962 p. 94; Searle, 1969 p. 23). There have been arguments and critiques of the classification of speech acts as mentioned by Sbisa (1995), Trosborg (1995), Mey (1993), and elsewhere in the literature of pragmatics. The main critiques concern the classification of illocutionary acts. Searle argues that Austin's classification of illocutionary acts as based on illocutionary force is problematic and proposes the classification to be based on 'illocutionary points' or intention expressed in its essential condition, 'direction of fit' or relevance between words and the world, and psychological states of the mind or expression of the speaker's attitudes, state, etc under the sincerity condition (1975 p. 1-16; 1979, p. 2-5). However, Sbisa (1995 p. 500-503) and Trosborg (1995 p. 18-20) mention that criticisms have been made of Searle's claim for the universality of speech acts and felicity conditions on the basis that these vary with culture, and his failure to develop Austin's notion of perlocutionary acts, and his neglecting roles of both interactants in the performance of speech acts. Mey (1993, p. 124-126) criticises Searle's classification of illocutionary acts as limited and says it fails to include contextual conditions, although he mentions them in his proposition of the taxonomy. Whilst speech act classification will not be covered further in this section, there is further more detailed discussion of this in Chapter 4.

### *2.3.2.2 Face and Politeness*

Face and politeness theory deal with linguistic conceptions of judgemental criteria communicators are obliged to follow in interaction with other members of a community. These judgemental criteria are social conventions that regulate one's linguistic behaviour. The concept has been widely used in numerous pragmatic studies, such as in interpersonal communication (Swangboonsatic, 2000), organisational communication (Rogers & Lee-Wong, 2003), business communication (Pilegaard, 1997; Bargeila-Chiappini & Harris, 1996; Charles, 1996; Bandyopadhyay, 2002), cross-cultural business communication (Marriott, 1997; Mulholland, 1997; Grindsted, 1997; Sheer & Chen, 2003), and in Japanese (Ide, Hill, Cames, Ogino, and Kawasaki, 1992), Chinese (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994; Lee-Wong, 1999), Zulu (de Kadt, 1998), etc. due to its relevance to linguistic interactions and communicative principles, despite its having been revised and criticised by several linguistic scholars since it was introduced between the 1970s and 1980s.

The main theory of face and politeness that will be covered here is Brown and Levinson's (1987) model. For reasons that are elaborated in the discussion below, I believe that Brown and Levinson's model is superior in explaining communicator's linguistic behaviour in comparison to other models, such as Lakoff's (1973) and Leech's (1983). Studies adopting Brown and Levinson's model and critiques of the theory will also be included.

Based on Erving Goffman's notion of face, Brown and Levinson (1987 p. 68) posit that communicators assess their own and their interactant's face and choose strategies to minimise threatening face in achieving communication goals. They conceptualise two types of face: *Positive face and Negative face* (p. 62). Positive face is defined as individual's desire that his/her wants be appreciated or approved of in social interaction. Negative face is defined as individual's desire that his/her wants of freedom in interaction and freedom from imposition be addressed. Strategies chosen to maintain these two types of face in speech acts are called politeness strategies. Positive politeness strategies aim at supporting positive face wants while negative politeness strategies aim at avoiding violating negative face wants.

In choosing these politeness strategies to maintain face wants in interacting with others, individuals are assumed to evaluate three components that Brown and

Levinson consider prone to threaten the face of both parties before committing a speech act. They posit three components in calculating the weightiness of a face-threatening act (FTA): social distance between interactants, power difference in relation to roles of the interactants, and the degree of imposition of the speech act to be performed. The following is their suggested equation in calculating the weightiness of FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987 p. 76):

$$W_x = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + R_x$$

According to the equation, x is the FTA, W is weightiness of FTA, D is social distance between S (speaker) and H (hearer), P is power difference between S (speaker) and H (hearer) in relation to their roles in the situation of interaction, and R is the degree of imposition of FTA. Therefore, the weightiness of a Face-threatening act is a judgement based on the combination of social distance and power difference between the two interactants and imposition of that FTA.

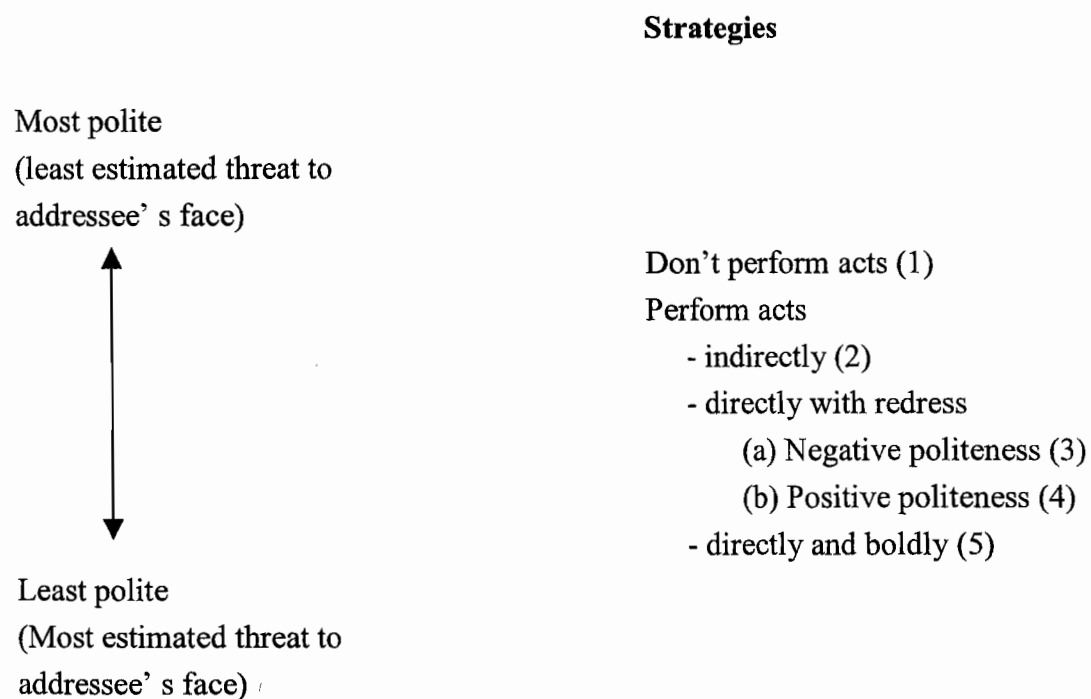
Brown and Levinson also postulate a set of five possibilities of decisions that individuals may make after evaluating the three variables. The five possibilities in minimising face threat of a speech act demonstrate different levels of politeness that range from performing the act baldly and without redressing face (Do the FTA baldly with no redressive action) to omitting the act (Don't do the FTA) as shown in the Figure 2.2.

The other two widely recognized politeness models are Lakoff's (1973) and Leech's (1983) models. To compare their politeness models with Brown and Levinson's model, it is unavoidable to mention Grice's cooperative principles (Grice, 1975) from which the two models are developed.

Grice posits cooperative principles in the form of a set of conversational maxims that communicators are expected to adhere to. Utterances made with these principles are interpreted as truthful and intentional. Violating these principles leads to the addressee's effort to make inferences (or 'implicatures' in Grice's term) of the utterer's intentional meanings and to rectify any misunderstanding. The cooperative principles are composed of 4 maxims:



**Figure 2.2 Brown and Levinson' s politeness strategies  
(adapted from their original diagram and Tracy' s (1990) suggested figure)**



- a. Quantity maxim - interactants should make appropriately informative utterances for the conversation.
- b. Quality maxim - interactants should make only truthful statements based on their knowledge.
- c. Relation maxim - interactants should make only statements relevant to the purpose of the overall conversation.
- d. Manner maxim - interactants should avoid utterances with obscurity, ambiguity, unnecessary verbosity, and unorderedly manner.

Developing along Grice's CP, Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983) introduce their politeness models. Lakoff (1973 p. 305) proposes a politeness model as part of her projection of pragmatic competence or pragmatic rules that govern the production of pragmatically appropriate utterances. Her model is composed of two rules of *Being clear* and *Being polite*. The politeness rule contains three sub-rules: *Don't impose*, *Give options*, and *Make 'A' feel good - be friendly*. Lakoff also elaborates that in some situations the rule of clarity may conflict with the rule of politeness and in such situations the rule of politeness usually supersedes. However, Watts (2003) observes that the rule of clarity seems to resemble Grice's maxims and suggests that Lakoff tries to include Grice's cooperative principles in her politeness model. Watts (2003) comments that the inclusion of Grice's CP in Lakoff's model leads to a failure of the model to really address politeness. Watts also criticizes the model's lack of an explanatory device in showing how politeness is expressed linguistically as the sub-rules of politeness in Lakoff's model are rather vague. I agree with Watts' comment on Lakoff's mistake in her inclusion of Grice's CP in her model and I argue that clarity and politeness need to be addressed separately in the investigation of linguistic interaction due to their possible conflict.

Similar to Lakoff, Leech (1983) proposes Politeness Principles as part of his conceptualisation of general pragmatics and the model similarly causes some criticism. Leech sees two sets of general pragmatic conditions or 'the general

conditions of the communicative use of language' (1983, p.10), one related to text and the other related to social or interpersonal interactions. The textual pragmatic conditions are composed of *the Processability Principle, the Clarity Principle, the Economy Principle, and the Expressivity Principle*. The Politeness Principle (PP) and the other two principles of Cooperation and Irony are suggested in the social pragmatic conditions. Within the Politeness Principle, Leech proposes six maxims based on an evaluation of cost and benefit relative to both interactants: *Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, Approbation maxim, Modesty maxim, Agreement maxim, and Sympathy maxim*. However, Leech's definitions of the terms 'positive politeness' and 'negative politeness' is different from those used by Brown and Levinson. Applying the speech act theory, Leech refers positive politeness to the maximisation of the politeness of polite illocutionary acts while negative politeness is referred to the minimisation of the impoliteness of impolite illocutionary acts (Fraser, 1990 p.226). Watts (2003) argues against Leech's assumption of politeness and impoliteness inherent in the illocutionary acts and comments that his model does not clearly demonstrate how interactants realise the degree and type of politeness in a speech act and therefore the model lacks explanatory power. My further comment is that Leech's model seems to stress semantics view of politeness in the language, which are opposed to the pragmatics view of politeness and impoliteness in social interactional conventions.

Whilst espousing Brown and Levinson's model as being the most developed and robust, it is important to acknowledge that it is not without criticisms. At the outset it is important to acknowledge that Brown and Levinson themselves have identified and acknowledged the incompleteness of their model, especially in relation to their application of speech acts in the conception of politeness, rigidity in the ranking of five levels of politeness strategies, neglect of consideration of other possible factors than the three variables in the equation, and failure to adequately address the differences in the concept of politeness in different cultures.

O'Driscoll (1996), de Kadt (1998), and Watt (2003) all criticise Brown and Levinson's face concept as being a distortion of Goffman's concept. To them Goffman's face is a construct of self that is dynamic, renegotiable and mutually managed by oneself and others in an interaction. In contrast, Brown and Levinson

conceptualise face as a static construct related to individuals' wants. Watts (2003) comments that Brown and Levinson's model is a production model that claims to explain the linguistic behaviour in relation to face and politeness and argues that their model is more about facework or communication strategies that address face concerns than politeness. Another critique is the universality of Brown and Levinson's claim for their face and politeness concept (Watt, 2003 p. 101-103). Nwoye (1992) contends that not all speech acts pose a threat to face and therefore the equation of FTA is not applicable in all linguistic interactions. Cherry (1988) and Lee (1993) have criticized that Brown and Levinson's politeness model for not being able to address all of the nuances of style and content produced by changing contexts. Pragmatic studies of face and politeness in other languages and cultures such as Japanese (Ide, Hill, Cames, Ogino, and Kawasaki, 1992), Chinese (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994; Lee-Wong, 1999), Zulu (de Kadt, 1998), etc have shown that individuals' self and face is less important than that of the social group and addressing face and politeness is determined by social expectations. These studies have argued against Brown and Levinson's claim of universality, suggesting that it is rather a European and individualistic concept.

There are also some critiques of the validity of the three variables in Brown and Levinson's model. The model with three variables of social distance, power difference and degree of imposition in the equation to determine the weightiness of FTA has been criticised as crude, static, and insufficient to account for politeness in linguistic behaviour (Werkhofer, 1992). Fraser (1990) questions the validity of the three variables in determining the weightiness of FTA and choice of politeness strategies. Holtgraves and Yang (1990) also comment on the unreliability of the social distance variable and suggest it to be based on relationship. In particular, Werkhofer (1992) criticises the model for failing to acknowledge other factors that may influence linguistic realisation of politeness in a chain of interactions such as reactions of the addressee, repair mechanism, etc.

It is evident that the linguistic concepts of face and politeness have been recognised as integral in linguistic behaviour and the principles have been conceptualised to operate on the threshold of social and cultural conventions in interactions and language use. As Brown and Levinson's model is a production

model that addresses face concerns, situational influences, and communication strategies (Tracy, 1990), it can be used as an explanatory device in the investigation of linguistic behaviour in relation to face and politeness concept. However, any application of their model needs to take account of the criticisms that have been made against it. In particular, the critiques on the insufficiency and unreliability of their FTA equation and the proposition of other possible variables in the chain of interactions that are made by Werkhofer, Fraser, and Holtgraves and Yang. Their comments seem to suggest that the face and politeness principles and the three variables in Brown and Levinson's model are not the only determinants of linguistic interactions.

This suggests that this investigation of linguistic behaviour should not only adopt the face and politeness concept and the three variables in Brown and Levinson's model in the analysis, but also include other principles such as Grice's cooperative principles, etc and address possible factors that may have influence on linguistic choices in specific sociocultural contexts. Moreover, critiques of the face notion in relation to conventions of different cultures or discourse communities should be considered when applying Brown and Levinson's model in the analysis.

### **2.3.3. Pragmatics and Business Communication**

Interest in researching language use in communication has grown to include investigation of business communication in different types of business interactions, such as negotiation, meeting, etc. in 1990s (Harris & Bargiela-Chiappini, 1997). One of the linguistic perspectives employed in studies of business communication is pragmatics. However, most of these pragmatic studies investigate verbal business interactions. Therefore, it is not surprising to find more investigations of verbal than written discourses in the literature. Moreover, the investigations are often in contact situations between business professionals of different sociolinguistic and cultural backgrounds (Marriott, 1997; Mulholland, 1997; Grindsted, 1997; Sheer & Chen, 2003). These investigations usually adopt a perspective that national culture is the main determinant of different communication behaviours as shown in the level of linguistic realisation and style (direct vs. indirect) of speech acts (Blum-Kulka et al,

1989), which are mostly in English. The interest with such perspective has recently developed into a branch of communication studies called 'intercultural business communication' and has adopted disciplines, theories, methodologies, and analytical approaches from sociolinguistics and other branches of communication studies (Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson, 2003).

As a large number of pragmatic studies that contain fundamental principles, theoretical discussions and findings are in interpersonal communication, this part of the literature review will consider only the body of knowledge dealing theoretically and analytically with pragmatics of intercultural business communication, particularly in relation to the focus of this project on electronic international trade communication. Face and politeness has had a great influence in the development of intercultural business communication studies. The theory has provided insight in the nature of language use in business communication and illuminated factors that have influence on the discourses of business interactions, so it will be discussed in this section of literature review. The studies to be covered in this discussion are chosen from a limited source of literature in intercultural business communication and primarily based on the theoretical perspective and analytical approaches relevant to this research project.

Brown and Levinson's politeness model has been widely used in the studies of intercultural business communication. Their notion of face and the components in FTA equation such as social distance, power difference, and imposition of speech acts have been collectively or selectively applied with other additional or emergent elements. It is noticeable that two constituents have evolved from the application of the theory: identity and relationship. The identity constituent derives from the concept of face (Charles, 1996), and the relationship constituent derives from a composite of politeness variables (Rogers & Lee-Wong, 2003; Bandyopadhyay, 2002; Charles, 1994, 1996; Grindsted, 1997). Some studies also relate the two constituents to other concepts such as collective values and communication norms of national culture or subculture (Sheer & Chen, 2003; Marriott, 1990, 1995, 1997; Enomoto, 1993; Enomoto & Marriott, 1994; Bilow, 1997; Grindsted, 1997; Mulholland, 1997), and goals (Neumann, 1997; Yamada, 1997; Ma et al, 2002).

Adopting Brown and Levinson's face and politeness model, Charles (1996) introduces the concept of 'professional face' (p. 24). The professional face is associated with the status and behaviours of buyer and seller business professionals and is used to capture their negotiation discourses. Charles explains that business professionals are likely to adopt professional face wants rather than personal or social face when they are engaged in business tasks and settings. This notion of face is in line with Goffman's definition that face is dynamic and negotiated between interactants **during a particular contact** as discussed earlier. The contact situation as bolded is the key element that determines the type of face interactants adopt in relation to the task and settings. This means that when individuals enter a realm of business setting and perform a negotiation task, they tend to adopt their professional face and engage themselves in the discourse of language use and interaction appropriate for their given roles. The concept of professional face and facework also reflects professional identity and self-presentation, a concept in the sociopsychological study of face (Tracy, 1990). It is also possible that negotiators view themselves as representatives of their business corporations, a professional identity which also includes face concerns of their company, when performing a negotiation task. However, Charles (1996) proposes two types of face: professional face and personal and social face, based on the stages of interaction. She relates the professional face to the face wants of business people at the beginning of their interaction and the personal and social face to the face concerns in the later stages when they have developed some acquaintance with each other through some communication and negotiation. Even with this dynamism in face, professional identity based on such a face concept is a significant constituent in the discourse strategies of business communication.

Relationship has been suggested as another important constituent in the linguistic realisation of speech acts and interaction in intercultural business communication. In their politeness model, Brown and Levinson propose five levels of politeness reflected in the five choices of strategy, which derive from a summation of social distance, power difference in relation to roles, and degree of imposition of speech acts. The summation reflects levels of relationship and the three variables have been used to explain linguistic behaviours in business communication. For example, Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003) find that power difference related to the roles of

subordinate and supervisor and the imposition of the task of criticism create tensions in the subordinates' linguistic choice in critiquing supervisors' work with an effort to maintain degree of politeness. Similarly, Bandyopadhyay (2002) reports that when an economic situation favours the supplier, asymmetry of power between the supplier and the trader influences the supplier's choice of direct influence strategies through the use of speech acts of requests, promises, threats, and legal pleas. When the market scenario provides symmetry of power between the two roles, the supplier opts for indirect influence strategies through the realisation of speech acts of information exchanges and recommendations. Relationships have been investigated in relation to politeness in terms of their relative newness (Charles, 1996), two versus three parties (chain) (Grindsted, 1997).

A number of studies in intercultural business communication have investigated norms and values of national cultures and business professional culture in association with the two constituents of identity and relationship. These norms and values of national and business cultures in relation to identity and relationship are found to affect business negotiation and communication. For example, Australian communication norms favor direct answer and compliance, while Japanese prefer indirect answer and compliance with details in the written communication channel (Marriott, 1990, 1995, 1997; Enomoto, 1993; Enomoto & Marriott, 1994). The indirect communication norms in business negotiation of the Japanese are also found among the Chinese (Bilow, 1997; Sheer, 2000), the Korean and the Vietnamese business people (Mulholland, 1997). Chinese cultural values of harmonious face and social relations have been found to influence business negotiation (Woo and Prud'homme, 1999; Sheer, 2000; Pye, 1992; Zhao, 2000). Danish cultural values of positive face (affiliation) are emphasized through being equal while Spanish cultural values of negative face (autonomy) are stressed through being different (Grindsted, 1997). In a recent study in international business negotiation, Sheer and Chen (2003) found that business professional values of loose relationship (instrumental relationship) influence negotiation in some situations.

National and professional cultures in relation to the two constituents of identity and relationship are also reflected in emphasis of goals. Two types of goals are ascribed to affect discourses of business negotiation and meeting: task-oriented



goals and relationship-oriented goals. For example, Yamada (1997), Ma, Wang, Jaeger, Anderson, Wang, and Saunders (2002), and Neumann (1997) found that while American, Canadian, and German professionals focus on task-oriented goals, Japanese, Chinese, and Norwegian tend to emphasise relationship-oriented goals in their discourses. As discussed earlier in the literature that face concerns and relationship are reflected in the summation of three variables in Brown and Levinson's politeness model, the emphasis on relational-oriented goals of the Japanese, the Chinese, and the Norwegian business people suggests the influence of their national cultural value. In contrast, the focus on task-related goals of the American, Canadian, and German business people suggests the influence of business professional culture. From the above examples of studies in intercultural business communication, national and professional cultures in relation to identity and relationship have been shown to influence business communication. Identity and relationship emerge as two constituents of Brown and Levinson's politeness model and these will be further discussed with the application of message production theory in the next section of literature review.

However, recent studies have suggested interplay of several factors on business communication. For example, Ulijin, Lincke, and Karakaya (2001) study negotiation strategies of three groups of negotiators with Anglo (U.S. & Canada), Nordic (the Netherlands, Sweden, & Finland), and Latin (France & Colombia) backgrounds. Two types of negotiation strategies (cooperation or win-win and competition or win-lose) are investigated through the use of the first, second, and third personal pronouns. Ulijin, Lincke, and Karakaya find no significant distinction in the usage of personal pronouns by the three groups and conclude that there is no influence of national culture. They suggest interplay of pragmatic principles in trade negotiation, email medium and professional culture over national culture in business negotiation.

As it is shown in this part of literature review, pragmatics perspective and theory has been widely used in the study of discursive practices of language use in intercultural business communication interactions. The theory has proved to hold explanatory strength in explicating the nature of human communication and identifying discourse conventions and communication rules. Through their speech

acts concept, Brown and Levinson's face and politeness model, Grice's Cooperative principles, language use is illustrated and explained in relation to contextual factors. Therefore, it seems possible and potentially fruitful to apply some of these pragmatics disciplinary approaches and findings from intercultural business communication in the study of electronic international trade email communication.

## **2.4. Message production**

As discussed in the previous sections dealing with genre studies and pragmatics adopting a social constructionist perspective, communicators in a discourse community have communicative purposes in common and achieve these purposes by conforming to similar communication conventions negotiated through processes of meaning making in interaction. Communicative purposes are one of the essential components of genre and a significant element in text and textual production as suggested in some research in genre and pragmatics studies focusing on communicators' goals, such as Swales' (1990) categorisation of genre or discourse community based on common communicative goals, Givon's (1984) proposition of speakers' goals as a major component in context, and task-oriented goals and relationship-oriented goals in Yamada's (1997), Ma et al's (2002) and Neumann's (1997) pragmatics studies of intercultural business communication. In order to enhance textual analysis of interaction via CMC and, particularly, to investigate the roles of goals and other related elements in the textual production processes, there is value in adopting an approach that has recently been explored in communication studies to investigate cognitive structures of goals in the textual production processes. This approach is broadly called message production theory.

This section of the literature review starts with general background to the theory and covers some of its key concepts such as the concept of goal, plans & planning, multiple goal achievement, and rational message design, etc. Factors having an influence on textual production processes as suggested by studies in compliance gaining are also presented. Hierarchies and taxonomies of goals in

different models are discussed and critiques of the methodology and attribution of factors are made towards the end of the section.

#### **2.4.1. General background**

Message production is an approach to conceptualising communication that adopts psychological perspectives drawing on social psychological and cognitive approaches to the study of compliance gaining strategies. The theory involves explicating intra-individual states and processes in relation to individual and contextual factors in the production of persuasive messages (Greene, 1997). Typologies of compliance gaining strategies and individual/situational variations are usually suggested within a broadly constructivist perspective (Wilson, 1997).

Message production theorists working with this framework adopt the functional terms of cognitive science to explain the psychological structure and process of the message output system of a noncorporeal “mind”, rather than adopting a neurophysiological perspective (Greene, 1997 p. 152). The theory aims to explicate the mechanisms by which message output is produced in human communication during ongoing interactions.

#### **2.4.2. Key Concepts**

##### ***2.4.2.1 Concept of goals***

Goals are defined as people’s cognitive representations of states of affairs that they desire to bring about or maintain (Wilson & Putnam, 1990 p. 376). Similar concepts are ‘intention,’ ‘motivation,’ ‘cognitive processes,’ etc. Goals are used to explain discourse behaviour based on the assumption that the mind causes action or that an individual’s observable behaviours can be explained by their mental processes (Bavelas, 1991). Based on the concept that communicators form goals in association with their understanding of compliance-gaining situations, the main goals are to gain compliance from interactant and are defined by Wilson (1997) as influence goals.

#### *2.4.2.2 Strategies vs. Tactics*

Within this approach an important distinction is made between ‘strategies’ and ‘tactics’. Strategies are defined as *cognitive* attempts to achieve goals (Waldron, Cegala, Sharky, and Teboul, 1990; Greene, Smith & Lindsey, 1990). Tactics are referred to *behaviour* attempts to achieve goals (Waldron et al, 1990) or abstract act types such as ‘ask,’ ‘bargain,’ or ‘threaten’, including acts commonly listed in taxonomies of compliance-gaining techniques (Greene et al, 1990).

#### *2.4.2.3 Plans & Planning*

Another concept is that of plans and the associated concept of planning, which provide insight about the processes underlying message production. Unlike strategies which are abstract descriptions of overt behaviour, plans are mental representations or knowledge structures of actions for achieving a goal or several goals (Berger & Kellermann, 1994; Greene, 1990; Wilson, 1997). Plans contain knowledge that is more general and less rigidly sequenced than scripts (Berger, 1995). Plans can vary in complexity, specificity (Wilson, 1997), and hierarchy (Berger, Knowlton, and Abrahams, 1996). Planning is the process of recalling, generating, selecting, adapting, and implementing plans into action (Berger, 1995; Dillard, 1990; Meyer, 1994). Planning can happen prior to the interaction and/or online during interaction (Wilson, 1997) or as an ongoing process of interactive conversational planning (Waldron, 1997).

#### *2.4.2.4 Multiple goal achievement*

Multiple goal achievement stems from the conceptualisation that communicators pursue additional goals to influence goals during seeking/resisting compliance. The additional goals are proposed to shape and constrain the way in which communicators seek/resist compliance (Wilson, 1997).

Greene and Lindsey (1989) and Greene, Lindsey, and Hawn (1990) test the premise of multiple goal achievement with action assembly theory and find that messages with multiple goals take longer to produce and involve greater ratios between phonation and pause than messages with a single goal. Action assembly theory posits that goals activate memory that contains past knowledge of action features in association with outcomes and systemic and environmental features. During planning, multiple goals increase the activation and time required in the process of assembling actions, which reflects the higher level of cognitive load and complexity and leads to a longer time being required to produce messages than single goal (Greene & Ravizza, 1995).

#### *2.4.2.5 Message design*

With the concept of multiple goal achievement, O'Keefe (1988, 1990, 1991) proposes communicators prioritise different types of goals and their priorities lead to different message features. O'Keefe calls the model of goal priorities 'message goal structure' and terms the premises that are used to achieve goals and represent these goal structures in messages 'message design logics' (O'Keefe & McCornack, 1987 p. 70; see O'Keefe & Lambert, 1995 for more details and discussion). O'Keefe posits that face saving attempts and message clarity concerns are considered subsidiary goals to the main influence goals. In her studies, she finds that communicators assign different priority to the two subsidiary goals of message clarity and face concern and the different priority leads to diverse types of messages.

Based on Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness model, O'Keefe and Shepherd (1987, 1989) identify three strategies that communicators use to manage the two subsidiary goals. The three strategies are selection, separation, and integration.

Due to their discovery of integration strategy, O'Keefe and Shepherd argue that the four strategies of face-threatening acts suggested by Brown and Levinson are insufficient and incomplete.

O'Keefe (1988, 1990, 1991) argues that communicators differ not only in how they assign priorities to subsidiary goals leading to message diversity, but also that they differ in their message design logic. O'Keefe contends that the message design logic determines how messages are linguistically realised and informatively structured. O'Keefe contends that this message generation process enables meanings, situations and communication rules to be negotiated and unfold instead of rigidly established. O'Keefe explains that individuals have different message design logics to achieve their priorities of goals, which leads to different message features.

#### **2.4.3. Factors**

Goals and strategies contribute to differences in tactics. However, message production theory also relates goals and strategies to individual and situational factors. Attributed individual factors include skill and chance orientation (Canary, Cody & Marston, 1987), task and relational orientation (Hample & Dallinger, 1988), efficiency and social orientation (Kellermann & Park, 2001), level of cognitive differentiation (Leichty & Applegate, 1991; O'Keefe & Shepherd, 1987, 1989; O'Keefe and McCornack, 1987; Waldron and Applegate, 1994), cognitive complexity (Hale, 1986), gender (de Truck, 1985; Smith, Cody, Lovette, and Canary, 1990), perception of the beneficiary of the compliance, views, personality (Boster & Stiff, 1984), and situational perception (Canary, Cody, and Marston, 1987). Situational and related variations have been found to influence goals and strategies. For example, role-related power, familiarity or social distance, and speech act magnitude or imposition of speech act (Tracy, Craig, Smith, and Spisak, 1984; Cody, Woelfel, and Jordon, 1983; Leichty & Applegate, 1991; Wilson & Kang, 1991), urgency, privacy, formality (Kellerman & Park, 2001), task (Canary, Cody & Marston, 1987), and relationship (de Turck, 1985; Kellerman & Park, 2001).

#### **2.4.4. Models of goals**

Several goal models have been suggested and there are some differences and similarities in these models in the hierarchy and taxonomies of goals. The following are discussion of hierarchies and taxonomies of selected goal models that have often been mentioned and consistently studied and refined by studies in message production.

##### ***2.4.4.1. Hierarchies of goals***

While there may be several goal models that address different hierarchies based on different principles in the area of cognitive psychology and other disciplines, there are a few models that propose two to three hierarchies in the literature of message production up to date. The choice of goal models with two hierarchies to be discussed in this section is based on their relevance to the realisation of email texts of this study.

##### ***Goal models with two hierarchies***

##### **Consummate and Contributory Goal Model**

Whilst Wilson & Putnam (1990) propose a three-hierarchy goal model based on the principle of size or length of interaction segments and containing global, regional and local goals, Benoit (1990) argues that there are ambiguities and problematic distinctions in Wilson & Putnam's model and that the principle of size is not an efficient basis of distinction as new goals emerging from an interactive negotiation can be global, regional or local for a new interaction while serving as global, regional or local for the ongoing overall interaction. Benoit argues that variation of length of interaction cannot be used to distinguish goal abstraction as a global goal can be achieved within a shorter period in one brief interaction than a local goal in a strenuous interaction. Benoit also contends that most of the examples given by Wilson and Putnam fail to make reference to time as proof for their distinction criterion.

Benoit posits that structure is the key mechanism through which behaviours are produced and interpreted as relevant. It is also through structure that goals are organised in an interrelated way. Therefore, in order to understand the relationship among goals and to suggest a typology of goals, it is necessary to study the structure of goals. Benoit proposes a goal model based on structure of goals comprised of two types: consummate and contributory goals. Consummate goals are the ultimate objectives or the final state of affairs perceived and desired by an interactant regardless of actual success or failure of goal achievement. Contributory goals are objectives perceived by an interactant as instrumental facilitating the accomplishment of consummate goals and can be structured parallel, hierarchical, or unrelated to each other.

### **Primary and Secondary Goal Model**

Dillard (1990; Dillard, Segrin, and Harden, 1989) proposes a goal model based on forces of goals. Goals are assumed to exert forces. In interaction, some goals motivate message source to act towards achievement but some goals draw message source back. Goals that exert 'approaching' or 'pushing' force for interaction such as influence goals in seeking compliance are classified as primary goals. Goals that cross-situationally exert 'inhibiting' or 'pulling' force, shaping and constraining how message source seeks compliance are secondary goals. Dillard's model is somewhat similar to Benoit's contributory and consummate goal model in that both models seem to suggest two procedural stages of interaction as the achievement of procedural or secondary goals lead to the fulfilment of the consummate or primary goals. It is possible that the accomplishment of secondary goals both constrains and accommodates the fulfilment of the primary goals.

#### ***2.4.4.2. Taxonomies of goals***

While several taxonomies of goals based on different principles as criteria have been suggested, the following taxonomies of goals will be discussed based on



goal models that have been consistently studied and refined in the message production literature. Refer to Table 2.3.

### *Taxonomies of goals in the higher hierarchy*

Goals in the higher level are defined by specific situations and reflect the main tasks or activities in the compliance gaining situations. These goals determine the course of interaction and tactics as Dillard, Segrin, and Harden describe that it 'brackets the situation. It helps segment the flow of behavior into a meaningful unit; it says what the interaction is about' (1989, p. 21). A few terms have been used to refer to these goals in the higher level, such as instrumental goals (Wilson & Putnam, 1990), interaction goals (O'Keefe, 1988), and influence goals (Kellermann, 1992; Dillard, 1990) as shown in the table.

### *Taxonomies of goals in the lower hierarchy*

There seem to be four general goals in the lower hierarchy suggested in O'Keefe's (1988) model, Kellermann's (1992) and Kim's (1994) Meta goals, Dillard's (1990) secondary goals, Wilson and Putnam's (1990) Cognitive rules model, and Kim's (1994) list of conversation constraints as shown in the table. The first and second goals are identity goal and relational goal. The five models base the two goals on the same principles of face and politeness in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model. The first type of goal is the intention to address the linguistic concept of face and to manage the perception of social identities of both interactants according to one's knowledge of social values, norms, politeness and one's preference or decision in the task and its situation. According to the principles of face and politeness in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, in any interaction people acknowledge each other's positive and negative face wants and evaluate the role-related power, social distance, and imposition of the linguistic acts. Such evaluation constitutes a concern or an intention that affects the linguistic realisation of messages. It therefore forms a goal, which Wilson and Putnam (1990) call 'Identity goal' while O'Keefe (1988) identifies it as 'Face concerns', and Kellermann (1992) generally call it 'Social appropriateness'. The goal seems to cover Dillard's (1990) 'Identity goal,'

**Table 2.3 Summary of taxonomies of goals from selected literature in message production theory**

Taxonomies Hierarchy/ Types of Goals	O' Keefe (1988)	Wilson & Putnam (1990)	Dillard (1990)	Kellermann (1992) Kim (1994)
	- Interaction goals	- Instrumental goals	- Influence goals	- Influence goals
Macro Hierarchy	- Face saving attempt	- Identity goal	- Identity goal - Interaction goal - Arousal Management goal	- Social appropriateness - Concern for avoiding negative evaluation by the hearer - Concern for avoiding hurting the hearer's feelings - Concern for minimising imposition
Micro Hierarchy/ Identity				
Relation		- Relational goal	- Relational Resource goal	
Efficiency			- Personal Resource goal	- Efficiency
Effectiveness	- Message clarity			- Concern for clarity - Concern for effectiveness

and 'Interaction goal', and 'Arousal goal'. Dillard defines the interaction goal as attempts in attending to managing social identities of one's own and others, social appropriateness, and politeness, and the arousal goal as attempts in attending to maintaining one's mental states and interests in engaging in the interaction. Although Dillard's definition of the arousal goal may sound ambiguous, his examples of the goal seem to suggest an effect in relation to face concerns. It is therefore possible to categorise his three goals under the same identity goal. In Kim's (1994) list of conversational constraints, concern for avoiding negative evaluation by the hearer suggests the message producer's concern of their own face needs while the concern for the hearer's feelings and the concern for minimising imposition in Kim's model suggest the message producer's concern of the target's face needs. The concern for minimising imposition also suggests an evaluation of imposition of linguistic acts according to Brown and Levinson's politeness model.

The evaluation of face and politeness in the linguistic realisation of messages may also lead to an establishment of relationship between interactants and in return the relationship may influence the evaluation of the two elements in the subsequent interactions after the establishment of relationship. Therefore, it is possible that attending to the identity goal also contributes to the establishment or maintenance of relationship. In other words, the relational goal can be linguistically achieved in a way by one's evaluation of the two principles as expressed through the language use in the messages. This is supported by Wilson and Putnam's proposition of their relational goal to be based on the evaluation of power and trust elements, which are similar to the role-related power and social distance in Brown and Levinson's politeness principle. Dillard defines 'Relational resource goal' to attempts in attending to keeping valued relationships. Only Wilson and Putnam and Dillard acknowledge this concept and highlight it through their proposition of the relational goal.

The third type of goal attains to the efficiency in reserving resources such as time, energy, material, mental and physical resources as suggested in Berger and Kellermann's 'Efficiency goal' and Dillard's 'Personal Resource goal'. The

proposition of this goal suggests that in any compliance gaining situation negotiators tend to invest a certain level of resources in seeking compliance. The effort is reflected in the linguistic realisation of messages and may be related to other factors in the compliance gaining situations such as types of compliance gaining tasks/activities, level of relationship, medium, etc.

The fourth type of goal attains to the effectiveness of messages. O'Keefe's proposition of the message clarity concern suggests that the concern is part of effectiveness as message clarity is an indication of level of communicativeness of the messages to convince the addressee to comply with the persuaders' requests. This is supported by O'Keefe and McCornack's (1987) study, which finds that individuals' design logic is associated with level of perceived effectiveness. They find that increase in individuals' message design logic to address the face and message clarity concerns results in perceived effectiveness in one's competence, attraction, goal-relevance, motivation, face support, and prediction of success in satisfying the target, the group and obtaining target's compliance. This suggests that message clarity concern is associated to effectiveness and they can be categorised under one goal of effectiveness. Although Kim categorises the clarity and effectiveness concerns separately in her model, the two concerns also suggest a similar intention of effectiveness and the two concerns can be classified under the same effectiveness goal.

Although it is possible to summarise goal hierarchy and organise taxonomies from these models, there are some further arguments on the concepts of these goals. Whilst face and politeness concerns are important elements in the linguistic realisation of messages by which the evaluation of the two elements affect and are affected by relationship, consecutive interactions with several activities that involve the two interactants in communication over time through which the two elements are constantly maintained are possibly another factor that contributes to the relationship. Therefore, investigation in compliance gaining message production should include a series of sequential interactions to test the development of relationship in relation to the identity and relational goals.

It is still arguable whether the two intentions of effectiveness and efficiency should be combined or separated. There seem to be more efforts to separate the two intentions than to combine them as suggested in some of the models and O'Keefe and McCornack's (1987) study. Kellermann and Shea (1996) also contend that the two intentions should be separated as effectiveness is a consideration of an outcome but efficiency is a consideration of the investment of resources to achieve an outcome. These all substantiate that message producers have an objective for their message to be both effective and efficient. However, in planning the two intentions are more likely to be considered together and merge into one intention as clearly stated in definition of efficiency that it is a judgement of an effort and a result. The judgement seems to include an amount of resources to be invested in producing a message with a level of effectiveness. Therefore, an intention for a message to be efficient also includes some message effectiveness.

#### **2.4.5. Critiques**

Whilst the approach to conceptualising and understanding communication with the goal perspective of message production theory provides a valuable insight in the investigation of discourse of language use, there are some deficiencies and limitations in the methodology and attribution of factors.

Most of the methodology used in the studies of compliance gaining message production involves selection or scale-rating of choices of messages that are designed to reflect different possible strategies and test influences of specific individual and situational factors in the form of questionnaires. (examples: Baxter, 1984; Canary & Spitzberg, 1987; Bingham & Burleson, 1989; Smith, Cody, Lovette & Canary, 1990; Dillard, Palmer & Kinney, 1995; Kellerman & Park, 2001). The attribution of factors is mostly correlated between tested factors and provided choices of strategies and messages in the questionnaires. Such methodology lacks realism and varieties of messages due to the limitation of choices given in the questionnaires (Boster & Stiff, 1984). Investigation of messages produced in naturally occurring interactions and qualitative linguistic analysis of messages are still lacking in most of the studies in compliance gaining message production as Sanders and Fitch (2001) indicate in their

discussion of theoretical frameworks in compliance gaining research. There is also a lack in the attribution process of inferring factors from the messages.

One of the factors that has not been acknowledged much in the studies of compliance gaining message production is culture. Culture as an operational element of nationality and ethnicity has recently been attributed as a possible factor in some persuasion studies. Burleson and Mortenson (2003) find that cultural values and goals may interact to influence individuals' preferential choices of behaviours. Although Saeki and O'Keefe (1994) do not find an influence of nationality culture on message design logic, they report substantial differences in the messages between the American and Japanese participants in their study and their study could have been taken further to test the cultural factor. Despite some of these studies, there is still a lack in the focus on specific cultural factor as Fitch (2003) comments that most research in persuasion investigates compliance gaining strategies across general cultures rather than specific aspects of cultures, such as persuasion and persuasive methods that are acceptable in different cultures.

Amid the debate on the concept of culture, there is a failure to apply the concept of professional speech community and its cultural influence on goals in message production. Moreover, experiments that are designed to test certain factors may fail to include other possible factors such as task and its scenarios, medium, etc. Such methodology also fails to acknowledge as a possible influence of the interaction of multiple factors on goals in message production.

Despite these critiques, there are aspects of this research in message production that seem to be robust in communication studies and can be usefully applied in the study of electronic international trade communication. For example, the conception of influence of goals in the lower hierarchy on those in the higher level, such as Dillard's (1990) projection of secondary goals as exerting constraint on the achievement of primary goals. O'Keefe's (1988) proposition of goal priorities leading to different message features proves to be very useful as it suggests the influence of communicators' emphasis on different goal types as another factor. Although Wilson and Putnam (1990) postulate global goals affecting regional and local goals in contrast to Dillard's model due to their different principle, Wilson and

Putnam's supposition that relational and identity goals that are classified secondary goals in Dillard's model can be realised as global goals suggests possible influence of the two goals on the instrumental goals or primary goals. Their supposition also suggests communicators' goal priorities. Recent studies have found that compliance-seeking acts which are perceived as face-threatening are associated with compliance gaining situations (Wilson, Aleman, and Leatham, 1998; Kellermann, 2004). Such findings support the relations between identity goals and influence goals.

The taxonomy of goals that are summarised here and the concept of multiple goals can be adopted to build a goal model that addresses these elements and some methodological and other issues that are mentioned in this literature. Such a goal model can then be used to assist textual analysis and incorporated in the interpretation of the study of genre of international trade email communication in English. Application of this goal model will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

## 2.5 Synthesis of literature

Despite studies of the asynchronous email communication, including its advantages (Danet, 2001; Dimmick, Kline, and Stafford, 2000; Neufeld, Dyck & Brotheridge, 2001) and disadvantages (Thompson & Nadler, 2002) in comparison to other media and of email discourse and text (Yates & Orlikowski, 1993; Gimenez, 2000; Gruber, 2001), there are still relatively few studies of email business communication, particularly those dealing with international trade adopting a perspective to define communication conventions, practices, and related elements. Although Hiranburana (1996) studies the genre of international trade communication, her data is mainly letters, telexes and faxes, and to date there has not been an investigation of this genre when using an electronic medium.

Time and space constraints in the electronic systems have been identified as influencing email discourse and text (Crystal, 2001; Hale & Scanlon, 1999; Baym, 1996). Other factors include national culture, business culture, sociolinguistic backgrounds of interactants (Chang and Hsu, 1998), their roles (Panteli, 2002), gender

(Colley and Todd, 2002), relationship (Bertacco and Deponte, 2005; Yates & Orlikowski, 1993), task (Yates & Orlikowski, 1993). Only a few studies have focussed on the continuing evolution of email medium to incorporate other media such as audio, visual and web linkage (Devis and Brewer, 1997) and suggested an interaction of several factors such as task, email medium, national culture, English proficiency, etc (Biesenbach-Lucas and Waesenforth 1997; Ulijn, Lincke, and Karakaya, 2001; Yates & Orlikowski, 1993) as contributing to email discourse and text. However, all the studies to date adopt approaches that are designed to test only a certain set of predetermined factors. None of these studies consider a range of possible contextual factors that may evolve from a series of communicative events. These studies, similarly, do not illustrate how factors may interact to exert influence on the communication.

With these points in mind, I argue that it is important to study the existence of a genre of email communication in international trade. The genre perspective adopted in this study focuses on writing conventions in textual units of moves and acts in association with the social and cultural practices. To identify these possible conventions in international trade email communication, the Social Constructionist perspective and Swales' textual analysis of moves and acts will be applied in the study. The perspective and analytical approach can also be employed to discuss the dynamic characteristic of this business email communication. The Systemic Functional linguistics perspective, particularly Leckie-Tarry's conceptual model of contexts, which explains relationship between context and text, can be usefully applied to analyse the context of these communication practices and to illustrate the influences of social and cultural practices and some possibly emerging contextual factors affecting business email textual production. Some pragmatics concepts, such as Goffman's face notion, Brown and Levinson's politeness model, and Grice's Communication Cooperative principles can be integrated with Leckie-Tarry's model in explicating details of contextual impacts on business email discourse. To supplement these approaches to textual analysis, the cognitive goal model derived from the literature in message production theory can also be used to examine participants' introspections to substantiate the identification of communication conventions, meaning making processes, thereby assisting in examining the dynamic nature of this communication. Details and justifications for the application of these



perspectives and approaches will be further discussed in the next chapter of methodology.

Based on the literature and theoretical and analytical focus of the study, a model for international trade business email communication has been developed as a framework for the study. The model contains three main parts: email text, goals, and contextual factors, and demonstrates their relationship (Refer to Figure 2.3). The model posits that contextual factors influence the realisation of email text through communication goals in the textual production processes. Six significant contextual factors are proposed to affect and regulate the formation of five types of goals that are achieved through the realisation of linguistic discourses of moves and acts in the email texts. It is proposed that communicators operate with main business goals and a choice of some of the other four goals, any of which may be emphasised during a course of email interaction. The main business goals engender the most important messages of the email that lead to the desired ultimate stages of the interaction. The main business goals are higher in the hierarchy of all the five types of goals, propelling and regulating the other four goals on the lower hierarchy. The subsidiary business goals pertain to linguistic actions that are required and therefore reflecting business practices in international trade. The identity goals, the relational goals, and the efficiency goals have been discussed earlier in the literature review of message production theory. These subsidiary business goals, identity goals, relational goals, and efficiency goals are posited to shape linguistic actions to support the overall achievement of the main business goals.

# Chapter 3

## Methodology

The research paradigm that is adopted will determine the insights that are obtained in the study of human communication. With the recent introduction of the computer and Internet technology, our understanding of human communication has been shaped not only by the paradigm we adopt in studying the computer-mediated communication and interaction via a variety of the media, but also by the use of the media to conduct our research. In this chapter I will briefly discuss key aspects of the paradigms that have shaped the design of this project, before then describing in some detail the methods that have been developed for the collection and analysis of data.

Baxter & Babbie (2004 p. 426) define paradigm as ‘a model or framework for observation and understanding that shapes both what we see and how we understand it’. One of the current paradigms that has been used in communication studies is the interpretive one, which is underpinned by the belief that humans act with some purpose and such action is ‘meaning making activity’ (Baxter & Babbie, 2004 p. 59). A similar emphasis is evident in sociolinguistic research influenced by the traditions of systemic functional linguistics. This holds as a fundamental premise ‘the complete interconnectedness of the linguistic and the social’ and places emphasis on the importance of focussing on ‘meaning and on the ways in which people exercise choices in order to make meaning’ in whole texts (Christie and Unsworth, 2000 p.2-3).

In this exploratory and explanatory research in international trade email communication, I draw on the interpretive tradition in researching email communication discourse of the particular business, international trade, employing a data collection methodology via email. The interpretive paradigm is also related to constructionism, which posits that reality is constructed through relationships of meanings (Gergen, 1999), or through our experiences and interpretations (Sarantakos, 2005).

Whilst working within an interpretive, constructionist framework I have also drawn on some basic principles derived from what has become known as the post-positivist paradigm (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002, p.9). These include principles such as an adherence to systematic observation of complex phenomena geared to uncovering patterns in behaviour, inclusion of some elements of factor control, the use of multiple methods and triangulation of findings, valuing of qualitative methods for their contribution to analysis and striving for logical explanation based on the evidence from observations and analysis.

The adoption of both interpretive and post-positivist perspectives will enable the study to uncover what we know about the communication behaviour of international trade business professionals when they interact via email. The quest for this knowledge is determined by my interpretation of how this site of communication practice is constructed and how these practices lead to the generation of email texts. In considering the construction process of these communication practices, the study also investigates conditions and factors that are involved in the process.

The choice of methodology for my study is, therefore, an empirical one following inquisitive procedures of forming general and specific research aims, identifying types of data to be gathered, collection techniques, and analytical approaches. Simple quantification is used to complement my qualitative interpretation, categorisation and analysis. The integration of both qualitative and quantitative approaches is intended to elucidate my investigation with the intention that one does not blemish or lessen the strength of another, but rather complement each other to make stronger interpretation and argument. My choice of explanatory perspective and approach is an interdisciplinary or convergent one drawing on genre theory, pragmatics, and message production within a microsociolinguistic canopy. Dervin, Grossberg, O' Keefe, and Wartella (1989 p. 16) comment that interdisciplinary perspectives and approaches have become appreciated and have brought heterogeneity into the field of communication research.

Taylor (2001) argues that the researcher has some relevance to the course of discourse analytical research and at the outset of this chapter I acknowledge that my intimate interest, worldview and experience have some impact on the research

undertaken in this project. My fundamental secondary education and training in science has influenced my quest for knowledge and my commitment to systematic enquiry. My Buddhist philosophy has given me a logical and explanatory approach to thinking. My undergraduate study in English instigated my interest in the English language. Experience with intercultural communication as a cultural exchange student in Australia for one year when I was 18 attracted me into this field and, subsequently, led to my interest and training in the interpretive paradigm. My 5 years of professional experience in international trade and import/export business email, fax, and telex correspondence and negotiation led to my fascination with electronic business communication and equipped me with some knowledge for designing the contexts for this investigation. This professional experience has also enabled me through my business network to recruit professionals to participate in this project, and it has also enabled me to engage in the analysis and interpretation of the data from the point of view of a member of this professional discourse community. Last in this conceivable list, but with great importance, is both of my supervisors' guidance in sociolinguistics that has shaped my focus on the relation between language use and context. These influences are evident in the following details of this methodology chapter.

## **3.1 Research Aims**

### **3.1.1 General aims**

- To investigate communication behaviour via email in English of professionals in international trade in the Asia Pacific in order to determine whether it can be claimed that their texts constitute a genre

### **3.1.2 Specific aims**

- a. To document the commonalities and differences in communication of the international trade professionals as evident in their email textual structures and introspection reports.

- b. To identify and define elements that may be considered to constitute a genre of electronic international trade communication based on the commonality in the textual structure.
- c. To identify factors that influence the common and different email texts.
- d. To explore how factors interact to exert influence on the production of email texts.

## 3.2 Research Methodology

### 3.2.1 Towards Developing a Methodology for Data Collection

To achieve the research aims as outlined in 3.1, this research project adopts and modifies some methodologies that have been used and suggested by other studies to provide sufficient and reliable data. Two types of data need to be collected for analysis in order to achieve the aims of the study: email texts generated by business professionals engaged in international trade email communication and material that provides an insight into the email textual planning and production processes.

#### *Introspections*

Gaining an insight into email textual planning and production processes was considered to be important for substantiating the interpretation of the texts themselves and in explicating the contextual analysis of their production. Such material was judged to be best collected via introspective data collection techniques. Such techniques can be considered to constitute representations of participants' plans in producing email texts, and include their plans in the process of planning for, undertaking the generation of email texts and/or immediately following their email interactions. Henceforth, these approaches will be referred to as prospective, simultaneous, and retrospective means of collecting introspections, depending on

when the introspective material is collected in relation to the actual time of the textual production taking place.

Simultaneous introspective data may be collected through 'think-aloud' protocols which enable 'real-time' collection of participants' thought processes through encouraging them to verbalise their thoughts which are recorded at the time that participants are engaged in a task (Kasper, 2000). In their verbal reports participants are asked to report on the information they use to form particular strategies, their planning processes, their considerations of alternatives, their reference to communication rules and linguistic knowledge of the language used in handling a task, and their difficulties in producing particular strategies concurrently or immediately from their short-term memory. These introspections can then be used to trace how various factors influence participants' textual production.

Another means of collecting introspections is through retrospective data collection processes, such as face-to-face interviews. Such interviews involve a series of questions asking participants to reflect on their past activities in dealing with a task (Kasper, 2000), and may include detailed reviewing of the texts (oral or written) produced (see for example, the work of interactional sociolinguists, such as Gumperz and his collaborators eg. Gumperz, 1982). It enables not only further retrieval of additional in-depth information participants use, but also informative details of their reasons in planning and making decision about particular textual production strategies and processes and in interpreting the response of the partners they are interacting with. It is also possible to adapt the interview technique to use as a complementary method to think-aloud protocols to collect introspective data about participants' plans prior to their email composition. Interviews can thus be used to collect both prospective and retrospective introspections, whereas think aloud techniques collect simultaneous introspections.

The combination of these methods for collecting introspective data can enable a thorough understanding, in-depth investigation and accurate analysis of the textual production of electronic international trading and import & export business communication. Writing plans (ie prospective) and/or simultaneous or retrospective introspective data has been included in communication and sociolinguistics studies to

explicate elements that may influence communication and linguistic production, such as in genre studies (Forman & Rymer, 1999) and message production (O' Keefe, 1992).

In this study, all data collected under guidance to provide insight into participants' processes of message and textual planning and production will be referred to as introspections, regardless of the method used to collect the data. 'Think aloud' data, and data collected through interviews and written reflective reports (both prospective and retrospective) have been collected from participants, depending on factors such as the participants' choice and convenience.

### *Email Texts*

My preliminary discussion concerning the research topic undertaken in Thailand in April, 2001 prior to the initiation of the study demonstrated to me that it would be problematic to collect samples of email exchanges in the real international trading business communication setting due to issues of confidentiality of business transactions and of the need to obtain consent from all participants. The international trading business environment is a highly competitive one and seeking consent from all parties is considered too potentially harmful for business relations. I agree with Yates (2001) that not only the ethical issue is a concern, but the large size of the actual digital text corpus might also be too difficult to manage when researching electronic interactions.

Analysis of some collected samples of email exchanges in the real setting undertaken in this preliminary assessment of data collection options also suggested that a research methodology that could control factors, such as the parameters of the task, background characteristics of interactants and role expectations would enhance the potential for precise and valuable analysis and interpretation of data. It was fundamental to the aims of the study to ensure that the tasks encompassed in the email corpus cover the most common activities in international trade that require international trade professionals to engage in email interactions. Another factor concerns the email writer's background characteristics, such as their experience in

using email for international trade communication, socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds, English competence, etc. One of the important elements is the development of an 'online' relationship between professionals through their longitudinal interaction, which necessitates the study to collect a series of email exchanges over a period. The role of each professional within the international trade relationship is another factor that may influence the use of language in the email interaction. These are some of the important factors that needed to be considered and examined for their impact within the study, but to achieve this through naturalistic data collection with the level of control that would be desirable was considered impossible. Accordingly, for all these reasons, a decision was made that the study be based on the use of a set of simulations of international trade negotiation and communication.

The initial collection methodology in the first pilot study involved forming a group for participants through recruitment of volunteers via email. The group was considered to constitute a discourse community of international trade professionals, and the researcher facilitated them interacting with each other with scenarios to guide their interactions. The email text data was collected via my email correspondence with participants, while 'think aloud' introspections were recorded on tape to be sent to the researcher via post. However, this approach proved to be impractical. It was difficult to recruit participants virtually who had a sufficient level of commitment for them to continue to participate over the sustained period (several weeks), and most dropped out part way. In addition, the simulation designed for the group interaction proved to be excessively complicated to manage.

Data collection through a more tightly controlled approach adopting discourse completion of set tasks via email was then introduced into the study. The discourse completion test or task (DCT) has been widely used in the study of pragmatics and applied linguistics to investigate behaviour in cross-linguistic and cross-cultural contexts (see Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989 for principles; Rose, 1994 and Sasaki, 1998 for critiques of the DCT). Traditionally, the format of the DCT is open questionnaires, in which scenarios are provided without turns. The DCT has been developed to suit many different kinds of research, and also with different formats for the tasks, including multiple choice questionnaires, video elicitation tasks, and



picture-prompted tasks. For this study the DCT methodology was modified to contain interactive features (discussed further in the following section) and, hence, enabled the collection of sets of email text data and introspective data.

Collecting data via the Internet is a relatively recent phenomenon and issues, such as sensitivity of research topic and questions to be used, and participants' confidentiality need careful consideration (Crowell & Anderson, 2005; Yates, 2001). For this research each simulation was sent within the DCT to participants to interact with and to be forwarded back to the researcher with their written email text and self-report in the email correspondence. Participants were required to finish one simulation within one week, before the second simulation was sent to them. Participants were given a choice either to record their think-aloud introspections on a tape that was provided or to write their introspections and send them back by email. Some participants were fluent in verbalising their plans and choose to report them on tape, while others seemed more comfortable in recording their introspections in written email texts.

Towards the end of the data collection, it was found that the longitudinal data collection method (normally over 6 weeks) involved a commitment over too extended a period of time for some participants. Therefore, a modified version of this method was introduced in which participants interact using the same simulation, but undertaken in my presence and within the one extended data collection session, and with a face-to-face interview to collect introspections immediately after the completion of each simulation task.

Even with this experimentation and development of the data collection methodology, due to the competitive nature of the international trade business and difficulty in recruiting participants with the required experience and willingness to commit to the study, the development of the data collection methodology and the data collection itself took almost 3 years from mid 2001 to early 2004.

By collecting the two types of data through the methodologies described here, sufficient data was obtained for qualitative analysis of both the email texts and the introspections about the planning and production processes to fulfil the general and

specific research aims outlined in 2.1. Further detail about the simulation tasks, the participants in the research and the data analysis are provided below.

### 3.2.2 Development of the Simulation

Fundamental to the concept of simulation is an assumption of the appearance or existence of something real (Dawson, 1962) or a dynamic representation of reality (Guetzkow, 1962; Crookall & Saunders, 1989; Ellington, Gordon, and Fowlie, 1998). In a technical sense, simulation refers to "the construction and manipulation of an operating model, that model being a physical or symbolic representation of all or some aspects of a social or psychological process" (Dawson, 1962 p. 3).

There are three fundamental components that need to be considered: the simulandum, the simulans, and correspondence (Breznitz & Lieblich, 1972 p. 72). The simulandum is the phenomenon in reality that the researcher is interested in investigating, but confronting difficulty in its cost, complexity, access and practical possibility, or moral objection. The researcher may choose to study some of the phenomenon's elements, or parts of its structure and simulate these into a simulation. The simulandum, hence, becomes the object of simulation. The simulans, on the other hand, is a system that is constructed to simulate the simulandum. It can be a replication, an abstraction, or a sample from the whole phenomenon in reality. Correspondence is the relationship between the simulandum and the simulans and is the shared common elements between the two systems. Inbar and Stoll (1972) discuss the value of simulation as a research tool that can enable the study of an environment that is simplified and has its scale reduced and its time compressed. Regardless of such manipulations the simulation should have reliability and validity.

Simulation has a major advantage in that it enables recursive and controlled investigation and manipulation of social or individual interactions. Simulation also enables the collection of data on outputs, behaviours, structures, and processes in social science research (Inbar & Stoll, 1972 p. 256). Simulation has been used in communication research, particularly in studies of business negotiation where collection of real negotiation practices is impractical due to the high confidentiality of

business, such as in cross-cultural business negotiation (Graham, Mintu & Rodgers, 1994; Grindsted, 1997; Ulijn, Lincke & Karakaya, 2001).

Two aspects of the use of simulation have been discussed extensively. The first concerns the reliability and validity of simulation. De Geus (1994) points out that both practically and theoretically no simulation or model can be a precise representation of reality due to the fact that a simulation is constructed from the observation of reality of its designer whose view is influenced by his/her position. Inbar and Stoll (1972) similarly argue that a simulation may also resemble pictures of some parts of the real phenomenon as seen by its developer or the researcher. Yet simulation is a reality in its own right as it is an operating reality that becomes real by participant's interaction to and experience with it (Thomas, 1951, Lee, 1987, and Keats, 1819 all quoted in Crookall & Saunders, 1989). Therefore, the validity and reliability of a simulation, based on the relevance of the experimental setting to the requirements of the actual situation, is an important element for consideration (Ulijn, Lincke & Karakaya, 2001). The second aspect is the behaviour of participants to be drawn from the simulation and used as data for research analysis. Grindsted (1997) contends that although participants act according to their given roles in the simulation, their engagement in the simulation guides their behaviour in planning and interacting with the task in close relation to their behaviours in the actual situation.

Simulation was identified as a potential tool for this study as it allows participants to construct and interact with reality under the conditions of simulation. Based on the above discussion, it is clear that the validity and reliability of a simulation needs to be maximised to meet its practical purpose, and that its degree of correspondence to the designer's understanding of the reality, and its level of involvement of participants in the interaction and experience is very important. Its reliability depends significantly on the designer's and the participants' evaluation of the simulation in relation to their experiences of the reality. Given my background in international trade and my experience of the success of simulation for the study of email communication, in the context of informal interactions between a group of Thais and a group of Australians (Swangboonsatic, 2000), I decided that the use of simulation could be appropriate to elicit data for this research purpose, provided the

simulations were carefully constructed in relation to the real world operating environment.

Six simulations were designed to create communicative contexts and events to reflect international trade business email communication in the Asia-Pacific region, involving professionals who are part of the international trade chain working as trading agents, manufacturers, and shipping companies. To represent the real nature of this electronic international trade communication and to test some contextual factors that may have an influence on this communication, the communication process in the simulation is designed to be an evolving one, engaging participants on a one to one basis in writing emails in a series as part of an ongoing process of interaction and negotiation. Throughout the simulation participants are involved in writing emails to a 'dummy' trade counterpart, as this then enables me to control the characteristics of the interactant each is responding to, maximising my control of aspects of the context.

Participants in the simulation were assigned to one of four groups, dependent on their sociocultural background. Participants in each group then participated in the simulated communicative events that were designed to simulate their role and activities in Asia-Pacific trading. The four groups who were designed to participate in the simulation were:

Group 1: Australian traders trading with a 'dummy' Thai counterpart

Group 2: Non-Thai Asian traders trading with a 'dummy' Thai counterpart

Group 3: Thai traders trading with a 'dummy' Australian counterpart

Group 4: Thai traders trading with a 'dummy' Thai counterpart

This design of groups enabled direct comparison of some groups by holding an aspect of the interaction constant. So the Australian and Non-Thai Asian traders are involved in interacting with the same 'dummy' Thai counterpart, and the two groups of Thai traders are involved in trading with either an Australian or Thai 'dummy' counterpart, whilst simulating for each group a range of trading scenarios based on real life situations. Details of the participants assigned to each group are provided in Section 3.2.3.

The inclusion in the study of four different groups enables the investigation and comparison of communicative and linguistic behaviour among international

trading business people with different sociocultural backgrounds: from Australia and using English as a native language, and those from Thailand and other Asian countries, who are all using English as a non-native (either foreign or second language) business lingua franca. Other important parameters were the counterpart (same or different background) being interacted with and the relationship between the interactants, which is considered to evolve over the simulations as the involvement of each trader in trading develops and leads to successful outcomes in engaging in trade with their counterpart. So my intention in the simulation is to have scope to explore these variables and their influence on the communication conventions and nature of international trade business email communication.

The six simulation events are designed to contain maximal relevance and closeness to the actual practices in international trade in order to reflect the nature of the business and have been designed based on my work experience in the international trade for 5 years, and preliminary naturalistic data collection. This leads the simulations to comprise several trade transactions with only certain tasks that are performed by participants across all four groups being selected for detailed analysis in this study. The overall simulation is designed as a series of six consecutive communicative events engaging participants in the roles of a buyer and a seller of products writing emails to their 'dummy' counterpart whose identity and emails are created in the simulation for participants to interact with to accomplish six trade transactions. The inclusion of a sequence of six consecutive communicative events, each with a main task to be achieved, is designed to enable observation of how the email interactions change as the relationship between interactants evolves. The two roles of buyer and seller are not only integrated into the subtle features of the simulations to test their possible influence on participants' email discourse, but are also designed to represent actual practices associated with the two roles of the trader in this type of business.

Similar trade transactions are given to participants in three of the four included participant groups: the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians, and the Thais interacting with an Australian 'dummy' counterpart. The second Thai group of participants who interact with a Thai 'dummy' counterpart are given a different set of trade transactions that engage them only in the role of a seller due to the nature of

international trade between traders in the same country. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are assigned to initiate the contact by writing an email to their counterpart enquiring about trade for a first product and are engaged in negotiations to trade two types of products later in the sequence of communicative events. In contrast, the Thais interacting with an Australian ‘dummy’ counterpart reply to their counterpart's first email approach by answering the counterpart's trade enquiry and then negotiate to trade two types of products later in the sequence of communicative events. Similarly, the Thais interacting with a Thai ‘dummy’ counterpart reply to their counterpart's first email contact by answering the counterpart's trade enquiry. However, they are involved in negotiations to trade only one type of product.

Some details of products, trade conditions, problems, etc are slightly different in the trade transactions assigned to the four groups of participants. However, for the purposes of analysis only transactions that are performed by all groups are included in the analysis, meaning data gathered for the tasks of ‘placing orders for products’, ‘following up’ and ‘second response in answering a repeat request’ by the Thais interacting with a Thai counterpart were excluded from the analysis. Details of these simulations are given in the Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 Outline of Communicative Event Sequence and Trade Transactions in the Simulations of Each Group Participating in the Simulation**

**Group 1 - Australian participants and Group 2 – Non-Thai Asian participants each interacting with Thai ‘dummy’ counterpart**

Australian Participants AND Non-Thai Asian Participants		Thai ‘dummy’ Counterpart	
Communicative Event	Trade transactions	Communicative Event	Trade transactions
1	Enquiring about trade (of product 1)	1	Answering a trade enquiry (of product 1)
2	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)	2	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)  Urging for an order (of product 1)  Enquiring about trade (of product 2)
3	Placing orders (of product 1)	3	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 2)

	Answering a trade enquiry (of product 2)		
4	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 2)  Urging for an order (of product 2)	4	Placing orders (of product 2)
5	Dealing with problem 1	5	Dealing with problem 2
6	Dealing with problem 2	6	No trade transactions

**Group 3 – Thai participants responding to an Australian ‘dummy’ counterpart**

Australian ‘Dummy’ Counterpart		Thai Participants	
Communicative Event	Trade transactions	Communicative Event	Trade transactions
1	Enquiring about trade (of product 1)	1	Answering a trade enquiry (of product 1)
2	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)	2	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)  Urging for an order (of product 1)  Enquiring about trade (of product 2)
3	Placing orders (of product 1)  Answering a trade enquiry (of product 2)	3	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 2)
4	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 2)  Urging for an order (of product 2)	4	Placing orders (of product 2)
5	Dealing with problem 1	5	Dealing with problem 2
6	No trade transactions	6	Dealing with problem 1

**Group 4 – Thai participants responding to a Thai ‘dummy’ counterpart**

Thai ‘dummy’ Counterpart		Thai Participants	
Communicative Event	Trade transactions	Communicative Event	Trade transactions
1	Enquiring about trade (of product 1)	1	Answering a trade enquiry (of product 1)
2	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)	2	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)  Urging for an order (of product 1)
3	Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)	3	Following up
4	Placing orders (of product 2)	4	Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment (of product 1)  Urging for an order (of product 1)
5	No trade transactions	5	Dealing with problem 2
6	Dealing with problem 2	6	Dealing with problem 1

Each simulation contains instructions and information about the scenario, task, activities, trading role, trading counterpart, other related trade conditions, and an email message from the ‘dummy’ trading counterpart for participants to interact with. The instructions involve the participant in reading the description of the situation and then either writing or recording his/her prospective introspective plans prior to composing the email message. Guidelines about how to write their plans are given. The three things participants are required to include in their plans are: what they plan to write in their email messages to their partner, how they are going to compose their email messages and their rationales for composing in such a way.

There are 3 sets of counterpart' s emails, which were developed and which are used within the simulations. The first set is emails produced by a Thai ‘dummy’ for the Australian and non-Thai Asian participants to interact with. The second set is



designed to be emails produced by an Australian ‘dummy’ for Thai participants to interact with. The third and final set is designed as emails produced by a Thai ‘dummy’ for the second group of Thai participants to interact with. These 3 sets of emails were based on emails gathered in the naturalistic international trade email communication in the process of conducting pilot work for the project and were only slightly altered for content and consistency for their use in the main data collection DCT simulation.

As scenarios in the six simulations are co-related forming a series of business transactions between the participants and their trade counterpart, participants’ previous email is forwarded back to them for continuing correspondence with their counterpart in the next simulation. This constitutes an interactive simulation in which an email may contain two parts of texts that are written for two trade transactions or tasks as evident in the collected samples of authentic emails. The following is an example of the simulation (See more examples in the Appendix):

#### **Situation 2 TH -AU**

##### **Instruction**

Welcome to the project. The following is situation 2.

Please read the situation and first write a brief report telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write such as asking for price deduction, etc
2. HOW you are going to write such as short/long, types of words, etc
3. WHY you write it that way - because you want to be polite, keep relationship, gain business profits, emphasising your role, expressing your..., etc

Then write your email after the brief report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

## Situation 2

After reading Global One (Australia)'s response email, you reply expressing your different idea towards the price. However, you are willing to give them a 90-day credit on payment terms under letter of credit (LC) and you urge them to place an order.

At the same time, you are also searching for electric heaters to supply to your customer in the US from them and need some detail of their heaters as well as other necessary information. Write an email to them accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

GLOBAL ONE (AUSTRALIA)'S EMAIL ATTACHED  
HERE:

Chevalier Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd.  
To:  
Hello ,

I have had a good look at your website, you have an impressive range of Bronze products on offer. After viewing the pricing shown on your site I must ask you if these are the lowest prices that you can offer.

The clients that I am acting for have been in this business for some time and have informed me that you may have published your prices above the minimum that you would accept for ongoing, large orders.

My clients are requesting that you issue us a more competitive price list or more appropriate discount than 10 % on your prices.

We would also like to arrange a 90-day credit on payment, with a letter of credit (LC) from a prime bank.

Let us come to some agreement, as I am sure that this venture will prove to be profitable and satisfying for both yourselves and us.

Thank You and Regards  
Mrs Elizabeth Blair  
Global One (Australia)

Simulation based on this model was used in both the pilot and main stages of the research. Results from the pilot stage were used to revise and provide validity for the main simulation to ensure that it reflected with maximal reality international trade email communication and effectively engaged participants in writing email text and report their plans for the study. The simulation was demonstrated to engage participants satisfactorily according to participants' evaluation in the pilot study.

### **3.2.3 Participants and Recruitment**

Participants recruited for the study were required to be currently working in the international trading business or import and export business or to have had such recent experience for at least one year. It was also required that they use or had used email and English in their correspondence. Since the research aims to investigate email communication in this type of business in the Asia Pacific, participants also needed to have an ethnic/national background from a country in the Asia Pacific region, such as Australian, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Thai.

Recruitment of participants with the above qualifications started after ethics approval was granted by the Human Research Ethic Committee. All participants were required to give their informed consent prior to their involvement. Participants were recruited through a variety of means, including some business connections, Victoria University of Technology's local and overseas alumni working in international trade, the Thai Export Promotion Department in Thailand and in the other countries in the region, and several other local and international trade associations, organisations and representatives including chambers of commerce of Thailand, Australia, India etc.

Lists of international trading and import & export business firms in the Asia Pacific region were searched through several sources, for example, through global and local Internet web sites such as World Trade on Internet ([www.wwtp.com](http://www.wwtp.com)), Singapore Trade Development Board ([www.tdb.gov.sg](http://www.tdb.gov.sg)), Thomas Global Register ([www.tgrnet.com](http://www.tgrnet.com)), Bidmis.com Trusted Source For Global Trade ([www.bidmix.com](http://www.bidmix.com)), the Center for Business ([www.tcfb.com](http://www.tcfb.com)), Swiss Info Net ([www.trade.swissinfo.net](http://www.trade.swissinfo.net)), searching engine ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)), etc. Some

additional lists were obtained from Kompas (Australia company information & products and services), Australian Trade Commission (Austrade), Office of Thai Export Promotion Department in Sydney, etc. Invitation was made via letters (300), emails (300) and phone calls. An advertisement about the study was posted on an international trading business group on the Internet and Yahoo business chat rooms were used to approach business people who normally gather and chat on line to participate in the study. Posters searching for postgraduate students with the required qualifications to participate in the study were put on notice boards at business faculty of several universities in Melbourne and a presentation introducing the study to undergraduate and postgraduate business students was made at several classes at Victoria University. A visit at a trade exhibition (Global Fashions from India) was also made to recruit participants. Potential participants were also approached in person through business network connection. The response rate from all these invitations was only about 1%, and a number of those who replied and were quite interested in the project, decided that they could not participate due to their very busy business commitments. Only a small group of five Thai business people were able to be recruited to participate in the pilot study. As discussed in Section 2.2.1, this experience led to some adaptation of the methods of data collection to make participation more time efficient and less extended in duration for volunteers.

For the main simulation, using the range of methods outlined above, I finally managed to recruit sixty-two participants with the required qualifications. Sixteen were Australians with Anglo-European ethnic background using English as native language. Sixteen were Asians from a range of non-Thai ethnic backgrounds Chinese (6), Japanese (2), Vietnamese (1), Malaysian (1), Indian (3), Sri Lankan (2), Philippino (1) all of whom were non-native speakers of English, some English as a second language speakers (7) and some English as a foreign language speakers (9). Thirty were Thais using English as a non-native language. Because of the difficulties in recruitment the approach to selection of participants was largely opportunistic. Provided the volunteer had the required professional experience in international trade, fitted the parameters of one of the four required groups and was willing to give their informed consent they were accepted into the study. Each group included professionals from both genders and with broadly equivalent range of ages and experience in international trade. There were some differences in the composition of

the groups in relation to age and gender, but the differences were such that they were not considered to have a major impact given the types of comparisons that are planned in the analysis. For example, there was a difference in gender balance between the two Thai groups (each of which had 1/3 males and 2/3 females) and the two non-Thai groups (each of which had 2/3 males and 1/3 females), but the design of the simulation does not require or enable direct comparison across the Thai and non-Thai groups as they are positioned differently in the trading scenarios.

Each participant was required to interact in the 6 communicative events across the overall simulation. The final corpus of data therefore comprised 372 email texts and the same number of introspective data reports/transcripts to be analysed in the study.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The communication behavior of international trade professionals in English via email will be demonstrated through the analysis of the two sets of data using linguistic and conceptual analytical tools as outlined in the synthesis of literature in section 2.5.

The email textual structure is analysed using Swales' (1990) move and act analysis as the starting point. Preliminary analysis of the email corpus suggested that the analytical framework of move and act needed refinement to suit the nature of the email texts in order to show subtle components of the moves and acts in the email texts. The approach adopted in undertaking the move and act analysis is described in detail in the next chapter. The analysis of moves and acts yielded percentages of participants using moves and acts in each group and it thereby illustrates similarities and differences in the usage preferences of each group of participants, as well as the variation in choices within each group.

Contextual factors are drawn from the analysis of the introspections using thematic qualitative analysis. A thematic conceptual matrix analysis, suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), is used to analyse the data in relation to the proposed

goal model developed from the concept of multiple goal achievement in message production theory. Introspections are categorized according to the five types of goals in the model. The analysis is based on ratio of participants verbalizing the five goals in their introspections, either directly or indirectly. The analysis thereby illustrates possible similarities and differences in goals and focus on individual goal types of the four groups of participants.

To understand how contextual factors affect the email communication of international trade professionals, Leckie-Tarry's (1995) model of context and register is used to account for similarities and differences in the usage of moves and acts. The analysis of goals in the introspections is used to further explicate variables having an effect on the email production. The interpretation also draws on principles from pragmatics theory, such as Goffman's face notion, Brown and Levinson's politeness model, and Grice's Communication Cooperative principles. Factors that may have influence on communication, such as the international trade activities, the email medium, interactants' socio-cultural formations, and business professional culture are all considered. In particular, the focus of the contextual analysis is on possible influence of emergent factors and interactions of these factors.

The analysis of the two sets of data is based on the researcher's interpretation of the intentions of the participants drawn from their email texts and introspections. The textual and contextual analysis with this proposed interdisciplinary approach and the study of the overall context considering all possible factors that may interact to impinge on the mechanisms of this communication has been designed to enable a thorough understanding and in-depth investigation of the possible genre of electronic international business communication in English. The analysis will also identify and define elements that may contribute to the possible genre of electronic international trade communication.

# Chapter 4

## Move Analysis

Linguistic analytical approaches that have been used in studying genres of communication aim at identifying conventions observable in texts written within a particular sociocultural context. Some examples of genre studies of business professional communication have been discussed in the literature review (2.2.4), and include Thomas' (1997) study of executive letters in annual financial reports within a systemic functional linguistics approach, and Jameson' s (2000) study of annual financial reports adopting a social constructionist perspective. Despite different genre perspectives, linguistic analytical approaches employed in genre studies, including the ones exemplified in the two mentioned studies, focus on repeated elements evident across a range of linguistic units, such as patterns of linguistic moves in the textual structure, other characteristics of sentence and paragraph length and structure, and patterns of choice in the use of voice and specific terminology (Pare & Smart, 1994). These constant recurrences of linguistic features are seen to represent similar patterns of thoughts and ways of doing things reflecting social and cultural practices.

Critical to the presence of a genre in approaches taken from both systemic function and social constructionist perspectives is the identification of a set and pattern of moves that govern the overall textual structure, and which reflect also evidence of a shared set of sociocultural practices and conventions. In this chapter my intention is to discuss in detail from both a theoretical and methodological standpoint some of the key approaches that have been taken in the analysis of moves within texts. From this I will then present and explain how I have approached the analysis of moves within the international trade email communication texts that form the text data corpus for this study. In the first section of the chapter I discuss Swales' (1990) move and step and its application to the study of business letters. Swales' approach is widely recognised as the prototype for the analysis of moves in genre studies and has been applied in several genre studies of written business correspondence eg. business letters (Bhatia, 1993; Hiranburana, 1996; Zu, 2000; Chakorn, 2002). Following this I

will discuss at some length a recent development of the approach by Lewin, Fine and Young (2001). Drawing on this analysis the third section of the chapter will outline the approach that has been developed for this study and explain how this approach has been applied to identify moves and acts in the international trade email communication texts.

## 4.1 Swales' rhetorical movement analysis approach

As the literature review (2.2.3.2) has highlighted Swales (1990) views a genre as a group of communicative events in which similar forms or content of language is used as a significant representation of shared communicative purposes realised by members of the same discourse community (1990, p.47). He also argues that these purposes shape compositional conventions that are changeable and vary in several aspects such as complexity of purpose, textual structure, medium, relationship between roles of interactants, variety of languages, activity, and institution.

Building on the notion of shared communicative purposes Swales suggests 'rhetorical movement' analysis or 'move and step' analysis (1990 p. 140) as the basis for defining a genre. However, whilst distinguishing between 'move' and 'step' by defining 'step' as a smaller unit than 'move', placed on a subordinate level to 'move', he does not clearly define how to distinguish a 'move'. In the analysis of an introduction section of a research article (see example from the text below), Swales (1990) identifies 3 moves and some steps as shown in his findings (see Table 4.1) and the example of his detailed analysis of the text (see Table 4.2).

**Table 4.1: Swales Identification of Moves and Steps in the Introductory Section of a Research Article**

Move 1 = Establishing a territory
Step 1 = Claiming centrality
Step 2 = Making topic generalization (s)
Step 3 = Reviewing items of previous research
Move 2 = Establishing a niche
Step 1 = Indicating a gap
Move 3 = Occupying the niche
Step 1 = Announcing present research
(Adopted from Figure 10 in Swales, 1990 p. 141)



**Table 4.2 Swales' analytical framework of communicative purposes**

<b>Text</b>	<b>Intentions</b>	<b>Rhetorical movement</b>
<p>(1) <i>The increasing interest in high-angle-of-attack aerodynamics has heightened the need for computational tools suitable to predict the flowfield and the aerodynamic coefficients in this regime.</i></p> <p>(2) <i>Of particular interest and complexity are the symmetric and the asymmetric separated vortex flows which develop about slender bodies as the angle of attack is increased.</i></p>	<p>Claiming centrality</p> <p>+</p>	<p>Step 1</p> <p>+</p>
<p>(3) <i>The viscous influence on the separation lines and the unknown three-dimensional (3D) shape of the vortex wake are some of the main flow features that must be modelled in the construction of a computational method to properly treat this problem.</i></p>	<p>Making topic generalization (s)</p> <p>+</p>	<p>Step 2</p> <p>+</p>
<p>(4) <i>Among the many potential flow methods, 2D time-stepping vortex models that include boundary-layer considerations, and a quasi-3D potential flow method that uses source and vortex elements.</i></p> <p>(5) <i>Liner, unseparated potential flow models as well as purely viscous methods, are not mentioned here.</i></p> <p>(6) <i>A survey of the various methods may also be found in Ref. 10.</i> (7) <i>The potential flow methods are of special interest because of their ability to treat 3D body shapes and their separated vortex flows using a simple and relatively inexpensive model.</i></p>	<p>Reviewing items of previous research</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Establishing a territory</p>	<p>Step 3</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Move 1</p>

In this example, Swales contends that as the writer progresses through each step in move 1, s/he aims to decline rhetorical effort, weakening knowledge claims in move 2, and increasing explicitness in move 3. He explains that the writer has choices over steps and taking each step leads to the realisation of a move. Each step is taken with a communicative purpose. For instance, the communicative purpose of step 1 in move 1 – Claiming centrality - is to seek ‘appeals to the discourse community whereby members are asked to accept that the research about to be reported is part of a lively, significant or well-established research area’ (p.144). This step is enacted for the accomplishment of move 1 – Establishing a territory. Swales also reports that steps and moves can be written in a variety of lexical and grammatical forms and extend from one simple sentence to several sentences and some steps and moves can be obligatory or discretionary. For example, step 3 in move 1 – Reviewing items of previous research – is obligatory while other steps are discretionary (p. 148). Swales has found a pattern of moves and steps and some possible alternatives in the pattern. As part of his approach, he also bases his analysis on the paragraph organisation, syntax structure, and lexicons. For instance, at the lexical level he relies on some lexical signals to assist in his identification of moves and steps such as ‘recently,’ ‘yet,’ ‘however,’ ‘we,’ ‘our,’ ‘considerable,’ ‘dearth,’ ‘few,’ ‘no studies,’ ‘have been explored,’ ‘but little,’ ‘these studies indicate,’ ‘purposes of the present studies,’ ‘this study attempts to...,’ etc.

As this example makes apparent, Swales’ analysis and identification of each move and step is based on the analysis of both communicative purpose and the linguistic structure of the text. However, he fails to delineate clearly the difference between a move and a step and, related to this, to explain how/why in his system a single step can realize a move, but not be defined as the move (see moves 2 and 3 in the example). Weakness such as this has led to criticism of Swales’ analytical approach. For example, Lewin, Fine, and Young (2001) claim that Swales’ approach lacks criteria and sufficient specification of the extent of moves and steps and it leads to inconsistency and problematic identification of moves in analysis of other texts. In developing my approach for the analysis of moves it is important to have a transparent basis and clear criteria for the delineation of moves and any textual structuring subordinate to the move within the texts. I return to this discussion further in 4.3 below.

Studying a much smaller scale of text than research articles, business letters and fax, Bhatia (1993), Hiranburana (1996), Zu (2000), Chakorn (2002) apply Swales' rhetorical approach to analyse moves and steps, based on communicative purposes and text organisation. Although these studies investigate move patterns or rhetorical organisation in business letters and fax for pedagogical and genre teaching purposes, they suffer from the same weakness as that identified in Swales' framework in that they do not provide a systematic analytical framework for distinguishing moves from steps. For example, Bhatia (1993) reports that there are 7 moves and 3 steps in the introducing the offer move, including the move of offering incentives. However, in Hiranburana's (1996) study of a similar type of business letter, the move of offering incentives is classified as a step.

Whilst these studies of business letters and faxes (Bhatia 1993, Hiranburana 1996, Zu 2000, Chakorn 2002) differ in their precise determination of moves and steps, it is relevant to note that all distinguish two hierarchies of communicative purposes and linguistic realisation leading to the distinction of moves and steps. However, their analysis of these shorter texts, business letters and faxes, suggests that broad and quite abstract criteria associated with the structuring and organisation of the texts are needed to determine the two levels within the hierarchy.

## **4.2 Lewin, Fine, and Young's discourse unit analysis approach**

Starting with Martin's concept that 'Genre is how we get things done when language is used to accomplish them' (1985, p. 250 quoted in Lewin, Fine, and Young, 2001p. 24) and Swales' use of communicative purposes to identify a genre, in their study of social science research texts Lewin, Fine, and Young (2001) conceptualise genre as 'representing the recognized pattern of verbal structures which constitute a social exchange for a specific purpose' reflecting 'the many rhetorical functions that such texts have to perform' (p. 24). Having been critical of the lack of criteria and consistency in the approach to move analysis of Swales and others working with his approach, they develop an approach based on analysis of discourse units with two specific premises. First, they contend that 'a rhetorical function is

realised in a discourse unit (similar to an utterance)' and 'discourse units can be realised by a variety of grammatical units' or diverse forms and lengths of linguistic realisation (p. 27). Their unit of analysis is that of the communicative intent that is expressed through a discourse unit. A communicative intent can be stated in various forms and lengths of linguistic realisation. For example, a communicative intent can be revealed in a clause, several clauses, a complicated sentence, or several sentences. This seems to parallel Swales' proposition that steps and moves can be written in a variety of lexical and grammatical forms and extend from one simple sentence to several sentences.

Lewin, Fine, and Young's (2001) second premise is that a communicative intent can be expressed in different levels of discourse units. Specifically, they propose two hierarchical ranks of units of analysis as a criterion – with 'Act' as the minimal unit of expression of a communicative intent and 'Move' as a bigger unit of expression of a communicative intent. An act is an element within the higher level move structure. A move is composed of a 'head act', which is obligatory plus 'pre-act/s' and/or 'post-act/s', which are optional. Their move and act analytical approach is developed from study in exchange structure, speech function, and grammar in conversation and the terminology and concept is adapted from Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) study of classroom discourse. According to Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), an act is the lowest discourse unit and a move is the 'smallest free unit' (p. 23) and the 'minimal contribution' of one interactant in response to the move initiated by the other interactant to form an exchange (p. 81).

Lewin, Fine, and Young (2001) apply these linguistic principles together with the concept of communicative purposes from Swales (1990) in their study of written text. To identify a realisation of a discourse unit of an act, they adopt Martin's (1985) semantic component approach, which bases the analysis on semantic components of two parts of a discourse unit – the participant and its attribute. The participant is the semantic subject of a discourse unit and its attribute is the description of the semantic subject. The participant and its attribute are derived from semantic components that are realised systematically through their network in the discourse. Therefore, identification of an act does not rely on syntactic structure, lexico-grammatical signals, or location of an act. For example, a segment of an introduction text is:

*Major changes in work and leisure activities, lifestyles, and mobility patterns have occurred in the US in the last few decades.*

(Lewin, Fine, and Young, 2001, p. 31)

The semantic participant of the segment is 'the human behaviour', which is realised through the lexis – 'changes in work and leisure activities, lifestyles, and mobility patterns', and its attribute is 'magnitude', which is realised through the lexis – 'Major'. Therefore, the act is realised as 'claim relevance for human behaviour'.

Lewin, Fine, and Young determine a move by locating the obligatory head act, which is the main element in the realisation of a move. The example in Table 4.3 illustrates their analysis of a move and locating a head act. After semantic participants and attributes of acts in this section of text are located, it is found that there are 3 discourse units of acts comprised of one head act and two post-head acts. The head act and post-head acts of this text section are element structures in the realisation of the move defined as 'previewing the authors' contribution'.

The obligatory head act, which is normally the initial act of a move, is used to mark a move and to differentiate this move from other moves. However, when the head act is not at the beginning of a move or when moves are not ordered in a linear sequence, the differentiation of moves is based on analysis of an internal device, logical relations, either marked by connectors or inferred from within the text. Lewin et al (2001) base this approach on the work of Halliday and Hasan (1976), and Ventola (1987) and modify it for the analysis of their research text data. They suggested four categories of logical relations: (1) continuity, where an act extends, explains, strengthens or reformulates an adjacent act, and lexically signalled by connectors such as furthermore, in fact, similarly, etc; (2) reasoning, where an act is a conclusion and lexically signalled by connectors, such as in conclusion, therefore, if ... then, etc; (3) support, where an act shows evidence for a claim in an adjacent act and lexically signalled by connectors, such as for example, specifically, etc; and (4) comment, where an act presents the writer's view about an adjacent act.

**Table 4.3 Lewin, Fine and Young' analytical framework of discourse units**

<u>Text</u>	<u>Intentions</u>	<u>Discourse units</u>
<i>We report here the results of three studies on one parameter of adult-to-infant speech.</i>	Previewing +	Head Act +
<i>studies in which we have observed no evidence to support the hypothesis</i>	Reviewing results of the study +	Post-Head Act +
<i>that frequency modulation per se constitutes a salient feature of the infant's acoustic environment.</i>	Stating the hypothesis ↓	Post-Head Act ↓
	Previewing the author's contributions	Move

Similar to Swales, Lewin et al found that moves are not structured in a fixed order or pattern. However, while Swales uses textual organisation, syntactic structure, and lexical features as part of his move and step analysis, Lewin et al argue that moves cannot be identified by their syntactic structure, lexicogrammatical signals, or position in the text. While Swales' approach focuses on communicative purposes in his rhetorical analytical framework, Lewin et al's more linguistic analytic approach focuses on discourse units that express communicative intents.

Despite their differences, there are some significant aspects of the concept and analytical framework that both approaches have demonstrated. First, a move has a higher rhetorical rank and larger linguistic structure than a step/act, which suggests that there is a hierarchy in these linguistic realisations, and that communicative intents expressed in moves and steps/acts may also have different hierarchical ranks. Secondly, identification of moves and steps/acts needs to be based on both communicative intents and linguistic realisation. Thirdly, analysis also relies on semantic analysis of lexis that signify imbedded meanings and relationships of intentions in the text. It is also possible to depend on textual organisation, syntactic structure, and lexicogrammatical signals. Fourthly, both approaches still fail to explain how one rhetorical step can become a rhetorical move, or an act (head act) can be realised as one move when linguistic structure is the same and discourse units are of similar hierarchical rank. Finally, it is important to note that these approaches are influenced by the nature of the text corpus under study. Sophistications are likely to stem from the complicated and lengthy text of research articles.

### **4.3 Towards an Analytical Framework for the Analysis of Moves and Acts**

#### **4.3.1 Hierarchy in communicative purposes and discourse units**

As I have shown in discussion of the approaches of Swales (1990) and Lewin et al (2001) in the preceding two sections analysis of the texts is based not only on communicative intents and linguistic realisation, but also on an abstract structure of intentions and organisation of text. Swales' (1990) rhetorical analytical approach

focuses on communicative purposes and he explains that achievement of one purpose or several purposes leads to the accomplishment of another purpose through the rhetorical organisation of text. This suggests that he conceives two abstract hierarchical ranks of intentions in the structure of communicative purposes and determines intentions based on this abstract hierarchical structure. His definition of rhetorical moves and steps is also based on this abstract hierarchical structure of intentions. Figure 4.1 shows Swales' analytical framework and the abstract hierarchical structure of communicative purposes (developed from his examples). Similarly, and more explicitly, Lewin et al's (2001) discourse unit approach relies on the conceptualisation of the two abstract hierarchical levels of discourse units in relation to the textual organisation as illustrated in Figure 4.2.

Such a hierarchical structure has also been suggested in other related research. For example, both Eggins and Slade's (1997) systemic functional linguistics study of conversation and Trosborg's (1995) pragmatic study of speech acts of requests, complaints and apologies adopt Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) two discourse hierarchical ranks of moves and acts. In particular, Ferrara (1985) has proposed the study of hierarchical relations between speech acts in association with the overall coherence of text (p. 140), and suggests that hierarchies of speech acts can be identified by linear mapping them with hierarchies of intentions that are expressed in single speech acts. Ferrara's approach seems to be influenced by Searle's (1979) classification of illocutionary acts based on illocutionary point or purpose. Searle (1979) does not give a clear definition of illocutionary point or purpose, but suggests it as an attempt to have something done by the hearer, which closely resembles communicative purposes or intentions. Whilst Ferrara does not categorise speech acts explicitly at two hierarchies as moves and acts, Ferrara's approach suggests an abstract hierarchical structure of discourse units and communicative purposes, and also seems to suggest that a speech act or linguistic act which has been defined by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) as the lowest in the hierarchy and smallest single discourse unit can be conceived of as a move when it is realised on the hierarchy comparatively higher than other acts relative to the overall textual structure.



**Figure 4.1 Swales' abstract hierarchical structure of intentions in relation to the overall communicative purposes**

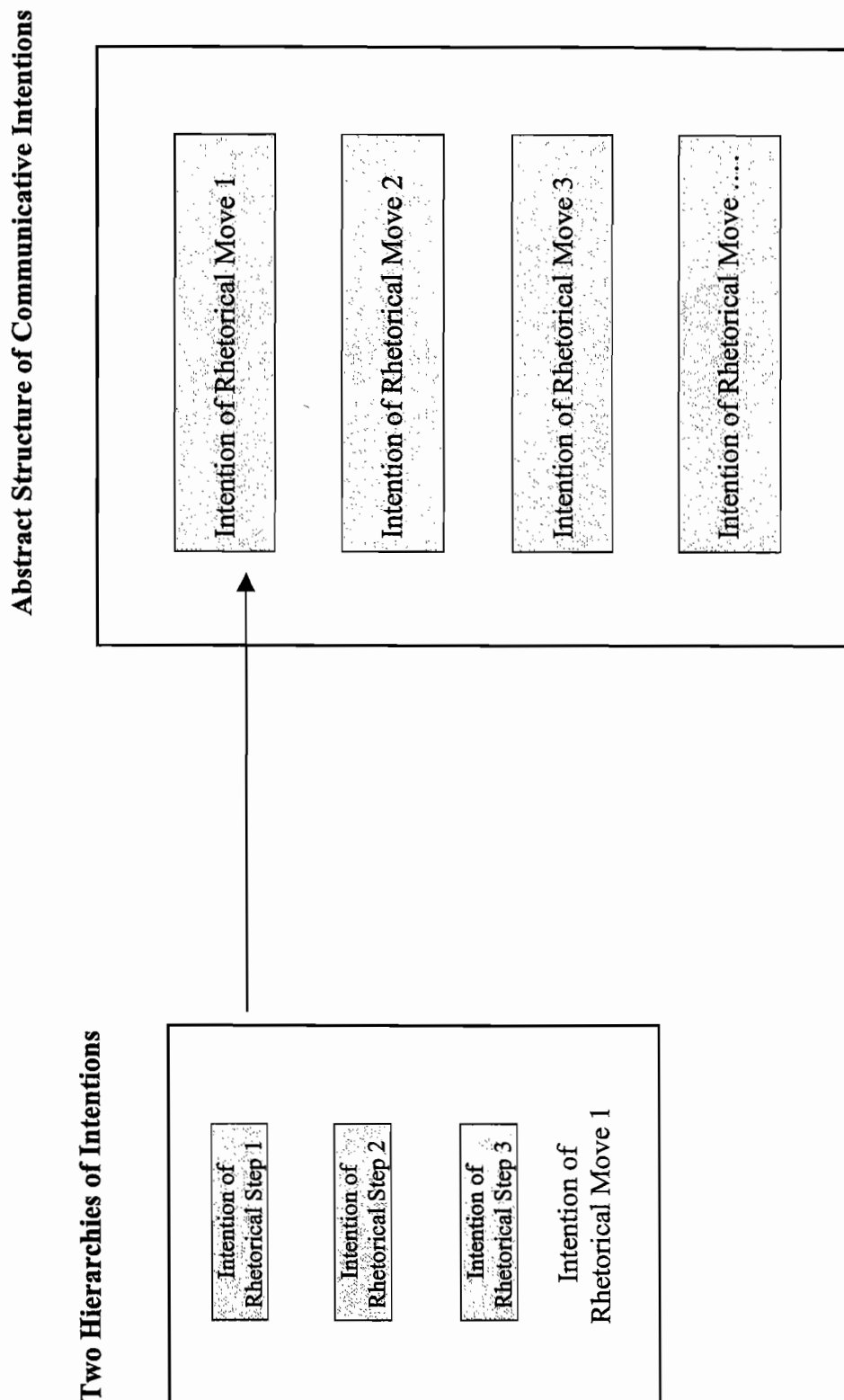
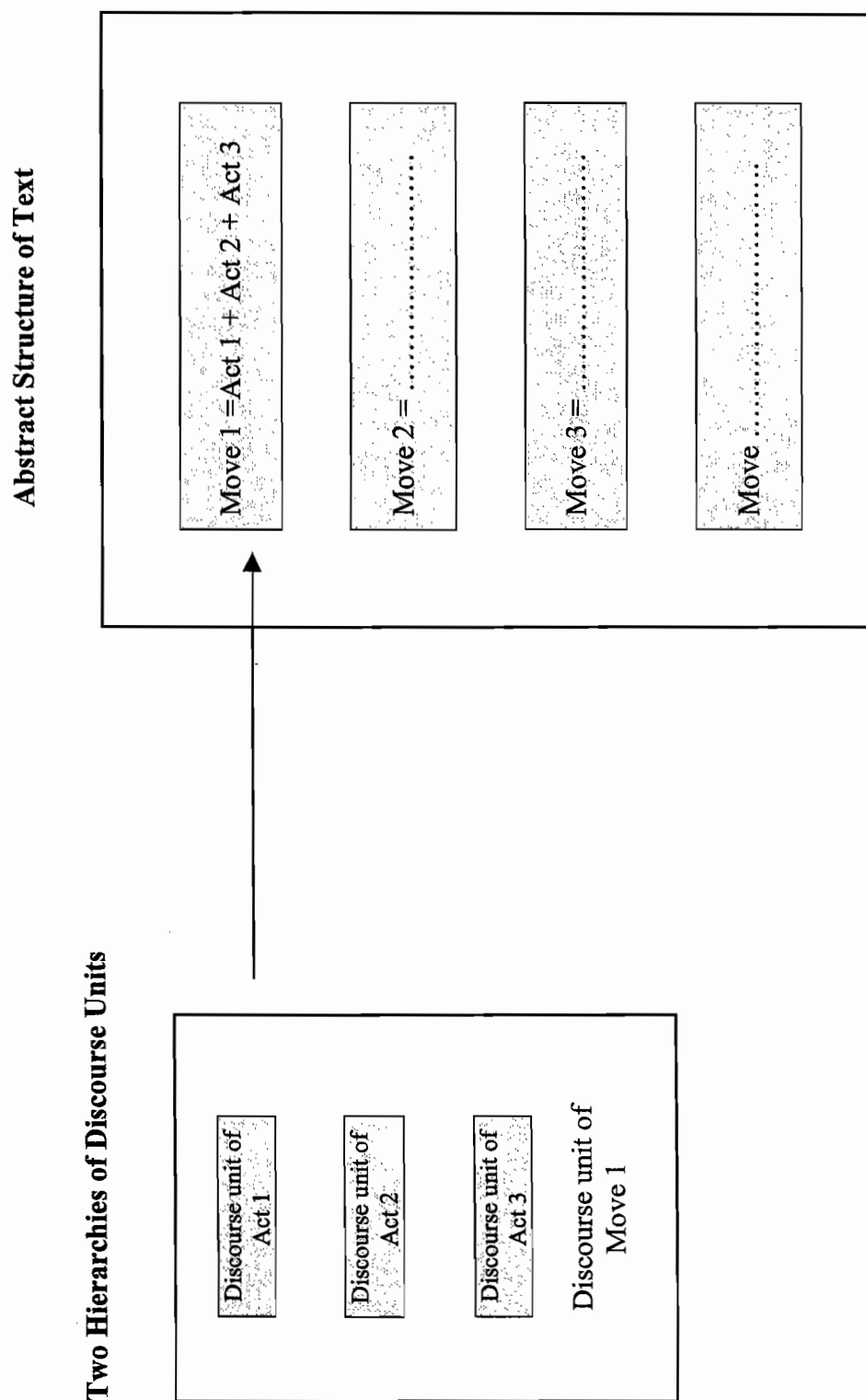


Figure 4.2 Lewin, Fine and Young' abstract hierarchical structure of discourse units in relation to textual organisation



### 4.3.2 A Refinement to Previous Analytical Approaches

Applying Swales' (1990) and Lewin, Fine, and Young's (2001) concepts and analytical frameworks to analyse email texts in international trading business communication has proved problematic for this study as it is found that email texts in the corpus whilst generally quite simple and brief are also more variable than other texts structurally and syntactically. Some of them are individually written line by line in the structure of the email. Some are written in condensed clause structure. Some are not well structured according to English writing standards. Some are clustered in complicated sentences with some paragraphs as long as a few sentences. This means that the analysis cannot rely entirely on the discourse structure as proposed in Lewin et al's approach or directly apply Swales' rhetorical movement analysis approach. However, it is possible to adapt some aspects of their concepts and analytical approaches, particularly the abstract hierarchy in communicative purpose structure and textual organization that has emerged from their studies and others as discussed earlier.

The most satisfactory starting point is the process of drawing communicative intentions from text and this has been done by adopting an approach that involves the semantic analysis of lexis that signify imbedded meanings and relationships of intentions in the text, textual organisation, syntactic structure, and lexicogrammatical signals. Such a process is implied in Swales and Lewin et al, but for the analysis of the email texts it assumes a central focus. An inference analytical process is used to elicit communicative intents from lexis in each discourse unit based on the researcher's interpretation as the reader of the email text. At this stage, the analysis is on the smallest discourse units expressing a communicative intention. A discourse unit can be realised in various linguistic features of lexis, syntactic structures and paragraph structures, and length. However, sometimes these linguistic features, lexicogrammatical signals and textual organisation are used to mark each discourse unit and its communicative intention. As most of email texts are short written messages and each discourse unit is composed of simple syntactic structure with some lexicogrammatical signals, intentions can be inferred from individual discourse units, for example:

Selected section:

*“In regard to the shipment of bronze handicrafts, my customer has informed us that firstly, the amount of product is short and secondly that many of the products bear defects.”*

The lexicogrammatical signal of ‘in regard to’ and the syntactic structure suggest that there are two groups of lexis and discourse units of

*“In regard to the shipment of bronze handicrafts...”* – D1 and

*“...my customer has informed us that firstly, the amount of product is short and secondly that many of the products bear defects”* – D2

By inferring meaning from these two groupings of words, discourse unit D1 connotes a meaning of making a reference to the product and D2 connotes a meaning of informing the reader of some problems. With the researcher adopting the role of the reader, the interpretation of the message is that discourse unit D1 expresses the writer’s intention of **Referring to the product**, and D2 expresses an intention of **Stating problems**. So it is interpreted that there are two communicative intentions in this section of text.

The approach may be considered to parallel Searle's (1979) identification of illocutionary acts by illocutionary point/purpose or intention as discussed earlier. However, as the analytical approach developed in this study is not limited by Searle's five general classification of speech acts, the approach can be used to analyse a greater numbers of discourse units in an email and cover a wider range of categories of discourse than Searle's speech act classification.

The following shows an example of analysis of discourse units and communicative intentions in an email text that also includes the salutation and ending section. Unlike studies in business letters and fax conducted by Bhatia (1993), Hiranburana (1996), and Zu (2000), all of which exclude analysis of the salutation

and ending section, this study includes analysis of the two sections in the email text because they also carry intentions.

Discourse units	Communicative intentions
Dear Khun Montri Teerap	Addressing
I am pleased to introduce my company. We are Australian importers and distributors of handicrafts and other gift lines. Our company has been operating successfully in Australia for ten years. We distribute to 150 outlets around Australia.	Introducing oneself/company Establishing credentials
I learned about your agency from the Department of Thai Export Promotion's website and I am interested in obtaining more information about your range of bronze handicrafts.	Acknowledging source of contact Expressing interest in trade
Would you kindly forward details of your bronze handicraft range including prices FOB Bangkok? The minimum quantity required is one FCL.	Asking for trade Specifying details of the request
I shall look forward to your reply. Please call me on 61-409 179 627 if you have any questions.	Soliciting response
Yours sincerely Ann Director	Expressing sincerity Signing

The above example is chosen to show that most emails in the corpus are well structured in sentences and paragraphs and their textual organisation and syntactic structure can be used as part of this analysis of discourse units and communicative intentions. Each paragraph tends to contain at least one discourse unit. Most intentions are expressed in simple discourse units that are realised in simple sentences or even phrases.

In adopting the concept of hierarchical ranks of discourse units and communicative intentions (as suggested in other genre studies as previously discussed) it is proposed that the overall communicative purpose and organisational structure of a text has two hierarchical levels: intentions and discourse units that contribute to the overall communicative purpose and organisational structure of a text are categorised as the **macro level**. Intentions and discourse units that lead to the development or achievement of another intention and realisation of another discourse unit that constitute the main communicative purpose and main structure of a text are categorised as the **micro level**. These two hierarchical levels in the structure of communicative intentions and textual organisation are relatively abstract, but are derived from relative comparison between intentions and the overall communicative purpose of the text (see Figure 4.3). For instance, from the above example three intentions of ‘introducing oneself/company,’ ‘establishing credentials,’ and ‘acknowledging source of contact’ are comparatively related on the same level and lead to a higher hierarchical ranking communicative intention of building up business confidence or ‘establish confidence’, which contributes to the overall communicative purpose of this email. Therefore, the three intentions are categorised at micro level and subordinate the main or macro hierarchical ranking ‘establish confidence’ intention. With the same principle, three intentions of ‘expressing interest in trade,’ ‘asking for trade,’ and ‘specifying details of the request’ are comparatively related on the same micro level and lead to a macro hierarchical ranking ‘enquiring trade’ communicative intention. These two ‘establishing confidence,’ and ‘enquiring trade’ intentions are main intentions and on the same macro level as the other intentions of ‘addressing,’ ‘soliciting response,’ ‘expressing sincerity,’ and ‘signing’, all of which contribute to the overall communicative purpose of enquiring trade of this email. As a result, the hierarchy of intentions of this email can be listed as shown below:

#### **Macro (Main Intentions)**

Addressing

Establishing confidence

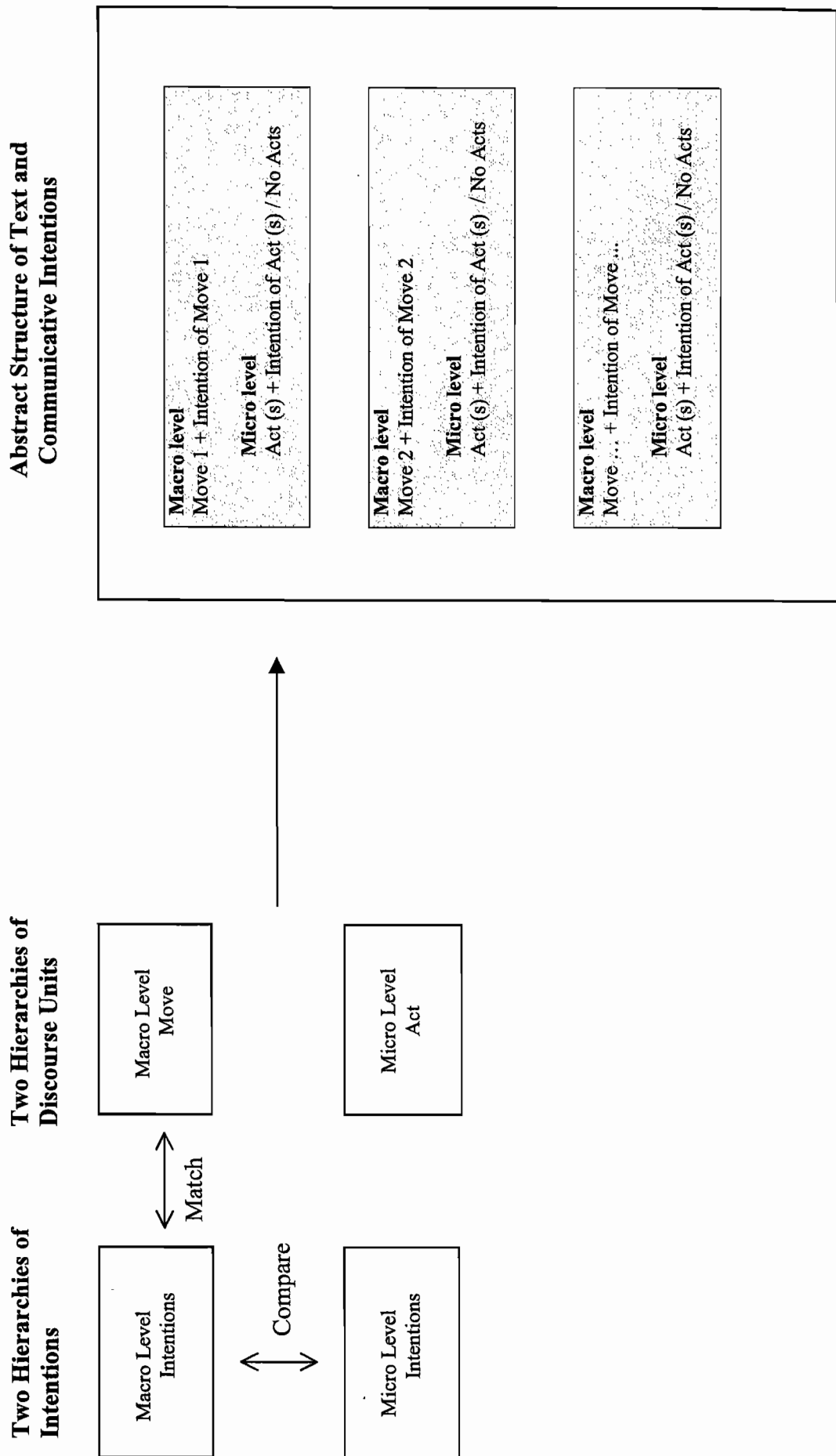
#### **Micro (Subordinate Intentions)**

Introducing oneself/company

Establishing credentials

Acknowledging source of contact

**Figure 4.3** Abstract structure of communicative intentions and textual organisation



Enquiring about trade

Expressing interest in trade

Asking for trade

Specifying details of the request

Soliciting response

Expressing sincerity

Signing

As it is posited in this study that there are two abstract levels of hierarchy in the linguistic realisation relative to the structure of email text, a linguistic realisation that expresses an intention on the macro level and contributes to the main abstract structure of a text is defined as a **move** and an **act** is a linguistic realisation that expresses an intention at the micro level and has a subsidiary or lower hierarchy than a move. Therefore, discourse units that express main intentions are categorised as moves and those that express subordinate intentions are classified as acts, regardless of linguistic forms, length and location in the textual organisation.

Because my approach is based on the hierarchy of linguistic realisation of move and act, a move then does not necessarily contain act(s) as proposed by Lewin et al. Whilst their approach is developed from the analysis of exchanges in conversation in which a move is similar to a turn of a conversation or a linguistic unit of a spoken or written text and composed of an obligatory head act and pre- or post-head act(s), my approach is based on a concept that when a discourse unit is realised at the macro level which organises the main abstract structure of a text and expresses an intention at the same level, it is defined as a move and an act is a linguistic unit that is subordinate to a move and expresses an intention on the micro level.

As the focus of my approach is on the abstract hierarchy and structure rather than on the actual linguistic feature or structure of these units, a discourse unit can be a move or an act depending on the hierarchy of intention it expresses as shown in the above example. Discourse units that express different hierarchical ranking intentions may be placed at disarrayed positions in the email text, such as the 'acknowledging source of contact' discourse unit is structured in the same sentence and paragraph as the 'expressing interest in trade' discourse unit. But as it was shown earlier that they are categorised to be at micro level and the 'acknowledging source of contact'



subordinates 'establishing confidence' intention, while the 'expressing interest in trade' intention subordinates 'enquiring trade' intention, these two discourse units are classified to be acts that are not related and do not form a move to express any possibly related intention at the macro level although they are actually structured in the same sentence and paragraph as it was written by the participant. In contrast to these two discourse units of acts, the discourse unit that expresses 'soliciting response' intention is classified as a move because its intention is one of the main intentions or macro hierarchical ranking intentions that form the overall communicative purpose of the email and the discourse unit also forms the abstract main structure of the email.

Moreover, a move is not necessarily constructed with act (s) or a move may have several acts depending on the number of subsidiary intentions that are expressed through the realisation of acts. For instance, the 'soliciting response' move is not structured with any acts but the 'establishing confidence' move is composed of three acts: 'introducing oneself/business,' 'establishing credentials,' and 'acknowledging source of contact'.

This approach that is based on the abstract structure of communicative purposes and textual organisation and the two hierarchies can be used to explain how one rhetorical step such as Step 1 of Move 2 in Swales' example can become a rhetorical move, and one act (head act) such as Move 2 in Lewin, Fine and Young' example can be realised as a move when linguistic structure is the same and discourse units are on similar hierarchical rank. When these intentions are at the macro level, their discourse units are classified as moves regardless of linguistic forms, length and location in the textual organisation. Therefore, it is clear why they are proposed to be moves by Swales and Lewin, Fine and Young with the use of this approach.

Figure 4.3 summarises my proposition of the two abstract hierarchies of communicative intentions and discourse units in relation to the structure of text, and shows the analysis process used in my approach for identifying moves and acts in the email texts of international trade business communication.

### **4.3.3 List of Moves and Acts in email text corpus**

With this analytical approach, the email texts in the corpus were analysed and a list of moves and acts found within the texts was identified. These are summarised below:

#### **Moves**

1. Addressing
2. Establishing confidence
3. Enquiring about trade
4. Answering a trade enquiry
5. Negotiating trade term (s)
6. Negotiating problem (s)
7. Asking for a purchase order
8. Soliciting cooperation
9. Soliciting agreement
10. Soliciting confidence
11. Projecting positive prospect
12. Soliciting response
13. Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc
14. Signing

#### **Acts**

1. Asking for trade
2. Offering trade
3. Asking for a price reduction
4. Asking for a credit payment
5. Granting a request
6. Declining a request
7. Stating the problem
8. Introducing oneself/company
9. Establishing credentials
10. Acknowledging source of contact

11. Acknowledging receipt of message
12. Expressing main intention
13. Expressing interest in trade
14. Expressing appreciation of business
15. Stating the issue of high price
16. Referencing
17. Apologising
18. Complaining
19. Asking for further details of trade enquiry
20. Asking for samples of the product
21. Offering samples of the product
22. Indicating values of the product
23. Offering incentives
24. Using pressure tactics
25. Undertaking actions
26. Asking for actions
27. Specifying details
28. Providing reasons

Across the six tasks involving international trade business communication via email a total of 14 moves and 28 acts have been identified. These moves and acts will be discussed in further detail with examples from the texts in Chapter 5.

## **4.4 Conclusion**

The discussion of Swales' move and step analysis in this chapter has resulted in a modification of his analytical approach. Most significant is the refinement of hierarchy of communicative purposes and discourse units in relation to the overall structure of a text that has been suggested in studies adopting Swales' approach. This modified analytical approach of move and act will be applied in the analysis of international trade email texts in the next Chapter to illustrate the realisation of moves and acts in the emails.

# Chapter 5

## Analysis of Email Texts

This chapter reports findings from the analysis of participants' email texts written for the six simulations in this study. The analysis adopts the approach to move and act analysis presented in Chapter 4, and includes the percentage of participants in the four groups using each type of move and act, thereby demonstrating the usage preferences for each group. Linguistic function, content and component, linguistic realization and position in the textual structure of each type of moves and acts are also discussed. Findings are presented with examples and distribution tables of moves and acts in the six tasks. From the analysis a common pattern in the structuring of moves and related acts is able to be identified across the four groups for individual tasks. The analysis enables the study to fulfil the first specific aim of documenting similarities and differences in email textual structure and the second specific aim of identifying and defining elements that may constitute a genre of international trade business email communication.

### 5.1 Task of Enquiring about trade

The task of enquiring about trade is situated in the first sequence of communicative event for the Australian participants and the Non-Thai Asians participants. In this task, participants initiate contact by writing their first email to the Thai counterpart. The email constitutes the first interaction between them and their Thai counterpart. For the Thai participants, it is second in the sequence when they are also negotiating on another trade with their counterpart. Therefore, when the Addressing, Expressing respect, gratitude, etc., and Signing moves were used in the email written for both trades or tasks, their usages were included in the analysis of text of both tasks. The task requires participants to write an email to their counterpart and request an opportunity for trade. Participants and their counterpart are

international traders and their companies are located in their national countries. Their businesses are international as they buy and sell products across different countries.

The following are examples of two emails, written by an Australian participant and a Thai participant.

### Example 1:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Mr. Somsak,</i>		Addressing
<i>Our company is Global One located in Sydney Australia</i>	Introducing oneself/company	Establishing confidence
<i>we are the largest importer of bronze in the country and have a turnover in excess of 10 million dollars. We employ over 20 staff and have 5 agents across Australia marketing and selling our products.</i>	Establishing credentials	
<i>We have recently found your company using the Department of Thai Export Promotion.</i>	Acknowledging source of contact	
<i>The types of products you are marketing are of interest to our company here in Australia. The line we are interested in is Bronze Handicraft.</i>	Expressing interest in trade	Enquiring about trade
<i>It would be appreciated if you could provide the following information:</i>	Asking for trade	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Product specifications</li> <li>- Price terms</li> <li>- International standards met</li> <li>- Supply ability</li> <li>- Minimum order quantity</li> <li>- Delivery time</li> <li>- Sample availability</li> <li>- Packaging details</li> </ul>	Specifying details	
<i>If you already have an agent here please let us know.</i>	Specifying details	
<i>We will look forward to hearing from you in the very near future.</i>		Soliciting response
<i>Best Regards</i>		Expressing respect
<i>Bill</i> <i>Global One</i>		Signing

(Bill, Australian participant)

## Example 2: (Partial text)

### Email Text

### Acts

### Moves

Dear Ms. Blair,

Addressing

-----

Also, now our regular client from US market look for electric heater. It would be good if you have this range in your product line.

Expressing interest in trade

We would like to get information. Asking for trade

Details for this order is attached.

Specifying details

Kind regards,

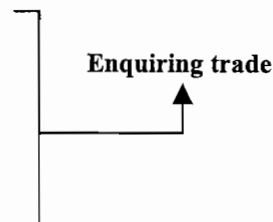
Expressing gratitude

Chaichana

Chevalier Trading (Thailand)

Signing

[sic] (Chaichana, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)



Enquiring trade

## 5.1.1 Analysis and Discussion of Moves

Table 5.1 summarises the patterns in the use of moves in the task of Enquiring about trade.

**Table 5.1 Distribution of moves in the task of Enquiring about trade**

	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 2
<i>Moves</i>	Australian Participants (N=16)	Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)	Thai 1 Participants (N=15)
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Addressing	100	100	93.3
Establishing confidence	81.3	100	0
Soliciting cooperation	0	0	33.3
Enquiring about trade	100	100	100
Projecting positive prospect	25	31.5	13.3
Soliciting response	56.3	56.3	53.3
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc	93.8	93.8	100
Signing	93.8	100	93.3

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Addressing, Expressing gratitude/respect/etc, and Signing Moves***

This set of moves seems to have two functions in the email. One is to conform to the socialisation practices and the other is to conform to written business correspondence conventions, which shows some influence on the lexis and format of these moves in the email. The **Addressing** move is placed at the beginning, whilst the **Expressing gratitude/ respect/etc** is followed by the **Signing** move and both come at the end of the email. These moves are realised linguistically similarly to those found in business letters as the examples demonstrate. The use of these moves by most of the participants suggests that most participants think that it is very important to include these moves in their email. Below are some examples from the data corpus illustrating how these moves are realised.

#### Examples of the **Addressing** Move:

- (1) *Dear Sir/Madam*, (Aram, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (2) *Dear Mr./Mrs. Family name* (Chaichana, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

#### Examples of the **Expressing gratitude/respect/etc** Move:

- (4) *Yours Sincerely, (Truly, Faithfully, etc.)* (Ann, Australian participant)
- (5) *Best regard, (Kind regard, etc.)* (Kenny Chu, Non-Thai Asian participant)

The linguistic realisation of the **Signing** move ranges from simply the name of the participant (as in 6) to the inclusion of work position, company name, contact details and email address (as in 8), for example:

- (6) *Thunya* (Thunya, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)
- (7) *Deen Brown*  
*Trade Officer*  
*Global One* (Deen, Australian participant)
- (8) *Issatri Tashmahal*  
*Trade Officer*  
*Global One International Trading Ltd.*  
*No. 50, Collins Street,*

*Melbourne*  
*Australia*  
*Tel: +61-3-9786787*  
*Fax: +61-3-9786788*  
*Email: [issatri@globalone.com.au](mailto:issatri@globalone.com.au) (Issatri, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

However, some of these moves are realised with differences in linguistic lexis and format. Most are similar to the addressing and ending of a formal business letter, as shown in the above examples, while a few follow memo format, such as

*(9) Attn: Mr Name*  
*Company: Chevalier Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd.*  
*From: Name*  
*Company: Global One (Australia) Pty.*  
*(Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

Some are a hybrid between spoken and written language, such as the use of ‘hello’ derived from speech added to the more formal written form ‘sir’ as shown in example 10, and the use of lower case of ‘regards’ and abbreviations as in example 11.

*(10) Hello sir (Charlie, Australian participant)*

*(11) regards/b. rgds./B. Rgds. (Don Goh, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

Some participants adopt a Thai honorific word ‘Khun’ (12 and 13), which is a formal address form in Thai with meaning close to ‘Sir’ and ‘Madam’ in English and normally placed in front of a name regardless of gender. Interestingly, only the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians use this Thai honorific title to address their Thai counterpart while the Thais interacting with Australian counterpart adopt the English way of addressing. This suggests that in addressing their business counterpart participants try to accommodate to their counterpart’s national culture.

*(12) Dear Khun Montri Teerap, (Khun + Name + Family name) (Hiran,*  
*Non-Thai Asian participant)*

*(13) To Khun Montri Teerap, (Donna, Australian participant)*



### ***Establishing confidence Move***

The **Establishing confidence** move contains positive and creditable information about the participants, their business and source of their counterpart's email contact. This move functions to solicit trust and confidence from the counterpart and to encourage trade and a relationship. It gives support and paves the way for the **Enquiring trade** move.

The move is generally realised through two or three acts, including *Introducing oneself/company* act, the *Establishing credentials* and/or the *Acknowledging source of contact* act. The *Introducing oneself/company* act is identified as the core act. It is usually structured at the beginning of the email and is realised through descriptive writing as shown in Bill's email in the Example 1. There is a clear statistical contrast between groups in the use of **Establishing confidence** move. All the Non-Thai Asian participants and most Australians (81.3 %) use this move compared to none of the Thais, which most likely relates to the different place of this task in the sequence of events for the Thai group.

### ***Soliciting cooperation Move***

The **Soliciting cooperation** move contains a request for support or assistance in trade. The move is structured before the **Enquiring about trade** move in this task so it functions like a prelude to the enquiry and contributes to the achievement of the enquiry. Only the Thais enacted this move. The move is realised through a few types of requests as illustrated below:

Request via modal verb:

- (16) *Simultaneously, we would like you to give us a favour ...*  
(Chedtha, Thai participant)

Request via statement of need:

- (17) *I also need your help.* (Nualnang, Thai participant)

### ***Enquiring about trade Move***

The **Enquiring about trade** move contains the most important message in this task and it is enacted to achieve the main task of initiating trade. It appears in all the emails written for this task. Apart from having the *Asking for trade* act as the core act of the move, participants also use other acts such as *Expressing interest in trade*, *Specifying details*, and *Offering incentives*. Most participants across the three groups share a common order of these acts and structure the move in the middle of the email. However, there are some differences in the realisation of the move in terms of the number of these acts involved, types of acts, and lexico-grammatical forms of these acts as shown in Bill's and Nualnang's emails in the Examples 1 and 2. The details of these acts and differences are discussed in the Analysis of Acts in the Enquiring about trade Move.

### ***Projecting positive prospect Move***

Like **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/respect/etc**, **Signing**, and **Soliciting response** moves, the **Projecting positive prospect** move is used across the six tasks, but much less frequently. In this task, it is used by only a small proportion of participants across the three groups (ie 25 % of Australians, 31.5 % of the Non-Thai Asians, and 13.3 % of the Thais). Due to its content, the move functions to promote the establishment of a trade relationship and to encourage the counterpart to attend to participants' request of trade. It also functions to support the **Enquiring about trade** move. The move is usually placed towards the end of an email and there is no apparent difference in the placement of this move in the participants' emails across the three groups. The Australians tend to project mutuality in profitable transactions, for example,

(20) *May this be continued and profitable for all.*  
(Charlie, Australian participant)

The Non-Thai Asians and the Thais tend to realise this move with a focus on establishing a friendly and long-term business relationship, egs.

(21) *We would like to establish a friendly business ties with your*

**company** [sic.] (Jerome Liew, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(22) *Perhaps we could do the business for long term.*  
(Saijaithai, Thai participant)

### ***Soliciting response Move***

The **Soliciting response** move contains a request for a reply and is placed towards the end of the email. The realisation of this move by slightly more than half of the participants across all the three groups suggests that it is considered important by the participants. The request is expressed in an invitation or a wish statement. Whilst there is a considerable linguistic variation in how this move is realised, there is no marked collective difference between groups in the use, position, content, and lexico-grammatical features of this move. The differences seem to reflect individual preferences. Sometimes the move is realised with a wish statement in proper English sentences, similar to those found in business letters, egs.

(24) *I look forward to hearing from you in the near future regarding this opportunity.* (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(25) *Your reply on this mail would be very much appreciated.*  
(Peangjai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Some are realised with an invitation of a response, egs.

(26) *Please feel free to contact us if you need more information.*  
(Pumarin, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

(27) *If there are any problems please do not hesitate in contacting me.*  
(Maria, Australian participant)

Some are in concise phrases, egs.

(28) *Looking forward to an early reply from you.*  
(Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(29) *In anticipation of your favourable response.* (Jeff, Australian participant)

Some involve non-standard grammar, egs.

(30) *I look forward your response very soon [sic.]*

(Kenny Chu, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(31) *We appreciate to hearing from you soon [sic.]*

(Pimprapai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Some include explicit reference to email medium, eg.

(32) *If you have further enquiry please e-mail me anytime.*

(Stuart Jieng, Non-Thai Asian participant)

## 5.1.2 Analysis and Discussion of Acts

### 5.1.2.1 Analysis of acts in the Establishing confidence move

Table 5.2 provides a summary of the distribution of acts used by the Australian, the Non-Thai Asian, and the Thai 1 participants in realising the Establishing confidence move.

**Table 5.2 Distribution of acts in the Establishing confidence move**

	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 2
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Introducing oneself/company	81.3	100	0
Establishing credentials	37.5	43.8	0
Acknowledging source of contact	50	81.3	0

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### *Introducing oneself/company Act*

As the core of the **Establishing confidence** move, the *Introducing oneself/company* act contains information about the trader and their business, such as name, work position, company name, and/or location. It functions to provide

information about the trader in the first encounter to promote a better understanding. Therefore, only the Australians (81.3 %) and the Non-Thai Asians (100 %) use this act. The high usage of the act by both groups suggests that they view introduction of oneself and business to be extremely important in the first business interaction. Both groups of participants also structure the act at the beginning of the move.

(33) *Our company is Global One located in Sydney Australia;*  
(Bill, Australian participant)

(34) *Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Metra B, working as a trade officer for an international trading company called Global One (Australia)*  
(Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Establishing credentials Act***

The *Establishing credentials* act is another act in the move. It contains detailed information about the trader's business profile, and functions to solicit confidence in the counterpart for trade and relationship purposes. However, it is used by less than half of participants in the two groups (Australians - 37.5 % and the Non-Thai Asians - 43.8 %) , in comparison with the *Introducing oneself/company* act, suggesting its lesser importance than the *Introducing oneself/company* act. Both groups structure the act after the *Introducing oneself/company* act and realise the act through descriptive writing (see the Example 1). However, some participants realise the act through reference to a file attachment to email, company website or an accredited trade organisation as shown in examples 37-39:

(37) – *refer corporate profile attached.* (Jeff, Australian participant)

(38) *(Please see a brief of my company attached – GlobalOne.pdf).*  
(Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(39) *(Please inquire about us Chamber of Commerce in Japan.)* [sic.]  
(Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Acknowledging source of contact Act***

The *Acknowledging source of contact* act is one of the three acts in the move and contains information about the source of contact or business network where traders

obtain the counterpart's business information. It functions to identify both parties' membership in the international trade group who share similar business interest and to fulfill social expectations in the first encounter. The act is placed either at the beginning (before the *Introducing oneself/company* act) or at the end of the move. Considerably fewer Australian participants (50 %) use the act than the Non-Thai Asians (81.3 %).

(40) *I am indebted to Thai Dept of Export for your name and address.*  
(Jeff, Australian participant)

(41) *I came across your company on the webpages of the Department of Thai Export Promotion.* (Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

#### 5.1.2.2 Analysis of acts in the Enquiring about trade move

Table 5.3 summarised the distribution of acts in the Enquiring about trade move.

**Table 5.3 Distribution of acts in the Enquiring about trade move**

	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 2
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Expressing interest in trade	100	100	100
Asking for trade	100	100	100
Specifying details	37.5	37.5	20
Offering incentives	12.6	25	0

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

#### *Expressing interest in trade Act*

As the name of the act suggests, the *Expressing interest in trade* act generally contains participants' demonstration of interest in an opportunity of trading with their counterpart and it functions as a prelude to a request in the *Asking for trade* act. All participants of the three groups employ this act as part of the **Enquiring about trade**

move. It is normally placed at the beginning of the move and is realised by an explicit performative verb, for example:

- (42) *We act on behave of our customers to search for quality bronze handicrafts.* (Drew, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (43) *By the way, I am searching for electric heaters to supply our customer [sic].* (Peangjai, Thai participant)
- (44) *I am writing to you today to enquire about the products your company produces.* (Adam, Australian participant)

### ***Asking for trade Act***

The *Asking for trade* act functions as the core of the **Enquiring about trade** move and it contains a request of an opportunity to trade or a request of information of a specific product. All participants of the three groups realise this act after the *Expressing interest in trade* act. The act is realised through several types of requests such as

Request with modal verbs:

- (45) *Could you please send them [ ] to me by email attachment if possible. Do you also have a website where they are shown.* (Lloyd, Australian participant)
- (46) *Unfortunately, we don't have much details on this. Would do us for a favor providing us the necessary information [sic].* (Temjit, Thai participant)

Request with the verb 'please':

- (47) *Please send your catalogues or brochures and their price list; along with the other trade conditions and terms.* (Aram, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a statement of condition:

- (48) *If you have products advise us please.* (Thunya, Thai participant)

Request in form of a statement of appreciation:

- (49) *It would be appreciated if you could provide the following information:*  
(Bill, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of invitation:

- (50) *Therefore I am glad to invite you to give us more details about your company and product range etc, so that we may further develop the business.* (Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Specifying details Act***

The *Specifying details* act generally contains requests or provision of the exact information regarding the topic of the move or act it functions to elaborate. It is normally placed behind the act that it modifies. In this task, the act is realised in the form of an indirect question or a description of product or trade details that are expected from the counterpart as shown in the following examples. Some of them are realised in referencing to attachment of email as shown in Chaichana's example (53). However, it is used by less than half of the participants (37.5 % respectively by the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians & 20 % by the Thais).

- (51)
- 1) *specification of the bronze handicrafts*
  - 2) *price on CIF HK base*
  - 3) *payment*
  - 4) *delivery*
  - 5) *packing and other trade terms*
- (Jeromy Liew, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (52) *Basically the product specification should reach the American standard like proved by FDA and the wire must be 110 volts and it would be good if the material is made of fibre [sic].* (Benjaporn, Thai participant)
- (53) *Details for this order is attached.* (Chaichana, Thai participant)



### ***Offering incentives Act***

This *Offering incentives* act generally contains trade conditions that vary on task. In this particular task, the act contains trade conditions that participants use to entice the counterpart to trade with them. These conditions are purchases of products in a large quantity, further negotiations on trade conditions, possible trade of several products, etc as shown in the examples. The act therefore functions like a persuasion and supports the achievement of the trade activity. In this task, the act contains offers of trade conditions based on quantity of purchase, further negotiation, trade of other products, etc as shown in the examples. The act supports the *Asking for trade* act. It comes after the *Asking for trade* act and realised through an anticipation of trade with a condition, using various linguistic forms, such as requirement, appreciation, conditional, etc (see 54-56). The act is used by only 25 % of the Non-Thai Asians, half as few Australians, and none of the Thais.

(54) *This is an opportunity to expand your market into Australia, large quantities are required. (Dennis, Australian participant)*

(55) *I would very much appreciate the opportunity to explore further discussion with you in details [sic]. (Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

(56) *Should you not be able to assist with this product but have other products that might be of interest, please let me know. (Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

### **5.1.3 Discussion of structure of moves and acts**

The following is the most common structure of moves and related acts generated from emails produced by the three groups of participants. There are no significant differences in the email structure between groups.

#### **Moves and Acts**

Addressing

Establishing confidence

Introducing oneself/company

Establishing credentials

Acknowledging source of contact

Soliciting cooperation

Enquiring about trade





















































Expressing interest in trade  
Asking for trade  
Specifying details of the request  
Offering incentives  
Projecting positive prospect  
Soliciting response  
Expressing gratitude/respect/etc  
Signing

#### 5.1.4 Usage preference of each group

There are some differences between groups in their usage preferences (see Table: 5.4). With the criterion of usage by over 80 % across the three groups, the **Enquiring about trade** move, *Expressing interest in trade* act, and *Asking for trade* act, the **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves are virtually mandatory. There are no additional moves or acts in the list with a criterion of usage preference between 60 – 80 % across the three groups. This suggests that only these moves and related acts are centrally important to be realised in the email written for this task.

However, there are some differences in the usage preferences in the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* act and *Acknowledging source of contact* act, and the **Soliciting cooperation** move. Only the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians realise the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* act, *Establishing credentials* act and *Acknowledging source of contact* act. The Non-Thai Asians have consistently higher usage preference for this move and its related acts than the Australians. Only the Thais realise the **Soliciting cooperation** move. In the next chapter (Chapter 6), these differences will be further discussed in conjunction with the introspective data.

**Table 5.4: Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Enquiring about trade task**

Moves & related Acts	Australians interacting with Thai	Non-Thai Asians interacting with Thai	Thais interacting with Australian
Addressing			
Establishing confidence			
Introducing oneself/company			
Establishing credentials			
Acknowledging source of contact			
Soliciting cooperation			
Enquiring about trade			
Expressing interest in trade			
Asking for trade			
Specifying details			
Offering incentives			
Projecting positive prospect			
Soliciting response			
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc			
Signing			
<div>  = Always used (100%)          = Very frequently used (81- 99%)       </div> <div>  = Frequently used (61- 80%)          = Sometimes used (41- 60%)       </div> <div>  = Infrequently used (21- 40%)          = Hardly used (1- 20%)       </div> <div>  = Never used (0%)       </div>			

## 5.2 Task of answering a trade enquiry

The task of answering a trade enquiry is situated in the first sequence of communicative events for the two Thai groups, as they have never contacted their counterpart before and it is the first email they write to reply to the counterpart. For the Australian participants and the Non-Thai Asians, it is third in the sequence so they have traded with their Thai counterpart earlier. Therefore, when the Addressing, Expressing respect, gratitude, etc., and Signing moves were used in the email written for both trades or tasks, their usages were included in the analysis of text of both tasks. The task requires participants to write an email to reply to their counterpart's enquiry about trade and to offer an opportunity of trade.

The following are examples of email written by a Non-Thai Asian participant and a Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart.

Example 3:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Mr Montri,</i>		Addressing
<i>With regards to the Electric heater</i>	Referencing	
<i>we are pleased to advise that we currently trade in this product and have the required information on hand.</i>	Offering trade	
<i>Please view the products at (webpage) and let us know what you think.</i>	Specifying details	
<i>Noting that our supplier is a major exporter and always looking for new markets.</i>	Offering incentives	
<i>We await your reply.</i>		Soliciting response
<i>Best Regards,</i>		Expressing respect
<i>Hiran Trade Officer Global One Trading</i>		Signing
(Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant)		

#### Example 4:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Mr Humphrey,</i>		<b>Addressing</b>
<i>We are pleased to receive your inquiry to get to know our company and products.</i>	<b>Expressing appreciation of business</b>	<b>Answering a trade enquiry</b>
<i>We are one of the best companies who produce bronze wares for export in Thailand.</i>	<b>Introducing oneself/company</b>	
<i>Since we have been established the factory, and expanding our market to overseas. We have been very pleasant to say that we get the orders from some well-known companies as you can see on the reference in our website. This makes us proud to announce we have won the prizes from the institutes.</i>	<b>Establishing credentials</b>	<b>Establishing confidence</b>
<i>Please see in our website the prices and catalog.</i>	<b>Offering trade</b>	
<i>If you have more queries, please feel free to contact me directly.</i>		<b>Soliciting response</b>
<i>Best regards,</i>		<b>Expressing respect</b>
<i>Issarachon</i>		<b>Signing</b>

[sic] (Issarachon, Thai participant interacting with Australian participant)

### 5.2.1 Analysis and Discussion of Moves

Table 5.5 summarised the distribution of moves in the task of Answering a trade enquiry by the Australian, the Non-Thai Asian, and the Thai2, and Thai1 groups.

**Table 5.5 Distribution of moves in the task of Answering a trade enquiry**

	Task part of Sequence 3	Task part of Sequence 3	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 1
<i>Moves</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Addressing	100	93.8	93.3	93.3
Establishing confidence	0	0	73.3	20
Answering a trade enquiry	100	100	100	100
Projecting positive prospect	43.8	25	40	6.7
Soliciting response	62.5	93.8	86.7	93.3
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc	87.5	100	86.7	100
Signing	100	93.8	93.3	100

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Addressing, Expressing gratitude/respect/etc, and Signing Moves***

Most participants from the Australian, Non-Thai Asian, and Thai1 groups adopt the same style for this set of moves in this task as in the previous task. While all the Thai1s adopt the English terms in addressing, about half of the Thai2s (53 %) choose to realise the **Addressing** move by use of the Thai honorific word ‘Khun’, due possibly to the nationality of the counterpart, see example 57.

(57) *Dear Khun Somsak*, (Prem, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

### ***Establishing confidence Move***

The move has been discussed in the previous task and in this task it is realised by only the Thai participants. A significantly higher proportion of the Thai1s (73.3 %) enact the move than the Thai2s (20 %). Some participants realise the **Establishing confidence** move within the **Offering trade** move as shown in Issarachon’s email (Example 4), while most realise it independently, egs.

- (58) I'm glad to introduce about our company Chevalier Bronze Col, Ltd. through the internet at <http://www.ChevalierBronze.co.th>. [sic]  
(Veera, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (59) Below is our company homepage.  
<http://www.ChevalierTrading.co.th>  
(ChaiChana, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

### ***Answering a trade enquiry Move***

This move contains the most important message in the email and it is enacted to achieve the main task of Answering a trade enquiry, in which a trade opportunity is offered by the counterpart. It is realised by all participants across the four groups. The move is normally placed in the middle of the email and realised through description. Apart from having the *Offering trade* act as the core of the move, participants also use other acts such as *Expressing appreciation of business*, *Referencing*, *Specifying details*, *Asking for further details of the trade enquiry*, *Indicating values of the product*, *Offering samples of the product*, *Offering incentives*, and *Using pressure tactics* acts. See Examples 3 and 4. Details of these acts and differences are discussed in the Analysis of acts under the Introducing trade Move below.

### ***Projecting positive prospect Move***

This move has been discussed in the Enquiring about trade task. In this task, there is a major difference in the realisation of this move by the four groups. About half of the Australian participants and the Thai1s (equally 43.8 %) use this move in comparison to only a quarter of the Non-Thai Asians (25 %) and only one Thai2 (6.7 %). With mutual profit projection and relationship establishment in the previous task, this move is realised with a strong projection of possible trade in this task, egs.

- (60) *I hope that you find our products suitable and we can have successful business in the future.* (Donna, Australian participant)
- (61) *Lastly, I hope our first business will be successful and make further relationship stronger between us.* [sic] (Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (62) *We hope those price are suitable and looking forward to service you soon.* [sic]  
(Saijathai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

### *Soliciting response Move*

In this task, this move is realised by most of the participants of the Non-Thai Asians (93.8 %) and the two Thai groups (86.7 and 93.3 %) compared to slightly over half of the Australians (62.5 %). The move is realised with several linguistic features in this task. Some are realised with a stronger request than a general invitation of response, egs.

- (63) *Please let us know whether the product satisfy your requirements.*  
(Issatri, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (64) *After you have visited our website, we hope very much to hearing any comment form you [sic].* (Peangjai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Some are realised with a promise to contact the counterpart at a later stage when the participant can properly attend to the counterpart's trade enquiry, for example:

- (65) *I will get back to you in the soonest few days with a catalogue and prices.*  
(Dennis, Australian participant)

Although mostly this move is placed towards the end of the email text, as in a business letter, some are structured with the move of **Answering a trade enquiry**, egs.

- (66) I am sending you an attachment with this email enclosed with the catalogue and if you are interested do email me by tomorrow. (Aram, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (67) Please visit our website (address) for more details on this product and feel free to contact me for any further information in this regard.  
(Premarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Some are reinforced by repetition of the move twice:

- (68) *If you are interested in our product and want to re-check the price with us, please contact me. If you need any more information, please get in touch.*  
(Nualnang, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (69) *If you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to hearing you soon [sic].*  
(Sawitri, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)



Some suggest the use of other communication medium such as telephone, fax, and a face-to face meeting, egs.

- (70) *Please call or fax us as to terms and conditions if you are interested.*  
(Theanchai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)
- (71) *If you want many details, pls feel free to make an appointment with us.*  
(Wilaiwan, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

## 5.2.2 Analysis and Discussion of Acts

### 5.2.2.1 Analysis of acts in the Establishing confidence move

Table 5.6 provides a summary of the distribution of acts in the Establishing confidence move within this task.

**Table 5.6 Distribution of acts in the Establishing confidence move**

	Task part of Sequence 3	Task part of Sequence 3	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 1
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Introducing oneself/company	0	0	73.3	20
Establishing credentials	0	0	46.7	13.3

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### *Introducing oneself/company Act, Establishing credentials Act & Acknowledging source of contact Act*

These three acts have been discussed in the previous task. In this task, only the two Thai groups realise the *Introducing oneself/company* and *Establishing credentials* acts, but the *Acknowledging source of contact* act is not included in their move. In comparison to the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in the previous task, the two Thai groups do not include the *Acknowledging source of contact* act. Moreover, the Thai1s

have a higher usage of the *Introducing oneself/company* and *Establishing credentials* acts than the Thai2s (73.3 vs. 46.7 % and 20 vs. 13.3 % respectively).

#### 5.2.2.2 Analysis of acts in the Answering a trade enquiry Move

Table 5.7 summarises the distribution of acts in the Introducing trade move in this task.

**Table 5.7 Distribution of acts in the Answering a trade enquiry move**

	Task part of Sequence 3	Task part of Sequence 3	Task part of Sequence 1	Task part of Sequence 1
<i>Acts</i>	Australian Participants (N=16)	Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)	Thai 1 Participants (N=15)	Thai 2 Participants (N=15)
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Expressing appreciation of business	6.3	37.5	93.3	100
Referencing	87.5	50	26.7	20
Offering trade	100	100	100	100
Specifying details	68.8	75	86.7	60
Asking for further details of trade enquiry	25	18.8	33.3	33.3
Indicating values of the product	31.5	18.8	20	13.3
Offering samples of the product	18.8	6.3	6.7	0
Offering incentives	25	62.5	20	20
Using pressure tactics	6.3	0	6.7	0

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

#### *Expressing appreciation of the business Act*

The act is generally realised in a remark of gratitude or thankfulness. It functions to acknowledge trade interest from the counterpart and helps to shape the direction of the email topic and to situate the *Offering trade* act in a positive atmosphere in order to encourage a trade opportunity. It presents the writer in a courteous and formal manner. The act is normally placed at the beginning of the **Answering a trade enquiry** move. In this type of email, the appreciation is either directly on the trade enquiry or indirectly on the email that contains such an enquiry. Almost all participants of the two Thai groups realise this act, whereas only about one-third of

the Non-Thai Asians (37.5 %) and almost none of the Australians (6.3 %) opt for this.

For example:

- (72) *I appreciate that you show such high interest in our electric heater.*  
(Don Goh, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (73) *I am very happy with your expression of interest in further products.*  
(Dennis, Australian participant)
- (74) *Thank you for your e-mail today.*  
(Kreangkrai, Thai participant interacting with Australian partner)

### ***Referencing Act***

The act in general functions to address the topic in the counterpart's previous email and to remind the counterpart of the topic. It also establishes a link between the participants' email and the counterpart's email. It signifies a response to the topic so that the participant can continue a dialogic correspondence with their counterpart. The act is usually placed at the beginning of the topic and realised with a reference indicator such as 're...', 'regarding,' 'in regard to,' 'with regards to,' 'with respect to,' 'as for,' 'as requested,' 'in reference to,' 'according to,' etc. It normally contains a reference indicator and a topic. In this task, most of the Australians use this act (87.5 %) compared to half of the Non-Thai Asians (50 %), which appears to reflect their differing group preferences. In contrast, only a few Thais across the two groups (about 20 %) use this act. Sometimes this act is realised in a phrase as in:

- (75) *Re heaters -*  
(Jeff, Australian participant)
- (76) *Regarding to your request for the electric heaters,*  
(Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (77) *With respect to electric heater,*  
(Fred, Australian participant)
- (78) *According to your request on description of product,*  
(Temjit, Thai participant interacting with Australian partner)
- (79) *As per your request,*  
(Prem, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

Some are realised in sentences, such as

- (80) *You have inquired about a supplier of electrical heater good for an overseas client of yours.* (Christine, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (81) *On your previous letter, we understand you are looking for electric heaters.* [sic]  
(Drew, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Offering trade Act***

All participants across the four groups realise the act. This act appears to be obligatory in the **Answering a trade enquiry** move as it contains an offer to trade. There are two kinds of trade offers in this act: offer to source the product (82) and offer the product (83), as shown in the examples below. The offer is also realised with a variety of ways, such as with different forms of an offer remark, description of product (86), or reference to a source of product information. It is placed toward the beginning of the move.

- (82) *I will find out if there are any suppliers.* (Maria, Australian participant)
- (83) *We have quality heaters at excellent prices with the major products available at ex-stock.* (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Forms of offers:

Offer remark:

- (84) *I am able to quote as follows:*  
(Ann, Australian participant)
- (84) *Currently we have many different electric heaters with different application and prices.* (Donald Wong, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Some offer remarks are expressions of willingness to offer, egs.

- (86) *We are more than happy to supply quotation per your request.*  
(James Chen, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (87) *We are pleased to present and show you the products we have and also the prices from our prices list.* [sic]  
(Keawgaew, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (88) *I would like to inform you, our products have many styles,* [sic]  
(Wilaiwan, Thai participant interacting with Thai partner)

Some offer remarks focus on assertion, egs.

- (89) *I think you have made the right choice by considering our products...*  
(Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (90) *We are agents for a number of reputable and reliable brands.*  
(Kim, Australian participant)

Description of product:

- (91) *Taking opportunity to introduce our electric heaters with its named PNLG 300, ...*  
[sic] (Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (92) *Our products are Statue which comes in a variety designs such as Dolphins, Bear, Lady and Boy as well as hardware appliances such as lamp stand, door handling, bolt, etc.* [sic] (Benjaporn, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Reference to source of product information such as a product catalogue distributed via post or an email attachment, egs.

- (93) In regard to issue of the heaters, *I am pleased to send you our product catalogue.*  
(Adam, Australian participant)
- (94) Regarding electric heaters *we have enclosed all details in the attached files.*  
(Lloyd, Australian participant)

Some are directing to a source of product information that is available on the Internet such as company website, egs.

- (95) *Please take a look our current catalogue on the web.* [sic]  
(Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (96) According to your request on description of products, *you can visit us on our own website containing details and pictures of product on <http://www.ChevalierTrading>*  
[sic] (Temjit, Thai participant interacting with Australian partner)

Company websites may include information not only about the products and trading terms, but also about the company, business credentials, etc. A company website can be used in the *Introducing oneself/company*, *Establishing credentials*, *Offering trade*, or *Specifying detail* acts. The identification of these acts, therefore, is based on the intention or type of act being realised in relation to the surrounding acts or moves. As shown in the example of Pimprapai's email below, she directs the counterpart to her company website which contains product information, trading conditions, and

company details. However, the company website is classified as an Offering trade act due to the antecedent Referencing act, referring to the trade enquiry. Her Introducing oneself/company act and the Specifying details (of the product) act come next to it.

**(97)Email Text**

**Acts**

As of your request for  
our products

**Referencing**

*that you could look into  
our website –  
<http://www.ChevalierTrading.co.th>*

**Offering trade**

*this website will show  
our company profile,*

**Introducing oneself/company**

product list and pricing all of  
products has install to this website.  
[sic]

**Specifying details**

(Pimprapai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

***Specifying details Act***

This act has been discussed previously in the task of Enquiring about trade, and also within the discussion of the Offering trade act above. In this task, the Specifying details act is realised to provide further details of the product. The Thai1s have a higher usage of the act (86.7 %) than the Thai2s (60 %). An example from this task:

(98) *I have attached catalogue and additional information on our range of heaters.*  
(Deen, Australian participant)

***Asking for further details Act***

The act contains a request for additional details of the trade enquiry, so that appropriate and particular information about trade can be provided. It functions to modify the *Offering trade* act and comes after it.. There are only slight differences in

the use of this act by the four groups. Most of the requests in this act are realised with 'please' or a conditional sentences, egs.

Request with 'please':

(99) *Please give me a rough estimate or how many will be required.* (Dennis, Australian participant)

Request in conditional sentences:

(100) *Could you please advise which items you are interested in and we can provide prices and trading terms on these products.* (Fred, Australian participant)

(101) *However, if we learn of your port of destination, we can inform you of the CIF price immediately.* (Wichuda, Thai participant interacting with Australian partner)

Moreover, some are realised with abbreviations and non-standard grammatical features, such as:

(102) *Please let us know more details about this, so we can give you the information asap.* (Kenny Chu, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(103) *Pls you give us bronze handicraft product styles as you require ... [sic]* (Marayart, Thai participant interacting with Australian partner)

Some include a list of enquiries, eg.

(104) *Anyway we can not quote you as this time because of we lack some information to make the satisfied price to you. May we have ask you more information as below;*  
- *What country will you export to your customers?*  
- *What kind of currency you prefer to quote price?*  
- *Would you make the scope of products (small piece for decoration or kitchen ware etc)?*  
- *What kind of terms and conditions you prefer to make?*  
*All above information are important for us to quote you the satisfied price. so please offer us their information because of we are so intention to serve you. [sic]*  
(Sawitri, Thai participant interacting with Australian partner)

### ***Indicating values of the product Act***

Like the *Offering trade* act, this act also contains a trade offer, but the details of the offer or the product are information aiming at convincing the counterpart to accept

the offer or to buy the product. It is therefore a persuasion and functions to assist the achievement of the *Offering trade* act. It is normally placed after the act and realised with descriptive. The Australians have a slightly higher usage of this act (31.5 %) than the other three groups (below 20 %).

- (105) *We sell our heaters to many countries including Singapore, New Zealand, Malaysia, and several European countries.* (Kim, Australian participant)
- (106) *Taking opportunity to introduce our electric heaters with its named PNLG 300, it is particularly suitable for your market for not only low price but also top quality, We have already had repeat orders from many Asian countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore..., PNLG 300 can supply high heat and save electricity. Otherwise it look very nice.* [sic] (Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (107) *A Handy Craft Products under brand Bronze (make in Thailand) is our new products which applies in modern design which made of best raw materials in Thailand therefore the prices is quite cheap but high quality. Bronze is best selling products of our company this year, ...* [sic]  
(Chedtha, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

### ***Offering incentives act***

In this task, the Offering incentives act pressures the counterpart to accept the trade deal or to buy the product after providing information and values of the trade. Like the Indicating values of product act, it functions to assist the achievement of the *Offering trade* act and it is placed behind the act. The act makes use of trade conditions as incentives as shown in the examples. The Non-Thai Asians have a much higher usage of this act (62.5 %) than the other three groups (about 20 %).

- (108) *Are you interested in becoming an agent for this product?*  
(Ann, Australian participant)
- (109) *Our company can also offer you the same 90 Day Credit on L/C.*  
(Charlie, Australian participant)
- (110) *FYI, for the large order, we can negotiate case by case.*  
(Don Goh, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (111) *Over 100 collections are available through our organisation at favourable discounts.*  
(Theanchai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)
- (112) *Pls note that the price as an attached file can be negotiated depending on the volume of the goods.*  
(Nuchanart, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)



Some of this act contains attractive details of the company that seem almost like business credentials. However, the information and intention in this act is slightly different from that in the *Establishing credentials* act. It contains brief and selected information about the company related to the product, which is much less than the information in the *Establishing credentials* act. It therefore suggests an intention of giving some incentives to get the counterpart's quick attention and decision to accept the trade offer or to buy the product. This kind of offering incentives act is placed at the beginning of the **Answering a trade enquiry** move and is found in only four emails of the Non-Thai Asian participants. It is not structured after the *Introducing oneself/company* act like the in the *Establishing credentials* act in the **Establishing confidence** move. Moreover, the *Establishing credentials* act has been enacted by these participants in their email written for the task of Enquiring about trade in the first sequence of interaction. Examples of this kind of offering incentives act:

- (113) As mentioned in my previous email, I am very thankful for bringing the electric heater opportunity to my attention. *Global One is a leading supplier in electric heaters in the local and international markets.* We have quality heaters at excellent prices with the major products available ex-stock. Please find the catalogue and pricing information attached. (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (114) As you mentioned in your email about electric heaters, *we are one of the leading suppliers of them.* Please take a look our current issue catalogue on the web. We have wide range of electric heaters with reasonable prices. We attached our quoted CIF LA, California prices. (Mimiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Offering samples of the product Act & Using pressure tactics Act***

Although these two acts are rarely used, they are persuasive strategies and function to assist the achievement of the *Offering trade* act. The two acts are realised with a business dealing that is likely to entice the counterpart to accept the trade deal. The trade conditions in the *Using pressure tactics* act are usually offered with time constraints, such as a favourable condition or product is available within a limited period, in order to pressure the counterpart to buy the product. The two acts are normally placed towards the end of the **Answering a trade enquiry** move.

Examples of the *Offering product samples* act:

- (115) *In addition we have shipped one of each product as a sample today by airfreight so you will receive in two days.* (Bill, Australian participant)

Examples of the *Using pressure tactics* act:

- (116) *We are pleased to inform that during the New Year Festival, our company offers the special promotion for our customer to get the 10% discount if ordering the product valued from 1000 US\$ before 31 December 2001.*  
(Wichuda, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

### 5.2.3 Discussion of structure of moves and acts

When answering a trade enquiry the following is the most common structure of moves and related acts employed in the email across the three groups of participants. There are no significant differences in the email structure between groups.

#### Moves and Acts

Addressing

Establishing credentials

Introducing oneself/company

Establishing credentials

Answering a trade enquiry

Expressing appreciation of business

Referencing

Offering trade

Specifying details

Asking for further details of the enquiry

Indicating values of the product

Offering samples

Offering incentives

Using pressure tactics.

Projecting positive prospect

Soliciting response
















































































Expressing gratitude/respect/etc

Signing

### 5.2.4 Usage preference of each group

The analysis shows that there are some differences between groups in their usage preferences for moves and acts (see Table 5.8). With a criterion of usage preference above 80 % across the four groups, the **Answering a trade enquiry** move, and

**Table 5.8: Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Answering a trade enquiry task**

Moves & related Acts	Australians interacting with Thai	Non-Thai Asians interacting with Thai	Thais interacting with Australian	Thais interacting with Thai
<b>Addressing</b>				
<b>Establishing confidence</b>				
Introducing oneself/company				
Establishing credentials				
<b>Answering a trade enquiry</b>				
Expressing appreciation of business				
Referencing				
Offering trade				
Specifying details				
Asking for further details				
Indicating values of the product				
Offering samples of the product				
Offering incentives				
Using pressure tactics				
<b>Projecting positive prospect</b>				
<b>Soliciting response</b>				
<b>Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc</b>				
<b>Signing</b>				
 = Always used (100%)  = Very frequently used (81- 99%)				
 = Frequently used (61- 80%)  = Sometimes used (41- 60%)				
 = Infrequently used (21- 40%)  = Hardly used (1- 20%)				
 = Never used (0%)				

related *Offering trade* act, the **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves are virtually mandatory. This suggests that these moves and related acts are the most common and important to be realised in the email written for this task. The finding that the **Soliciting response** move and the **Specifying details** act are used by between 40 – 80 % of participants across the four groups suggests that this move and this act are often used also in this type of email.

There are some differences in the usage of moves and related acts among the four groups of participants. Only the two Thai groups realise the **Establishing confidence** move and related **Introducing oneself/company** and **Establishing credentials** acts. Between the two Thai groups, the Thai1s have a much higher usage than the Thai2s. The Non-Thai Asians have comparatively lower usage of the **Projecting positive prospect** move and the **Soliciting response** move than the Australians and Thai1s, and the Thai2s hardly use the **Projecting positive prospect** move. The two Thai groups have the highest usage of the *Expressing appreciation of business* act, the Australians have the highest usage of the **Referencing** act, the Thai1s have the highest usage of the **Specifying details** act, while the Non-Thai Asians have the highest usage of the **Offering incentives** act.

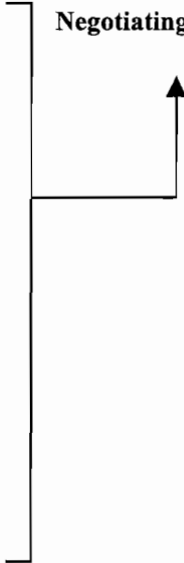
### 5.3 Task of requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment

Data was collected from three groups of participants – the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1s. The task of requesting a price reduction and a credit payment is situated in the second sequence of communicative events for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians. For the Thai1s, the task is third in the sequence and they have traded with the counterpart in the earlier sequence. Therefore, when the **Addressing**, **Expressing respect, gratitude, etc.**, and **Signing** moves were used in the email written for both trades or tasks, their usages were included in the analysis of text of both tasks. The situation of the task is that participants have received an email reply from their Thai counterpart regarding their trade enquiry and have looked at the details of the product and are interested in making a purchase. However, they are not quite satisfied with the trade conditions. They want to negotiate for a better price and

also need favourable credit terms to pay for the product. The task requires participants to write an email to their counterpart to fulfil this purpose.

The following are examples of email written by a Thai participant and an Australian participant.

Example 5:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Mrs. Elizabeth,</i>		Addressing
<i>Thank you very much for your information.</i>	Acknowledging receipt of message	Negotiating trade term (s) 
<i>Would you kindly quote your best price more lower than your current offered price?</i>	Asking for price reduction	
<i>Our customer will place orders to us if the price is very competitive and we really need the order. Frankly speaking, our margin is quite low comparing with other products.</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>Regarding credit on payment term,</i>	Referencing	
<i>we would appreciate if you can provide us a 120-day credit terms to our customer</i>	Asking for credit payment	
<i>We are looking forward to hearing your acceptance.</i>		Soliciting agreement
<i>Regards,</i>		Expressing respect
<i>Temjit</i>		Signing

(Temjit, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

### Example 6:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Montri,</i>		Addressing
<i>Thanks so much for your prompt reply to my email of 26<sup>th</sup> of April.</i>	Acknowledging receipt of message	Negotiating trade term (s)
<i>I have looked at your Website and I am impressed by the range of products.</i>	Expressing interest in trade	
<i>We propose to distribute your products to 150 customers across Australia. We currently supply \$3 million in gift and household products to these stores. We import most of our product range and deal with a number of manufacturers in Australia.</i>	Offering incentives	
<i>As this bronze line is currently unknown in the Australian market we will have to invest considerable resources into marketing.</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>We feel that payment terms of 90 days would give us the time to achieve this effectively.</i>	Asking for credit payment	
<i>The prices you have indicated are a little high compared to similar lines from China and Taiwan.</i>	Asking for price reduction	
<i>If we sell this line at the middle of the price range, we will achieve much higher sales.</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>If you could strike an average price of \$50.00, then we think the business would go well in this market.</i>	Specifying details	
<i>Please let me know your thoughts on the above and call me if you wish to discuss anything.</i>		Soliciting response
<i>Kind regards</i>		Expressing respect
<i>Ann Dairy Director</i>		Signing
(Ann, Australian participant)		

### 5.3.1 Analysis and Discussion of Moves

Table 5.9 shows the distribution of moves in the task of Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment.

**Table 5.9 Distribution of moves in the task of Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment**

	Task part of Sequence 2	Task part of Sequence 2	Task part of Sequence 3
<i>Moves</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Addressing	100	93.8	93.3
Negotiating trade term (s)	100	100	100
Soliciting agreement	62.5	75	53.3
Projecting positive prospect	56.3	31.5	6.7
Soliciting response	50	50	46.7
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc	100	93.8	93.3
Signing	100	93.8	93.3

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

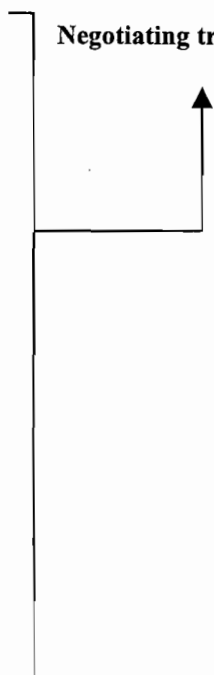
### *Negotiating trade term (s) Move*

This move is realised by all participants across the three groups and it contains the most important message in the email. It expresses the negotiating purpose of requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment. Due to the two activities in the task, the move is composed of two core acts: **Asking for price reduction** act and **Asking for credit payment** act. The move is also realised with the **Acknowledging receipt of message**, **Expressing interest in trade**, **Expressing main intention**, **Referencing**, **Stating the issue of high price**, **Providing reasons**, **Specifying details**, **Asking for samples of the product**, and **Offering incentives** acts (discussed further below).

The move is structured towards the beginning of the email. Participants across the three groups realise the move with an almost equivalent set of these acts and structure. The similarities suggest their common negotiation strategies and styles in this move and the influence of the international trade business context. However, there are some differences between individuals as shown in the email examples 5 and 6 and the moves example below. In the examples 5 and 6, the structure of the move

can be divided into two parts with the **Asking for price reduction** act and the **Asking for credit payment** act as the core of each part. In contrast, the structure of the move illustrated below is based on only one of the two acts realised together at the end.

#### Example 7:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Thanks you very much for your response about the price and product details</i>	Acknowledging receipt of message	
<i>After looking into your prices, I found your price is higher than what we bought before.</i>	Stating issue of high prices	
<i>We normally pay around xxx.</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>We are looking for a long term and stable suppliers so we can place repeat orders in the future. Our first order will be xxx and our yearly order will be xxx. You can see the potential of the business.</i>	Offering incentives	
<i>To buy from you, we would like to know if you could give us better price based on the quantity of the order,</i>	Asking for price reduction	
<i>we also need you to give us a 90-day credit on payment terms under L/C [sic].</i>	Asking for credit payment	
(Kenny Chu, Non-Thai Asian participant)		

#### ***Soliciting agreement Move***

This move functions to sum up the negotiation process and it is also one of the persuasion strategies that participants use in their negotiation to convince the counterpart to agree with their favourable trade conditions. It is often structured after the **Negotiating trade term (s)** move towards the end of email. The move is realised with a request in several linguistic forms, levels of directness and length. Most of the Thais realise this move as a request with the verb 'please'. This move is used by over half of participants across the three groups, which suggests that the move is deemed significant to be included in this negotiating email. However, the Thais tend to use this move (53.3 %) less than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians (62.5 & 75 % respectively).



Request with the verb 'please':

- (115) *Please confirm in return promptly. Hope you can complete my requirements...[sic].* (Chedtha, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request with modal verbs:

- (116) *Could you please consider these two concerns.* [sic]. (Kim, Australian participant)
- (117) *We would like to hear another consideration of those estimations, and I strongly believe that we will be able to reach* [sic]. (Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of conditional sentence:

- (118) *Should these terms be suitable please raise a per forma invoice.* (Paul, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of appreciation:

- (119) *Our agreement on the point would be appreciated.* (Jeromy Liew, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (120) *Thank you for your understanding and support as usual.* (Nongkran, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request in form of a statement of suggestion:

- (121) *Let us come to some agreement,...* (Charlie, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of expectation:

- (122) *We hope you can accept...* (Lloyd, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of need:

- (123) *If products on offer cannot be reduced down to our expectations, then we will need to reconsider other options.* (Christine, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of statement of assistance:

- (124) *Considering that..., coming to an agreement on the above two issues will greatly help to move things forward.* (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request with some incentives:

- (125) *Mr. Montri, I sincerely hope you will accept our request for price and modifications*

*in terms of business, so we can go ahead and place our first order with you. We are sure that this is a very small matter for an established company like yours, and you will have the foresight to look for larger gains while doing business with us.*  
(Premarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Projecting positive prospect Move***

In this task, this move is used as a persuasion strategy to convince the counterpart to agree to the trade conditions by projecting a win-win relationship and business benefits. It functions to support the **Negotiating trade term (s)** move. In the Enquiring about trade and Answering a trade enquiry tasks, the move is realised with a general projection statement, but in this task it is realised with a more assertive and convincing projection through three kinds of anticipation statements: wish, possibility, and affirmation as shown in the examples. The affirmation has the strongest degree of persuasion. The Australians realise this move (56.3 %) more than the Non-Thai Asians (31.5 %), and the Thais rarely use this move (6.7 %). Examples of the move in this task,

Anticipation with wish:

- (126) *We look forward to a lasting business relationship with you.* (Issatri, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Anticipation with possibility:

- (127) *In closing, the opportunity is likely to prove profitable for both parties...*  
(Fred, Australian participant)

Anticipation with affirmation:

- (128) *... I am sure that this venture will prove to be profitable and satisfying for both yourself and us.* (Charlie, Australian participant)
- (129) *I do believe it will be an excellent opportunity to do business with you, ... [sic].*  
(James Chen, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (130) *I stress again that we...would like to establish a strong trading partnership with you.*  
(Kim, Australian participant)

### 5.3.2 Analysis and Discussion of Acts

#### 5.3.2.1 Analysis of acts in the Negotiating trade term (s) move

Table 5. 10 shows the distribution of acts in the Negotiating trade term (s) move.

**Table 5.10 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating trade term (s) move**

	Task part of Sequence 2	Task part of Sequence 2	Task part of Sequence 3
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Acknowledging receipt of message	93.8	93.8	80
Expressing interest in trade	81.3	87.5	73.3
Expressing main intention	31.3	6.7	6.7
Referencing	0	18.8	46.7
Stating the issue of high price	31.3	43.8	53.3
Providing reasons	68.8	62.5	66.7
Asking for price reduction	100	100	100
Asking for credit payment	100	100	100
Specifying details	12.5	12.5	6.7
Offering incentives	43.8	31.5	33.3

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

#### *Acknowledging receipt of message Act*

This act generally contains an acknowledgment of information in the interactant's email. It functions like an interactive bridge between the participant and the counterpart. It links their correspondence and facilitates the flow of a dialogic interaction. This act is placed at the start of the email text. Most of the time the act is realised as an expression of appreciation for the information or email, egs.

(131) *Thank your for your prompt reply and the product information.*  
(Donald Wong, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(132) *Thanks for your quick response. I had a good look at your Website, ...*  
(Theanchai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Some are realised in a direct statement of receipt of the information:

- (133) *In reference to your email. [sic] (Maria, Australian participant)*
- (134) *We have look throuth the introduction of your products and price list. [sic]*  
(Don Goh, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Referencing Act***

In this task, the use of this act is a stylistic choice in structuring the email. As there are two topics of negotiation in the task, some participants divide their **Negotiating trade term (s)** move into two parts and realise the act at the beginning of second part before the **Asking for credit payment** act. However, some participants apply paragraph structure to signify separate topics without realising this act. There is a difference in the realisation of the act. About half of the Thais (46.7 %) use the act in comparison to none of the Australians and only one-fifth of the Non-Thai Asian (18.8 %).

- (135) *Refers to electric heaters, ... (Kreangkrai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*
- (136) *Secondly, re. the payment terms - ... (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

### ***Expressing main intention Act***

The use of this act is also a compositional stylistic option to signpost and reinforce the writer's purpose. It functions to signify the topic and is placed towards the beginning of the email. The number of topics or main messages is briefly given in the realisation of this act. In this task, the Australians realise the act (31.3 %) more than The Non-Thai Asians and the Thais (equally 6.7 %).

- (137) *However there are two issues which I wish to raise with you. (Adam, Australian participant)*
- (138) *However, I would like to bring to your attention, and would like to establish our negotiations on your price quoted for the bronze mantels, and our methods of payment which is a 90-day credit on payment terms under letter of credit(LC). (Stuart Jeang, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

## Expressing interest in trade Act

In this task, this act is realised to expression a much more intense interest than that of the same act at the earlier stage of interaction in the Enquiring about trade task. The expression of interest focusses on the product or trade.

- (139) *I **have confirmed** with my customer that the Bronze handicraft item is suitable for inclusion in his line.* (Paul, Australian participant)
- (140) *I **really want** to do business with you...* (Nualnang, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)
- (141) *From the discussion with our clients with the provided website, we could explore the further understandings. Moreover, my client has been much estimated to promote those products with our dealing campaign. We are **very much keen** to import these products below.* (Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

## Stating the issue of high price Act

This act is realised with a commentary statement of prices and is used as an indirect request of a price reduction or a prelude to a request of price discount. It functions as a negotiation strategy and is structured before the **Asking for price reduction** act. Mostly this act is realised with a negative statement after a positive or neutral statement. Normally, it is started with a contrastive connector ‘but,’ ‘however,’ ‘unfortunately,’ etc. For example,

- (142) ***Unfortunately** Montri, the prices very high ... [sic]* (Sam, Australian participant)
- (143) *I am interested variously model **but** prices are not competitive. [sic]* (Sawitri, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)
- (144) ***However**, there is some problems with your price list, cauze the quoted prices are too high over our acceptance. [sic]* (James Chen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Some are realised with a sequential adverb eg.

- (145) ***Firstly**, the quoted prices from your last email are rather high compared to quotes for similar products I have received from other local Thai bronze traders.* (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (146) ***Secondly**, I wish to express a slight concern about the level of your prices.* (Don, Australian participant)

Some are realised with a comparison of prices eg.

- (147) *On going through your price list, we found them to be quite on **the higher side**, comparing with similar products and quality in the market.* (Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (148) *We are interested but the prices are **more expensive than** other supplier.* [sic] (Saijaithai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

### ***Providing reasons Act***

Providing reasons act is another persuasion strategy that participants use to convince their counterpart to agree to their requests. It functions to support the **Asking for price reduction act** and the **Asking for credit payment act** and is placed next to the two obligatory acts. This act is realised in a factual statement, which is normally a reason, but not necessarily with causal connectors such as 'because,' 'as', 'due to,' etc. The reasons range from enticing benefits, big volume of purchase, unfavourable situations, etc.

#### **Benefits:**

- (149) *This commitment from you will greatly assist the market development of these products.*(Donald Wong, Non-Thai Asian participant)

#### **Normal trade practices:**

- (150) *We also request terms of payment to be established as LC at 90 days as set with the majority of our suppliers in the region. This is a policy set by management and therefore conducting business with vendors with differing payment terms is avoided.* (Sam, Australian participant)

#### **Unfavourable market situations:**

- (151) *Before you do so, however, I regret to inform you that I believe the Australian market will not support the base prices you have quoted.* (Steve, Australian participant)

#### **Unfavourable financial situations:**

- (152) *At Global One, we need to negotiate the best possible prices, because if they are too high we will be unable to pursue this trading opportunity.* (Don, Australian participant)

#### Unfavourable import/export process situations:

- (153) *Because we have order 100 set/month and customs charges & import charges in Thailand very expensive.* (Thuya, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

#### Competitiveness:

- (154) *Our client's competitors are able to obtain better prices from places like Bali. To enable us promote Thai products we need to be able to compete with them.* (Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant)

#### Volume of purchase:

- (155) *As you can imagine our volumes are very high and due to this the majority of our suppliers take this into consideration and allow a 90-day payment period.* (Bob, Australian participant)

### ***Offering incentives Act***

In this task, this act is realised with an offer of large amount purchase, more trades, and further business relationship. The usage of the act by about a third of participants across the three groups suggests that it is one of the important persuasion strategies in trade negotiation.

- (156) *Please keep in mind our first order will be \$AUD30,000 plus.* (Bill, Australian participant)
- (157) *If everything goes well we might consider a continuous demand on your product on a term contract.* (Drew, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Asking for price reduction & Asking for credit payment Act***

These two acts are the core in the **Negotiation trade term (s)** move. They contain the most important messages of the move and are used by all participants. The two acts are realised with a request of a price reduction or a deferred payment. The request is realised in an informative statement (similar to the **Stating issue of high price act**), expression of appreciation, wish, want, need, assistance, invitations, suggestions, questions, and offers. Participants have individual preferences in their choice of linguistic realisation of these two acts and the two acts are often realised in different linguistic forms within one email. Most participants structure these two acts

separately in the move and support each of them with other types of acts such as **Providing reasons**, **Specifying details**, etc. This results in two groups of acts with the **Asking for price reduction** or the **Asking for credit payment** act as the core of each group within the move as shown in Example 1 and 2. Only a few participants connect the two acts together within one compound sentence or two simple sentences as shown in the example from Kenny Chu in the **Negotiation trade term (s)** move (Email example 7). Examples of the acts:

Request in form of an informative statement:

- (158) *I will accept your price on the term that you provide us with credit of 90 days.*  
(Dennis, Australian participant)
- (159) *However, the prices you listed on the webpage were a bit higher than we expected.*  
(Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of an expression of appreciation:

- (160) *If possible, it would be grateful if you could re-quote the price for us.*  
(Benjaporn, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request in form of an expression of wish:

- (161) *However, I wish to negotiate the prices further and look at the possibility of gaining a 90-day letter of credit with your company.* (Deen, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of need:

- (162) *We also need a 120-day credit on payment under letter of credit.*  
(Nongkran, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request in form of a statement of invitation:

- (163) *As such, I would invite you to consider the possibility of extending your terms of credit for the purpose of this exchange, if it were to go ahead.* (Don, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of suggestion:

- (164) *May I suggest that you could perhaps make some allowance on your quoted prices ...*  
(Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a statement of assistance:

- (165) *And it would be help us a lot if you can give us a 120 days credit on payment term after L/C. [sic]* (Kreangkrai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)



Request in form of an offer:

- (166) *..., and the best we can offer is 90 days credit payment against LC.*  
(Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a question:

- (167) *Will you please consider 90 days after sight payment on an unsecured basis?*  
(Jeff, Australian participant)
- (168) *Could you please match the price?*  
(Chedtha, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request with the verbs 'request,' 'require,' 'ask for,' 'please':

- (169) *And the credit terms we require are on 90 day terms.* (Adam, Australian participant)
- (170) *Further, we request for a 90 days credit period under L/C terms, ...*  
(Issatri, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (171) *Please kindly offer us the credit term 120 days as well.*  
(Issarachon, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request with modal verbs:

- (172) *I would like you to revise your price once again ...*  
(Peangjai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Mixed requests:

- (173) *My concerns are:*  
1. *Products **appear** too expensive for the market here in Australia. ...*  
2. *I have spoken to my manager who **requests** that the LC at sight be extended to 90 days credit.*  
(Kim, Australian participant)
- (174) ***We hope** that there is room for Negotiation and **we kindly ask** that you requote and also suggest the terms be 90 days credit on payment under L/C.* (Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### 5.3.3 Discussion of structure of moves and acts

The following is the most common structure of moves and related acts in the email for this task across the three groups of participants. There are no significant differences in the email structure between groups.

## Moves and Acts

Addressing

Negotiating trade term (s)

Acknowledging receipt of message

Expressing interest in trade

Expressing main intention

Referencing

Stating the issue of high price

Asking for price reduction

Specifying details

Providing reasons

Offering incentives

Referencing

Asking for credit payment

Specifying details

Providing reasons

Offering incentives

Soliciting agreement

Projecting positive prospect

Soliciting response

Expressing gratitude/respect/etc



























































Signing

### 5.3.4 Usage preference of each group

The usage preferences of the three groups in moves and acts are provided in the Table 5.11. Applying the criterion of over 80 % usage across the three groups, the **Negotiating trade term (s)** move and the related *Asking for price reduction* and *Asking for credit payment* acts, and the **Addressing, Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves are virtually mandatory in this task. The **Negotiating trade term (s)** move and the related *Asking for price reduction* and *Asking for credit payment* acts are realised to achieve the main activities in the task. The set of **Addressing, Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves tends to suggest the business email format.

With a criterion of usage preference of between 60 – 80 % across the three groups, it is found that additional acts to the above list are very frequently adopted. These are the *Acknowledging receipt of message* act, *Expressing interest in trade* act, and the *Providing reasons* act.

**Table 5.11: Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment task**

Moves & related Acts	Australians interacting with Thai	Non-Thai Asians interacting with Thai	Thais interacting with Australian
Addressing			
Negotiating trade term (s)			
Acknowledging receipt of message			
Expressing interest in trade			
Expressing main intention			
Referencing			
Stating the issue of high price			
Asking for price reduction			
Asking for credit payment			
Providing reasons			
Specifying details			
Offering incentives			
Soliciting agreement			
Projecting positive prospect			
Soliciting response			
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc			
Signing			
<div>  = Always used (100%)  = Very frequently used (81- 99%) </div> <div>  = Frequently used (61- 80%)  = Sometimes used (41- 60%) </div> <div>  = Infrequently used (21- 40%)  = Hardly used (1- 20%) </div> <div>  = Never used (0%) </div>			

There are some differences in the usage preferences for the **Soliciting agreement** move, **Projecting positive prospect** move, **Soliciting response** move, *Expressing main intention* act, *Referencing* act, *Stating issue of high price* act, *Specifying details* act, and the *Offering incentives* act. The Australians tend to have a higher usage preference for the *Expressing main intention* act, *Offering incentives* act, and the **Projecting positive prospect** move than the other two groups. The Thai1s tend to have a higher usage preference for the *Referencing* act than the other two groups. The usage preference for the *Stating the issue of high price* act of the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1s tend to be higher than the Australians, while the preference for the **Soliciting agreement** move of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians is higher than for the Thai1s. The **Soliciting response** move and the *Specifying details* act are equally and moderately preferred across the three groups. In the next chapter, these differences will be further discussed drawing on the introspective data.

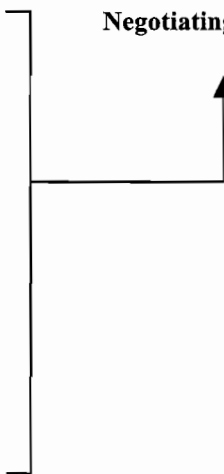
## 5.4 Task of answering requests for price reduction and deferred payment

Data was collected from all four groups of participants for this task. The situation of the task is that in the previous sequence of interaction participants have answered their counterpart's trade enquiry with details of trade and product, and in this current sequence they receive an email from the counterpart requesting a price reduction and credit payment. The task then involves participants in a negotiation activity in which participants are required to bargain with their counterpart on these two trade conditions. Participants are required to accommodate only one request, either to concede to reduce the prices or to allow credit payment. Participants are also required to urge the counterpart to buy their product. The task is situated in the fourth sequence of communicative events for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in which they have traded with the counterpart in some earlier sequences. For the two Thai groups, the task is second in the sequence. Therefore, when the Addressing, Expressing respect, gratitude, etc., and Signing moves were used in the email written


for both trades or tasks, their usages were included in the analysis of text of both tasks.

The following are examples of email written by an Australian participant and a Thai2 participant.

Example 8:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Montri,</i>		Addressing
In regard to your earlier request,	Referencing	Negotiating Trade Term (s) 
we are able to offer a 10% price reduction as requested,	Granting a request	
as we feel it will benefit our continued relationship.	Providing reasons	
However, due to our financial requirements	Providing reasons	
we are unable to offer 120 days credit terms.	Declining a request	
What we can offer is 90 days credit terms, as previously offered by yourself.	Offering incentives	
I hope these terms are able to meet your requirements.		Soliciting agreement
<i>Many thanks.</i>		Expressing gratitude
<i>Deen</i> <i>(Deen, Australian participant)</i>		Signing

### Example 9:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Attn; K. Somsak</i>		Addressing
<i>Thank you for your reply.</i>	Acknowledging receipt of message	Negotiating Trade Term (s)
<i>We consider both of 90-day credit term &amp; about discount product price,</i>	Referencing	
<i>we glad to accept about credit term,</i>	Granting a request	
<i>but about discount product price,</i>	Referencing	
<i>we would like to inform you for economic like this situation &amp; this is our first business,</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>I just have talk with sales manager, he said our quotation is low &amp; suitable,</i>	Declining a request	
<i>we'll offer more discount for next shipment to you. OK. ?</i>	Offering incentives	
<i>B. Rgrds,</i>		Expressing gratitude
<i>Wilaiwan</i> <i>[sic]</i>		Signing
<i>(Wilaiawan, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)</i>		

#### 5.4.1 Analysis and Discussion of Moves

The distribution of moves in the task are summarised in Table 5.12.

**Table 5.12 Distribution of moves in the task of Answering requests of a price reduction & a deferred payment**

	Task part of Sequence 4	Task part of Sequence 4	Task part of Sequence 2	Task part of Sequence 2
<i>Moves</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Addressing	100	100	86.7	100
Negotiating trade term (s)	100	100	100	100
Soliciting agreement	50	62.5	46.7	40
Asking for a purchase order	43.8	62.5	26.7	53.3
Projecting positive prospect	6.3	25	6.7	0
Soliciting response	50	12.5	46.7	46.7
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc	81.3	100	100	100
Signing	100	93.8	93.3	93.3

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### *Negotiating trade term (s) Move*

In this task, this move is realised to achieve the main task of answering a request of price reduction and a request of credit payment. Due to the two answers in the task (conceding one request and rejecting the other), it is composed of two core acts: Granting the request act and Declining the request act. It is also realised with Acknowledging requests of message, Expressing appreciation of business, Referencing, Specifying details, Providing reasons, Offering incentives, and Using pressure tactics acts. The move is structured at the beginning of the email text and participants across the four groups realise the move with almost a similar set of these acts and structure. However, there are some differences between individuals as shown in the examples 8 and 9. In the example 8, the structure of the move is composed of only one part with the two core acts structured together. In contrast, in the example 9, the structure of the move can be divided into two parts with the core act in each part.

### *Asking for a purchase order Move*

This move contains an urge for a trade. It functions to support the achievement of the Negotiating trade term (s) move by persuading the counterpart to finalise their decision. Instruction in the task requires participants to persuade their counterpart to purchase their product. The move is placed towards the end of email and often after the Soliciting agreement move. It is realised with a request in a variety of lexico-grammatical features such as with the verb 'please', affirmation, appreciation, expectation, suggestion, and need as shown in the examples. Only about half of participants of the Australians (43.8 %), the Non-Thai Asians (62.5 %), and the Thai2s (53.3 %) realise this move in comparison to a quarter of the Thai1s (26.7 %).

Request with the verb 'please':

(175) *Please place an order at your convenience.* (Don, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of affirmation:

(176) *..., and can assure you that as soon as you place an order, it will be deal with promptly [sic].* (Nuchanart, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request in form of a statement of appreciation:

(177) *It would be great if you would place your order at once after you have considered choosing us as your supplier.* (Peangjai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request in form of a statement of expectation:

(178) *Thanks for your understanding and hope you can place your order with us shortly.* (Lloyd, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of suggestion:

(179) *This is the best offer you are going to receive, therefore I recommend that you place an order.* (Donna, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of need:

(180) *..., and as such we would need to receive an order within the short terms.* (Adam, Australian participant)



### *Projecting positive prospect Move*

In this task, the move is hardly used and at most by only a quarter of the Non-Thai Asians (25 %). It is realised with an anticipation of further relationship as shown in the choice of words that connote an extension of relationship such as ‘greater,’ ‘further,’ etc.

- (181) *I sincerely hope this small matter should not come in the way of establishing a **greater** relationship between our companies...* (Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)
- (182) We would like to **continue further** business with you, ...  
(Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### *Soliciting response Move*

In this task the move is hardly used by the Non-Thai Asians (12.5 %) compared to by about half of the other three groups.

## 5.4.2 Analysis and Discussion of Acts

Refer to Table 5.13 for a summary of the distribution of acts in the Negotiating trade term(s) move.

**Table 5.13 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating trade term (s) move**

	Task part of Sequence 4	Task part of Sequence 4	Task part of Sequence 2	Task part of Sequence 2
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Acknowledging receipt of message	25	37.5	40	60
Expressing appreciation of business	18.8	25	26.7	26.7
Referencing	56.2	50	66.7	46.7
Granting a request	100	100	100	100
Declining a request	100	100	100	100
Specifying details	6.3	37.5	6.7	13.3
Providing reasons	100	75	73.3	86.7
Offering incentives	43.8	18.8	53.3	46.7
Using pressure tactics	12.5	18.8	13.3	13.3

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Acknowledging receipt of message Act***

This act has been discussed in the previous task. The Thai2s realise the act considerably more (60 %) than the other three groups (below 40 %).

### ***Referencing Act***

In this task, the major difference is between the two Thais groups. The Thai1s realise this act (66.7 %) more than the Thai2s (46.7 %).

### ***Specifying details Act***

In this task, the act contains further details of the agreement and disagreement such as price, credit terms, or other trade conditions. A number of the Non-Thai Asians (37.5 %) realise this act, in comparison to almost none of the other three groups. This is most likely due to their group preference in structuring and realising the *Granting a request* and *Declining a request* acts and other related acts. These Non-Thai Asians provide details in a separate act from the two acts as shown in the email of Issatri. In contrast, most participants of the other three groups include these details within the two acts or other related acts such as the *Offering incentives* act shown in Deen's email in Example 8.

(183) We are pleased offer the 10% price reduction as an exception however, the 120 days credit term is not possible as we have very strict payment terms with our supplier.  
We can give you 90 days credit term under LC. (Issatri, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Providing reasons Act***

This act has been discussed in the previous task. In this task, most of the reasons given in the act to support the *Granting a request* act are development in trade relationship and benefits. Reasons supporting the *Declining a request* act range from normal trade practices, third party's requirements, unfavourable situations, product quality, etc. The two Thai groups tend to mention product quality as a reason. All the Australians realise the act, compared to about 75 % of the other three groups.

### Development in trade relationship and benefits:

- (184) However, *due to our trading relationship*, we are able to comply to your 10% reduction in price. (Dennis, Australian participant)
- (185) As well as that, we will reduce our prices by 10% *to aid the development of this customer*. (Donald Wong, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### Normal trade practices:

- (186) However, it is our company policy *that 90 days credit is the maximum we can give*. (Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### Third party's requirements:

- (187) ..., *however*, due to the supply deal we have with the producer *I cannot supply on 120 day terms*. (Paul, Australian participant)

### Unfavourable situations:

- (188) *The current business climate here in Australia is not perfect for export, we have incurred considerable losses with the increase in the currency as the USD reduces. Due to this we have had to hold discussions with all our customers and advise that we are tightening the current credit being held by company*. (Bill, Australian participant)

### Best offers:

- (189) ..., *unfortunately Mr. Montri, the price quoted had already been reduced to the lowest price possible and we could not reduce this any further...* (Stuart Jieng, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### Product quality:

- (190) *As you need us to revise the prices, we think that our prices are reasonable due to the quality of the products*. (Niramon, Thai participant interacting Thai counterpart)

### ***Offering incentives Act***

As discussed in the previous tasks, the trade conditions used as incentives in this act varies on task. In this negotiation task, trade conditions are price discount based on purchase volume, deferred payment period, continuing trades, further negotiation, special treats, commissions, promises to grant requests in the next trade, counter offers of credit payment terms, etc. Only a few Non-Thai Asians (18.8 %) realise the act compared to about half of the other three groups. There is no difference in the choice of trade conditions among the four groups.

#### Price discount based on purchase volume:

- (191) However, *for large orders*, we please to discount you 5% of web-site price [sic].  
(Sawitri, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

#### Price discount based on deferred payment period:

- (192) ..., I can give you 2% for 45 days, 3% for 30 days and if you can pay within 10 days I can give 4% to you. All of this, it depend on qualifications (type) of product and quantity that you will order [sic]. (Keawgaew, Thai participant interacting Thai counterpart)

#### Price discount based on continuing trades:

- (193) We are pleased to offer you *on the 3<sup>rd</sup> shipment* on discount 10%.  
(Pumarin, Thai participant interacting Australian counterpart)

#### Further negotiation:

- (194) *Please give us more details for the product you interest, we might reconsider the price and giving you the best that we can* [sic].  
(Yaowaluck, Thai participant interacting Thai counterpart)

#### Commissions:

- (195) *We are still willing to give you 2% commission as a manner.*  
(Chedtha, Thai participant interacting Australian counterpart)

#### Special treats:

- (196) We agree to provide 90 days credit term under LC, *which we never given to any customer* [sic]. (Nualnang, Thai participant interacting Australian counterpart)

#### Promises:

- (197) *However, I will keep this in mind and if at any later stage this becomes feasible, I will definitely let u know.* (Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

#### Counter offers of credit payment terms:

- (198) What we can offer is 90 days credit terms, *as previously offered by yourself.*  
(Deen, Australian participant)

#### Other conditions:

- (199) *We can accommodate your request for 10% price adjustment on the heaters subject to a minimum initial order of 1FCL.* (Jeff, Australian participant)

### ***Granting a request Act***

As the task requires participants to negotiate on price and deferred payment, this act contains participants' compliance to one of the counterpart's requests for a price discount and a deferred payment. The act is one of the two core acts in the **Negotiating trade term (s)** move. Most participants across the four groups enact the *Granting a request* before the *Declining a request*, which shows their common steps in negotiation. The ordering structure of the two acts suggests that most participants prefer to deliver a positive answer prior to a negative one. The act is realised with an agreement in five types of lexico-grammar: emotive expressions, possibility, ability, decision, and declaration.

Compliance may be indicated in the form of a statement of emotive expression with 'happy,' 'pleased,' 'glad,' 'more than happy,' 'willing to,' 'look forward to,' etc:

- (200) ... , *we are willing to give you a 90-day credit under letter of credit (L/C)*.  
(Temjit, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Compliance may be expressed as a statement of possibility with 'it is possible,' 'ok' etc:

- (201) *It is possible to offer the 15% discount price...* (Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Compliance in form of a statement of ability with 'can,' 'able to,':

- (202) ... , *we are able to comply to your 10% reduction in price*. (Dennis, Australian participant)

Compliance in form of a statement of decision with 'decide,' 'accept,' 'agree,' 'acceptable,' 'offer,' 'provide,' etc:

- (203) *I have reviewed your request for a price reduction of 10% and have decided to pass this reduction on to Chevalier Trading (Thailand)*. (Sam, Australian participant)

Compliance in form of a statement of declaration:

- (204) *We are pleased to confirm that we can grant you 15% discount as requested, ...*  
(Lloyd, Australian participant)
- (205) *We come to conclude that we accept your requested price reduction, ...*  
(Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Declining a request Act***

This act is another core act of the move. It contains participant's rejection to one of the counterpart's requests in the negotiation. The act is realised with a disagreement in five types of lexico-grammar: decision, affirmation, chance limitation, ability limitation, and decline avoidance. Although participants across the four groups structure the two acts in a similar order, they opt for different preferences in their linguistic realisation of their decline, which suggests their variation in disagreement styles. The Australians tend to use affirmation and ability limitation. The Non-Thai Asians tend to use chance and ability limitation. The Thai1s tend to use decline avoidance, affirmation, and ability limitation. The Thai2s tend to use affirmation and have a variety of affirmative styles. For example,

Refusal in form of a statement of decision with 'no,' 'refuse,' etc:

- (206) But looking through the price, *as you know well for the unique product there's no reduction so much.* [sic] (Yaowaluck, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (207) *Reference to your inquiry for 120 day – credit term under L/C, we much regret to refuse this inquiry, ...* [sic] (Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Refusal in form of a statement of affirmation:

- (208) ... *90 days is the maximum we are allowed to go.* (Maria, Australian participant)
- (210) *However, I would like to say those prices that shown on the Internet are the lowest price compared to our competitors* [sic].  
(Theanchai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Refusal in form of a statement of chance limitation with 'impossible,' 'hard,' etc:

- (211) ..., *it is not possible to extend it to 120-day credit term.* (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Refusal in form of a statement of ability limitation with 'can not,' 'unable,' etc:

- (212) ... *but in prices of our product I can't reduction the prices of our product...* [sic]  
(Veera, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

(213) I have spoken to the electric heater company and they are unable to give you 120 days LC. (Dennis, Australian participant)  
Refusal in form of decline avoidance with an offer of new trade conditions:

(214) However, if you can pay me earlier than the period, we would appreciate to discount 10% [sic] (*Issarachon, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart*)

### 5.4.3 Discussion of structure of moves and acts

The following is the most common structure of moves and related acts in the email for this task across the four groups of participants. There are no significant differences in the email structure between groups.

#### Moves and Acts

##### Addressing

##### Negotiating trade term (s)

Acknowledging receipt of message

Expressing appreciation of business

Referencing

Granting a request

Specifying details

Providing reasons

Offering incentives

Referencing

Declining a request

Specifying details

Providing reasons

Using pressure tactics

##### Soliciting agreement

Asking for a purchase order

Projecting positive prospect

Soliciting response












































































Expressing gratitude/respect/etc

Signing

### 5.4.4 Usage preference of each group

The usage preferences of the three groups for the various moves and acts are provided in the Table 5.14). Applying the criterion of usage preference above 80 % across the four groups, the **Negotiating trade term (s)** move and the related *Granting a request* and *Declining a request* acts, the **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/**

**Table 5.14: Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Answering requests for a price reduction & a deferred payment task**

Moves & related Acts	Australians interacting with Thai	Non-Thai Asians interacting with Thai	Thais interacting with Australian	Thais interacting with Thai
Addressing				
Negotiating trade term (s)				
Acknowledging receipt of message				
Expressing appreciation of business				
Referencing				
Granting a request				
Declining a request				
Specifying details				
Providing reasons				
Offering incentives				
Using pressure tactics				
Soliciting agreement				
Asking for a purchase order				
Projecting positive prospect				
Soliciting response				
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc				
Signing				
<div>  = Always used (100%)  = Very frequently used (81- 99%) </div> <div>  = Frequently used (61- 80%)  = Sometimes used (41- 60%) </div> <div>  = Infrequently used (21- 40%)  = Hardly used (1- 20%) </div> <div>  = Never used (0%) </div>				



**respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves are virtually mandatory. The **Negotiating trade term (s)** move and the related *Granting a request* and *Declining a request* acts are realised to achieve the main activities in the task. As in the previous tasks, the set of **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves tends to suggest the business email format. With a criterion of usage preference between 60 – 80 % across the three groups, it is found that an additional act that is commonly used is the *Providing reasons* act, which suggests that it is important to be included in the negotiation of this task.

However, there are some differences evident in the usage preferences for the **Asking for a purchase order** move, **Projecting positive prospect** move, **Soliciting response** move, *Acknowledging receipt of message* act, *Referencing* act, *Specifying details* act, *Providing reasons* act, and *Offering incentives* act. The Thai1s have a higher usage preference for the **Asking for a purchase order** move than the other three groups while the Non-Thai Asians have a higher preference for the **Projecting positive prospect** move and lower preference for the **Soliciting response** move than the other three groups. The Thai2s have a higher preference for the *Acknowledging receipt of message* act than the Thai1s while the Thai2s have a higher preference for the *Referencing* act than the former. The Non-Thai Asians have a higher preference for the *Specifying details* act than the other three groups and the Australians have a higher preference for the *Providing reasons* act. However, the Non-Thai Asians have a lower preference for the *Offering incentives* act than the other three groups.

## 5.5 Task of dealing with problem 1

Data was collected from four groups of participants for this task. The situation of the task is that in the previous sequence of interaction participants have negotiated for trade conditions and decided to trade. However, in this sequence the task involves participants in another type of negotiation activity in which participants are required to negotiate with their counterpart over some problems. The Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants are required to report problems of a change in the credit term agreement and late shipment. Both Thai groups are required to reply to a notification

of problems with the shipment of their broken and short-amount product. The task is situated in the fifth sequence of communicative event for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians and sixth for the two Thai groups. Therefore, when the Addressing, Expressing respect, gratitude, etc., and Signing moves were used in the email written for both trades or tasks, their usages were included in the analysis of text of both tasks.

Example 10:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Montri,</i>		<b>Addressing</b>
<i>I am really sorry to inform you that per our supplier earlier communication, they advised me the following bad news,</i>	<b>Apologising</b> <b>Expressing main intention</b>	<b>Negotiating problem (s)</b>
<i>1. The production of your order of 5x20' of electric heater can't be completed as promised. They have to postponed the actual shipping date of your order.</i>	<b>Stating the problem</b>	
<i>2. The changes of the payment term. Due to cost of material dramatically increased internationally and their own financial difficulties, therefore they require 'at sight under L/C' for your current order.</i>	<b>Stating the problem</b> <b>Providing reasons</b>	
<i>I need you comment regards to the above two issues,</i>		<b>Soliciting response</b>
<i>and would you please accept my sincerely apologies for the changes.</i>	<b>Apologising</b>	
<i>Best regards</i>		<b>Expressing respect</b>

(James Chen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### Example 11:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>To : Elizabeth,</i>		<b>Addressing</b>
<i>We received your message</i>	<b>Stating the problem</b>	<b>Negotiating problem (s)</b>
<i>and would like to apologize for an unexpected event occurred.</i>	<b>Apologising</b>	
<i>after the investigation at our side, we found that it is our production's mistakes.</i>	<b>Providing reasons</b>	
<i>We will send the remaining amount to you on next Monday. All cost concerning this shipment is on shipper's responsibility.</i>	<b>Undertaking actions</b>	
<i>For the defected goods,</i>	<b>Referencing</b>	<b>Soliciting cooperation</b>
<i>we will send the replacement to you together with the remaining unsend unit.</i>	<b>Undertaking actions</b>	
<i>Pls help to take photo on defected goods and send them to me as that I can show it to our production dept.</i>		
<i>We are truly sorry for this unpleasant event.</i>	<b>Apologising</b>	
<i>We are truly sorry for this unpleasant event.</i>	<b>Apologising</b>	<b>Soliciting confidence</b>
<i>We will pay more special care for the outgoing shipment.</i>		
<i>We do hope you would accept our apologize</i>	<b>Apologising</b>	<b>Projecting positive prospect</b>
<i>and we are looking forward to do business with you in the near future.</i>		
<i>Regards,</i>		<b>Expressing respect</b>
<i>Peangjai</i>		<b>Signing</b>

(Peangjai, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

#### 5.5.1 Analysis and Discussion of Moves

Table 5.15 summarises the distribution of moves in the task of Dealing with problem 1 by the four groups.

**Table 5.15 Distribution of moves in the task of Dealing with problem 1**

	Task part of Sequence 5	Task part of Sequence 5	Task part of Sequence 6	Task part of Sequence 6
<i>Moves</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Addressing	100	93.8	93.3	100
Negotiating problem (s)	100	100	100	100
Soliciting cooperation	18.8	56.3	60	46.7
Soliciting agreement	50	75	26.7	6.7
Soliciting confidence	12.5	18.8	40	53.3
Projecting positive prospect	6.3	12.5	13.3	13.3
Soliciting response	25	50	26.7	13.3
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc	93.8	93.8	93.3	93.3
Signing	100	100	93.3	86.7

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Negotiating trade term (s) Move***

The move is obligatory as it is realised by all participants across the four groups and it contains the most important message in the email. It is composed of the *Stating the problem*, *Expressing main intention*, *Referencing*, *Apologising*, *Providing reasons*, and *Undertaking actions* acts. The move is structured at the beginning of the email text and participants have a rather similar ordering structure of these acts. However, there are marked differences in the realisation of these acts between the four groups as shown in the Example 10 and 11.

### ***Soliciting cooperation Move***

In this task where there are problems in trade, participants not only perform the obligatory **Negotiating problem (s)** move, but also realise this move to support the achievement of their negotiation. The move is therefore a persuasion and contains a request for assistance in this problematic situation. The request can be for a general cooperation or a specific action. A much lower proportion of the Australians use this move (18.8 %), than the other three groups (about 50 %). The

move is placed after the **Negotiating problem (s)** move. The request in this move has several linguistic realisations such as anticipation, appreciation, want, etc.

Request with the word 'please,' 'ask for,' 'request,' etc:

- (214) *Please kindly list the broken products and missing items.*  
(Issarachon, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request with modal verbs:

- (215) *Could you please advise your thoughts on these matters as our co-operative approach to these difficulties is likely to provide the best outcome.*  
(Fred, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of anticipation:

- (216) *I hope u shall kindly cooperate.* (Aram, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a statement of appreciation:

- (217) *We highly appreciate your cooperation ...* (Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a statement of want:

- (218) *However, we would like you to send us back under responsibility of any cost.*  
(Pumarin, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

### ***Soliciting agreement Move***

In this problematic situation, this move is also used as persuasion to acquire the counterpart's acceptance in changes in trade agreements or problems. The Non-Thai Asians (75 %) and the Australians (50 %) tend to have a heavier reliance on this move than the two Thai groups (26.7 & 6.7 %).

### ***Soliciting confidence Move***

Like **Soliciting cooperation** and **Soliciting agreement**, this move is another persuasion strategy used in this task. However, the move contains a promise of action to assure the counterpart of their commitment in trade. The fact that this move contains an action may make it somewhat like the *Undertaking actions* act. But the difference lies in the action and purpose of the action. The action and purpose in this move is to provide some measures to prevent similar problems from recurring. The two Thai groups use this move (40 & 53.3 %) more than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians (12.5 & 18.8 %). The move is realised in a statement of promise:

- (219) *Also we will recheck our products before ship and make sure we ship a full amount. [sic]* (Saijaithai, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (220) *Steps are being taken immediately to ensure that such mistakes do not occur in the future.* (Temjit, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)
- (221) *I appreciate for this change and wish to assure that this issue is due to a problem with our supplier's organisation and should not affect any future dealings we have.* (Adam, Australian participant)

### ***Soliciting response Move***

The move is used by half of the Non-Thai Asians, higher than the other three groups in this task (average 20 %).

## **5.5.2 Analysis and Discussion of Acts**

### ***5.5.2.1 Analysis of acts in the Negotiating problem (s) move***

Table 5.16 summarises the distribution of acts in the Negotiating problem (s) move.

**Table 5.16 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating problem (s) move 1**

	Task part of Sequence 5	Task part of Sequence 5	Task part of Sequence 6	Task part of Sequence 6
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Expressing main intention	6.3	25	0	0
Referencing	25	6.3	66.7	40
Apologising	62.5	87.5	100	86.7
Stating the problem	100	100	100	100
Providing reasons	81.3	100	60	66.7
Undertaking actions	93.8	87.5	100	100

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Expressing main intention Act***

In this task, the Non-Thai Asians include this act (25 %) compared to almost none of the other three groups. The act is realised with a topic sentence and some negative lexis such as ‘bad,’ ‘unwelcome,’ etc to indicate the problems.

(222) *However, there are two pieces of **unwelcome** news to you this time. [sic]*  
(Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(223) *There has been some **misunderstanding** between Global One and our supplier of electric heater.* (Christine, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Referencing Act***

As there are two problems in this task, participants across the four groups tend to structure the **Negotiating problem (s)** move into two sections and realise this act at the beginning of the section to mark its subject. The two Thai groups use this act (66.7% & 40%) more than the Australians (25%) and the Non-Thai Asians (6.3%). This may be due to the fact that both Thai groups are responding to a problem notification, while the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are reporting changes in the trade conditions. Many of the Thais refer to the problems before they start their

negotiation. There are also differences in the lexical choices to refer to the problem and trade agreement, such as:

Reference to purchase agreement:

- (224) *In regard to the order you made for heaters, ...*  
(Deen, Australian participant)
- (225) *As we stated in our contract, ...* (Theanchai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Reference to problems:

- (226)
1. *The numbers of our product that short below stated, ...*
  2. *The problem of our product that under the best quality. [sic]*  
(Veera, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

### ***Apologising Act***

This act functions to solicit understanding and to ease tension between the two parties that stem from problems in the situation. It is used by over 85 % of the Non-Thai Asians and the two Thai groups but comparatively less by the Australians (62.5 %). The act is mostly placed towards the beginning of the move. It is realised with an apology, which is expressed through two lexico-grammatical choices. One is with the verbs ‘apologise,’ or ‘regret’, which formally expresses the act, and the other is with ‘sorry’, which sounds less formal. Different levels of apology are also expressed through the choice of modifiers such as ‘very,’ ‘greatly,’ ‘really,’ ‘most sincerely,’ ‘terribly,’ ‘so,’ ‘truly,’ etc. Some participants realise the act more than once as shown in the Example 10 and 11. About half of the Non-Thai Asians and the two Thais groups express their apology more than once.

Apology with the words ‘apologise,’ ‘regret’, eg.

- (227) *I would like to apologise that ...*  
(Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Apology with the words ‘sorry’:



- (228) *We are sorry for this situation, ...*  
 (Wilaiwan, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

Apology with modifiers:

- (229) *I am **very** sorry to advise that...*  
 (Lloyd, Australian participant)
- (230) *We **really have to** say apologize for this problem ... [sic]*  
 (Kaewgaew, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

### ***Stating the problem Act***

This act is obligatory and used by all participants across the four groups. The act contains information about the problem(s) and functions as the core of the move. Most of this act is structured with the *Apologising* act. However, as the task contains dissimilar types of problems and correspondence turns for the four groups, this act has different linguistic realisations and positions in the move. As the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are required to report the two problems, they realise the act twice in two informative statements. Most of these repetitions of the act are separate and placed with other surrounding acts in two sections of the move. However, some are structured together in one sentence. Moreover, some participants mention only one problem and solve the other problem on their own, while some decide to cancel the trade, which shows their different strategies in handling the problems. For instance,

Structured together in one sentence:

- (231) *We will be unable to deliver on the due date and unable to extend LC of 90 days for such a large order.* (Dennis, Australian participant)

Structured separately:

- (232) One is that we have found out the difficulty of shipment schedule.  
 .....  
*As another reason for this delay, they ask for shortening the payment terms due to their urgent financially problems from 90 days to at sight under the LC. [sic]*  
 (Aram, Non-Thai Asian participant)

In contrast, as the two Thai groups are required to respond to a notification of problems, their realisation of the act is a brief acknowledgement of the notification

that contains only one or a few words referring to the problems such as ‘everything,’ ‘matter,’ ‘information,’ ‘mistake,’ ‘situation,’ ‘problems,’ ‘comment,’ etc. The brief statement suggests an encoding process in which participants use these few words to communicate messages and expect the counterpart to decode and obtain the messages in this brief act. For example,

- (233) *I'm sorry for everything.*  
*(Thunya, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*
- (234) *I'm sorry for the mistake with our shipments.*  
*(Chaichana, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*

However, some of this act is realised with more explicit words that illustrate the problems in a brief acknowledgment such as ‘short shipment,’ ‘defect goods,’ etc. This type of realisation reflects participants’ purpose of refreshing the counterpart’s memory of the topic or problems in the notification, eg.

- (235) *We really apologised for defect caused.*  
*(Yaowaluck, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)*

### ***Providing reasons Act***

In this task, the act is also a persuasion to gain compliance and understanding of the problematic situation. All the Non-Thai Asians realise this act in comparison to most Australians (81.3 %) and only slightly over half of the two Thai groups (60 & 66.7 %), although reasons are given in the task.

- (236) *We have a few concerns this end with production due to some industrial matters which are out of our control. We are able to supply 50% due to a cancelled order however there will be a delay on the remainder. Our manufacturer has also suffered some financial difficulties due to payment situation.* (Bill, Australian participant)
- (237) *Thank you for your prompt action. We checked with our production Manager and found that was a problem in the production line resulting in a short amount shipment and some defect merchandise. [sic]* (Saijaithai, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

### ***Undertaking actions Act***

This act contains a solution of a problem that participants propose to the counterpart while they are negotiating on problems. It is used to show their effort and seriousness in handling the problem in order to convince the counterpart of their commitment in business and to continue their trade and business relationship. It therefore demonstrates participants' negotiation strategy and functions to support the *Stating the problem* act. It is normally placed after the obligatory act. The high usage of this act by most participants (over 85 %) across the four groups suggests that it is a common negotiation strategy in this task. However, differences are in the details of actions or solutions of individual participants in the act. For example, offering a new supplier, maintaining the credit terms, offering further negotiation, discussing the problem with the party involved, offering new trade conditions, informing new changes, investigating the problems, offering product replacement, explaining trade conditions in the agreement. These different actions suggest various strategies that are related to the type of problems and practices in international trading.

#### **Offering a new supplier:**

- (238) *I have investigated another manufacturer and can advise the following product availability:*  
*Product*  
*Brand*  
*Model*  
*Other specifications*  
*Quality*  
*Availability*  
*Price FOB Melbourne*  
*Delivery time West Coast USA*  
(Ann, Australian participant)

#### **Maintaining the credit terms offer:**

- (239) *..., the management has made a decision to absorb the interest charges for this period of time.* (Metra, Non-Thai Asian participant)

#### **Offering further negotiation:**

- (240) *My apologies for this unforeseen change on the manufacturer's part, given which I am willing to discuss options.* (Deen, Australian participant)

#### Discussing the problem with the party involved:

- (241) *I am currently in discussion with the company as to when they will be able to ship them by. (Don, Australian participant)*

#### Offering new trade conditions:

- (242) *May I suggest the following:*
1. *If the new delivery date is not acceptable by the U.S. customer, perhaps we can convince the customer to accept partial deliveries. That is, we ship part of the order on the appointed date and ship the balance at a later date. The extra shipping cost will be absorbed by the supplier.*
  2. *Can I ask you to agree to a payment term of 50% at sight and 50% at 90 days credit? In turn, I will agree to pay at sight to the supplier so we can avoid further production delays. Please note that this trading term applies to this order only. We will honour the 90 day credit payment terms for other orders.*
- (Donald Wong, Non-Thai Asian participant)

#### Informing current changes:

- (243) *Would it be possible if we send on the (date)? We hope we can solve this situation as soon as possible to continue the shipment. If you can't delay the shipment then we will find another solution to deliver the goods on time. (Drew, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

#### Investigating the problems:

- (244) *Now we have just started an investigation on this issue and searching the causes why did this happen. [sic] (Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

#### Explanations:

- (245) *Furthermore, regarding to our contract, the price was quoted in FOB price which mean that we have the responsibility until the products are loaded onto the port in Thailand. We are afraid that we could not give your company any refund or replace the damaged product. [sic] (Benjaporn, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*

#### Offering product replacement:

- (246) *We shall replace the defected goods and balance the short fall with the new one soonest. (Nongkran, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*

### 5.5.3 Discussion of structure of moves and acts

The following is the most common structure of moves and related acts in the email for this task across the four groups of participants. There are no significant differences in the email structure between groups.

## Moves and Acts

Addressing

Negotiating problem (s)

Expressing main intention

Referencing

Apologising

Stating the problem (s)

Providing reasons

Undertaking actions

Referencing

Apologising

Stating the problem (s)

Providing reasons

Undertaking actions

Soliciting cooperation

Soliciting agreement

Soliciting confidence

Soliciting response

Projecting positive prospect

Expressing gratitude/respect/etc




































































Signing

### 5.5.4 Usage preference of each group

Despite the overall similarity in the moves and acts used in the task there are some differences in the usage preferences of each group (refer Table 5.17)

Applying the criterion of usage above 80 % across the four groups, the **Negotiating problem (s)** move and the related *Stating the problem (s)* are always used and the *Undertaking actions* acts, the **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves are virtually mandatory as well. The **Negotiating problem (s)** move and the related *Stating the problem (s)* act are realised to achieve the main activities in the task. The high usage of the *Undertaking actions* act shows that it is a crucial component of this type of email when business people are dealing with problems that are caused from their side. Like in the previous tasks, the set of **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves tends to suggest the business email format. Applying the criterion of usage preference between 60 – 80 % across the three groups, it is found that additional acts that are commonly used in conjunction with those listed above are the *Apologising* and the *Providing reasons* acts. The use of the *Apologising* act by all the Thai1s shows that it is imperative for the group. The use of the *Providing reasons* act by all the Non-Thai Asians shows that it is imperative for

**Table 5.17: Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Dealing with problem 1 task**

Moves & related Acts	Australians interacting with Thai	Non-Thai Asians interacting with Thai	Thais interacting with Australian	Thais interacting with Thai
Addressing				
Negotiating problem (s)				
Expressing main intention				
Referencing				
Apologising				
Stating the problem (s)				
Providing reasons				
Undertaking actions				
Soliciting cooperation				
Soliciting agreement				
Soliciting confidence				
Projecting positive prospect				
Soliciting response				
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc				
Signing				
<div>  = Always used (100%)  = Very frequently used (81- 99%) </div> <div>  = Frequently used (61- 80%)  = Sometimes used (41- 60%) </div> <div>  = Infrequently used (21- 40%)  = Hardly used (1- 20%) </div> <div>  = Never used (0%) </div>				

them. The use of the *Undertaking actions* act by all the two Thai groups shows that it is imperative for them. However, there are some differences in the usage preferences in the **Soliciting agreement** move, the **Soliciting confidence** move, the **Soliciting cooperation** move, the **Soliciting response** move, the **Referencing** act, the **Providing reasons** act, the **Expressing main intention** act, and the **Apologising** act. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians have higher usage of the **Soliciting agreement** move and the **Providing reasons** act than the two Thai groups, while the two Thai groups have higher usage of the **Soliciting confidence** move and the **Referencing** act than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians. The Non-Thai Asians have higher usage of the **Soliciting response** move and the **Expressing main intention** act, while the Australians have lower usage of the **Soliciting cooperation** move and the **Apologising** act in comparison to the other three groups who have approximately the same level of usage of the moves and acts.


## 5.6 Task of dealing with problem 2

The situation of the task and the problems are different amongst some of the four groups who participated in this task. For the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians, they have asked for changes in the trade agreement in the previous sequence of interaction and in this situation their customer has notified them of some problems with the product they bought from their Thai counterpart. The task requires them to inform the counterpart of the problems with products that are broken and shipped less in amount than mentioned in the agreement. The problem with broken product is postulated to be serious as it damages trust in trade. For the Thais, they have reached a trade agreement with the counterpart in the previous sequence and in this situation the counterpart requests for some changes in the trade conditions. The task requires them to accept the change of shipment date, but refuse the change in credit terms payment. The change in credit terms payment is postulated as a serious problem in trade as it involves financial difficulty, particularly after an agreement has been made. For the Thai2s, they have traded with the counterpart and shipped products to the counterpart's client in the previous sequence. In this situation they receive only 75% of product value from the counterpart. This short payment is

postulated as another serious problem as it damages trust in trade. The task requires them to inform the counterpart of this problem. All these problems are caused on the counterpart's side. The task is situated sixth in the sequence for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians and fifth in the sequence for the two Thai groups. Therefore, when the Addressing, Expressing respect, gratitude, etc., and Signing moves were used in the email written for both trades or tasks, their usages were included in the analysis of text of both tasks.

The following are examples of email written by a Non-Thai Asian participant and a Thai2 participant.

Example 12:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>Dear Mr. Montri,</i>		<b>Addressing</b>
<i>The shipment of XXX Bronze Handicrafts has been received by our customer on Monday.</i>	<b>Referencing</b>	<b>Negotiating problem(s)</b> 
<i>Unfortunately, 20% of the items have been found to be defective and unsuitable for sale. Further there was a short fall on the inventory of 5% in number.</i>	<b>Stating the problem (s)</b>	
<i>I attach a survey of the shipment by an independent surveyor.</i>	<b>Specifying details</b>	
<i>Thus my customer is left with only 75% of the purchase as saleable items.</i>	<b>Specifying details</b>	
<i>I am obliged to make a claim on behalf of my customer, for the amount of \$XXX, being the value of the defective stock.</i>	<b>Asking for actions</b>	
<i>With regard to the shortfall of 5%,</i>	<b>Referencing</b>	<b>Expressing respect</b>
<i>could you please look into the reason for this and have your supplier commit to making up this short fall in the next shipment.</i>	<b>Asking for actions</b>	
<i>Yours truly,</i>		
<i>Paul</i>		<b>Signing</b>
(Paul, Australian participant)		



### Example 13:

<u>Email Text</u>	<u>Acts</u>	<u>Moves</u>
<i>To : Elizabeth</i>		Addressing
<i>Regarding credit term,</i>	Stating the problem (s)	Negotiating problem (s)
<i>Our customer is not happy with you</i>	Complaining	
<i>as you have confirmed to provide 90-days credit term to them but you changed it after they ordered.</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>However, we will talk this matter with our customer again. But we don't think they will accept it. We will inform you again after we have talked with our customer.</i>	Undertaking actions	
<i>Pls give us a reasonable excuse for not given 90-days credit terms</i>	Asking for actions	
<i>as we would use your reason to negotiate with the customer.</i>	Providing reasons	
<i>Regards,</i>		Expressing respect
<i>Peangjai</i>		Signing

[sic] (Peangjai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

#### 5.6.1 Analysis and Discussion of Moves

Table 5.18 summarises the distribution of moves for this task.

**Table 5. 18 Distribution of moves in the task of Dealing with problem 2**

	Task part of Sequence 6	Task part of Sequence 6	Task part of Sequence 5	Task part of Sequence 5
<i>Moves</i>	Australian Participants (N=16)	Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)	Thai 1 Participants (N=15)	Thai 2 Participants (N=15)
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Addressing	100	93.8	93.3	100
Negotiating problem (s)	100	100	100	100
Soliciting agreement	0	0	40	0
Projecting positive prospect	25	12.5	20	6.7
Soliciting response	43.8	50	33.3	60
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc	87.5	93.8	86.7	93.3
Signing	100	93.8	93.3	86.7

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Negotiating trade term (s) Move***

This obligatory move is similar in content, function and intention to the one used in the task of Dealing with problems 1. However, as the problems are caused on the counterpart's side in this task, the move is realised with some different acts from the move in the previous task, such as *Expressing appreciation of business*, *Complaining*, *Specifying details*, and *Asking for actions*. Participants have a rather similar pattern of structuring these acts and there are similarities, but also some marked differences in the realisation of these acts between the four groups as shown in the Example 12 and 13.

### ***Soliciting agreement Move***

In the current task where problems are caused from the counterpart's side, only some of the Thais interacting with an Australian counterpart realise this move (40%). This is possibly due to the type of problems in the task of these Thais. The changes in credit payment and shipment date may demand them to make a request to keep the agreed trade conditions, while problems in short shipment, shipment of

damaged products, and short payment in the task of the other three groups may not necessitate this request.

### ***Soliciting response Move***

In the current task, a third of the Thai1s realise the move compared to about half of participants of the other three groups. The move is realised with some time modifiers such as ‘as soon as possible,’ ‘soonest,’ ‘promptly,’ etc eg.

- (247) *Waiting for your soonest reply.*  
(Niramon, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (248) *Your earliest reply would be highly appreciated.*  
(Don Goh, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Some are also realised with an offer to discuss the problems eg.

- (249) *Pls let me know if I can be of assistance. [sic]*  
(Nuchanart, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (250) *Please do not hesitate to contact me on (67 2 7655476) for further elaboration.*  
(Christine, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### **5.6.2. Analysis and Discussion of Acts**

Table 5.19 provides a summary of the distribution of acts in the Negotiating problem(s) move within this task.

**Table 5.19 Distribution of acts in the Negotiating problem (s) move 2**

	Task part of Sequence 6	Task part of Sequence 6	Task part of Sequence 5	Task part of Sequence 5
<i>Acts</i>	<i>Australian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Non-Thai Asian Participants (N=16)</i>	<i>Thai 1 Participants (N=15)</i>	<i>Thai 2 Participants (N=15)</i>
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Referencing	75	50	26.7	46.7
Complaining	50	81.2	66.7	20
Stating the problem	100	100	100	100
Specifying details	37.5	31.5	0	0
Asking for actions	100	100	86.7	100
Providing reasons	18.8	37.5	86.7	33.3
Undertaking actions	31.3	37.5	13.3	6.7

\*Percentage of participants using moves and acts

### ***Referencing Act***

A lower proportion of the Thai1s (26.7%), than the Australians (75%), the Non-Thai Asians (50 %), and the Thai2s (46.7%) realise this act in this task. In this task, the reference in the act is made to product, correspondence, purchase agreement, or problems and it is realised not only in phrases like in other tasks, but also in sentences.

Reference to the product:

- (251) *We have received **the shipment** ...* (Lloyd, Australian participant)

Reference to correspondence:

- (252) *Further our recent **telecon** concerning Out-tern of last shipment ex 'Sethaphum' vessel.* (Jeff, Australian participant)
- (253) *I have just received an **email** from my customer, ...* (Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Reference to purchase agreement:

- (254) *Referred to **your last ordered (attached)**, first order of 5,000 Bronze Cats that this shipment we sent our product via Inter Asia vessel name Saigon Leader B/L#BKJKT00102 cntr#CRXU8763 ready. [sic]*  
(Veera, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)
- (255) *SEE **CONTRACT**.* (Charlie, Australian participant)
- (256) *This is according to **the agreement** made between Global One and Chevalier Trading.* (Christine, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Reference to problem:

- (257) *Regarding **the short shipment**, ...*  
.....  
*Regarding **the damaged goods**, ...*  
(Adam, Australian participant)

### ***Complaining Act***

The act is used to express uneasiness and difficulty in order to draw the counterpart's attention and to get them to solve the problems in the situation. It

functions to stress the seriousness of the problems and to support achievement of the negotiation. Most of the Non-Thai Asians enact complaining (81.2 %), compared with about half of the Australians and the Thais (50 & 66.7 %), and about a quarter of the Thai2s (20 %). Regardless of differences in the problems, participants across the four groups express their discomfort due to the negative effect of the problems in their trade as shown in the realisation of this act. The act is structured before the *Stating the problem* act at the beginning of the move. It contains a complaint in several lexico-grammatical forms, such as statements with an apology, critique, expression of one's uneasiness, third party's complaint, uneasiness, or reaction, etc. Participants also express different levels of complaint through the choice of modifiers such as 'really,' 'very,' 'quite,' 'extremely,' 'most,' etc. Some participants realise this act more than once. The two Thai groups structure their complaint with an apology more than the other two groups. For instance,

Complaint in form of a statement of regret:

- (258) *We are really sorry to hear that your supplier hasn't agreed on the price.*  
(Nongkran, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Complaint in form of a statement of the third party's complaint:

- (259) *We have received several complaints from some traditional customers about your bronze handicrafts, ... [sic]* (Nguyen, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Complaint in form of a statement of the third party's uneasiness:

- (260) *Our client quite unhappy with the changes conditions. [sic]*  
(Chaichana, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Complaint in form of a statement of the third party's reaction:

- (261) *As this has made my client very unhappy and could be detrimental to any future shipments he might have planned.* (Maria, Australian participant)  
(262) *Many customers are requesting refunds or exchange. In the long-run, this could jeopardize our sell in this area.* (Stuart Jieng, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Complaint in form of a statement of one's uneasiness:

- (263) *I have some concerns about the recent shipment of bronze handicrafts.*  
(Kim, Australian participant)

(264) *It was **really** disappointing.* (Mamiko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

(265) *We feel bad for your news! [sic]*  
(Thuya, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

(266) *We have something make us uncomfortable. [sic]*  
(Niramon, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

Complaint in form of a critique:

(267) *I'm surprised that such a big order from us could not convinced you and your supplier. [sic]* (Theanchai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

(268) *This is **the most unacceptable** situation throughout our business, I'd like to be informed these before the product was shipped. [sic]*  
(Tasuko, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Stating the problem Act***

This act has been discussed in the Dealing with problem 1 task. Some of the act is structured with the **Complaining** act and placed at the beginning of the move. However, as there are some differences in the problems and correspondence turns in this task for the four groups, this act has different linguistic realisation and position in the move. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians realise the act with an informative statement, as they report the two problems to their counterpart. Most of them include two problems within one act as shown in Example 12 (Paul's email). However, some realise the act twice, each containing one problem, and support each obligatory act with other acts, creating two groups of acts and sections in the move. For instance,

(269) *Unfortunately, there have been some problems with the order. Firstly, our customer has noted that there are less goods than stated on the invoice.*

.....  
*Secondly, some of the products are defective.*

.....  
(Don, Australian participant)

The Thais realise the act with an acknowledgement of the counterpart's email as they respond to their counterpart's notification of changes in the trade agreement. Their realisation of the act seems communicable only between them and their counterpart as it contains a brief acknowledgement of the counterpart's email without any details of the problems and can appear vague as shown in the Example 13 of

Peangjai's email. The example also demonstrates that she realises one act containing the only problem she wants to discuss instead of two problems that are given in the task. However, some cover both problems within one act, for example:

- (270) *I regret to inform you that my customer could not accept payment LC at sight but my customer will accept payment at 30 days credit only. They accepted to amend the shipping date. (Sawitri, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*

Some realise the act twice to cover the two problems eg.

- (271) *I am sorry to tell you that we cannot accept any change in the payment term.*  
.....  
*However, I can accept late delivery shipment.*  
.....  
*(Nualnang, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)*

As the Thai2s initiate the correspondence by informing their counterpart about the short-payment problem, their realisation of the act contains details of the problem and the act contains only one problem as given in the task, eg.

- (272) *We are informed from the bank that the total amount on LC is only 75% of our agreement.*  
*(Prem, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)*

### ***Specifying details Act***

In this task, this act elaborates the obligatory act by providing further details of the problems. Only the Australians (37.5 %) and the Non-Thai Asians (30 %) realise this act. It is realised with a reference to an email attachment of document or photos. For example,

- (273) *We have itemised them on the enclosed attachment ... (Lloyd, Australian participant)*
- (274) *I have taken some photos of the defective bronze handicrafts and attached in this email. (Donald Wong, Non-Thai Asian participant)*

### ***Asking for actions Act***

This act contains a request for a solution of the problem. It is used to stress the seriousness of the problems and to oblige the counterpart to solve the problems. It is a negotiation strategy and it functions to support the obligatory act. The fact that most of participants (over 85 %) include this act in the move suggests that it is a common negotiation strategy in a problematic situation such as this, despite differences in the details of actions or solutions. The solutions range from asking for discount, refund, product replacement, return of broken product, quality control measures, adherence to agreed trade conditions, new shipment schedule, explanation, and further discussion or negotiation, etc. These actions suggest different strategies in dealing with the problems according to practices in international trade. The act is placed after the obligatory act and realised with a request in various lexico-grammatical forms such as appreciation, suggestion, persuasion, expectation, wish, want, insist, need, demand, condition, etc. Both Thai1s and Thai2s tend to use request with the word 'please' and modal verbs. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians have no group preference of these requests.

#### **Request in form of a statement of appreciation:**

- (275) However, we would appreciate if you could include products as replacement free of charge with the next delivery to us. (*Jeff, Australian participant*)

#### **Request in form of a statement of suggestion:**

- (276) We suggest another shipment is made as soon as to replace this shipment and enable us to regain the customer and confidence of our customer.  
(*Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant*)

#### **Request in form of a statement of persuasion:**

- (277) *In bad time let's advise the actual date of delivery.*  
(*Pimprapai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart*)

#### **Request in form of a statement of expectation:**

- (278) Perhaps you would remit the balance of #3,600.- in the next few days.  
(*Wichuda, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart*)



Request in form of a statement of wish:

- (279) *I hope that some agreement can be made to rectify this problem.*  
(Donna, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of want:

- (280) *... and I want you to be most careful when you send my purchase.*  
(Aram, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a statement of insist:

- (281) *I must insist that you meet these demands in full, ...*  
(Adam, Australian participant)

Request in form of a statement of need:

- (282) *We need you to look into this matter quite urgently ...*  
(Issatri, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request in form of a statement of demand:

- (283) *So you have to find a way to resolve this problem ...*  
(Jeromy Liew, Non-Thai Asian participant)

Request with the word 'please':

- (284) *Pls clarify what's happen. [sic]*  
(Jinda, Thai participant interacting with Thai counterpart)

Request with modal verbs:

- (285) *Would you mind talking with your supplier to help us to solve this problem? What is the best way to solve this problem?*  
(Kreangkrai, Thai participant interacting with Australian counterpart)

Request in form of a statement of condition:

- (286) *This is acceptable only on the provision that the missing pieces are present in the next shipment.* (Charlie, Australian participant)

Request with words 'request,' 'ask for,' etc:

- (287) *Therefore, I ask you to act immediately in order to reduce the damage.*  
(Kenny Chu, Non-Thai Asian participant)

### ***Providing reasons Act***

Most of the Thai1s (86.7%) realise this act, which has already been extensively discussed, compared to a third of the Non-Thai Asians (37.5%) and the Thai2s (33.3%), and a few Australians (18.8%).

### ***Undertaking actions Act***

This act is used in the two Dealing with problem tasks of this study and has been discussed in the previous task. However, in this task where problems are caused from the counterpart's side, participants take actions to alleviate the difficulty or to solve the problems they are facing. The act is therefore used to urge the counterpart to solve problems and functions to support the **Asking for actions** act and the obligatory act. About a third of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians realise the act (31.3 & 37.5 %) compared to only a few of two Thai groups (13.3 & 6.7 %). The actions range from offering to cooperate, inspecting the product, investigating the problems, discussing with the party involved, withholding payment, etc. These actions suggest different strategies in dealing with the problems according to practices in international trade. Some examples:

- (288) The bronze ware will be distributed to retail outlets in the next few days. I will let you know how things progress. (*Ann, Australian participant*)
- (289) The products have failed to meet specifications and therefore payment will be withheld. (*Fred, Australian participant*)
- (290) *I will talk to him and let u know, ...* (him = participant's customer)  
(*Preemarn, Non-Thai Asian participant*)
- (291) We are not sure how these defects occurred and we are trying to establish the cause.  
(*Hiran, Non-Thai Asian participant*)

### **5.6.3 Discussion of structure of moves and acts**

The following is the most common structure of moves and related acts in the email for this task across the four groups of participants. There are no major differences in the overall structuring of these moves and acts between groups.

## Moves and Acts

Addressing

Negotiating problem (s)

Referencing

Complaining

Stating the problem (s)

Specifying details

Asking for actions

Providing reasons

Undertaking actions

Referencing

Stating the problem (s)

Specifying details

Asking for actions

Providing reasons

Undertaking actions

Soliciting agreement

Projecting positive prospect

Soliciting response






















































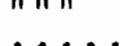






Expressing respect/gratitude/etc.

Signing

### 5.6.4. Usage preference of each group

Table 5.20 summarises the similarities and differences in usage preferences for moves and acts in this task. Applying the criterion of usage above 80 % across the four groups, the **Negotiating problem (s)** move and the related *Stating the problem (s)* act are always used and the *Asking for actions* act, the **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves are virtually mandatory. The **Negotiating problem (s)** move and the related *Stating the problem (s)* act are realised to achieve the main activities in the task. The high usage of the *Asking for actions* act shows that it is a crucial component of this type of email, when business people are dealing with problems that are caused from the counterpart's side. Like in the other five tasks, the set of **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.**, and **Signing** moves tends to suggest the business email format. There are no other moves or acts that are used between 60 – 80 % across the three groups. The use of the *Asking for actions* act by all the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians, and the Thais shows that it is imperative for the three groups.

**Table 5.20 Usage Preferences in moves and related acts in the Dealing with problem 2 task**

Moves & related Acts	Australians interacting with Thai	Non-Thai Asians interacting with Thai	Thais interacting with Australian	Thais interacting with Thai
Addressing				
Negotiating problem (s)				
Expressing main intention				
Referencing				
Complaining				
Stating the problem (s)				
Specifying details				
Asking for actions				
Providing reasons				
Undertaking actions				
Soliciting agreement				
Projecting positive prospect				
Soliciting response				
Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc				
Signing				



= Always used (100%)



= Very frequently used (81- 99%)



= Frequently used (61- 80%)



= Sometimes used (41- 60%)



= Infrequently used (21- 40%)



= Hardly used (1- 20%)



= Never used (0%)

There are some differences evident in the usage preferences of moves and acts of the participants. Only the Thai1s realise the **Soliciting agreement** move and their usage of the **Soliciting response** move is lower than that of the other three groups. There are some marked differences in the *Complaining*, *Referencing*, *Specifying details*, *Undertaking actions*, and *Providing reasons* acts in the **Negotiating problem (s)** move. The Thai1s have lower usage of the *Referencing* act and higher usage of the *Providing reasons* act, while the Thai2s have a lower preference for the *Complaining* act than the other three groups. Both Thai groups have lower usage preference for the *Undertaking actions* act than the other two groups, and do not use the *Specifying details* act in this task.

## 5.7 Conclusion

Analysis of email texts shows that whilst there is variation in the realisation of moves and acts across the six tasks by the three to four groups of participants, there tends to be more similarities than differences in the usage preferences of moves and acts. Whilst most of the similarities are at the level of moves and in the principles governing the main textual structure of emails, differences seem to be in the level of acts themselves, with some subtle difference evident in preferences for certain acts in the specific contexts of individual tasks. These findings will be further discussed through analysis of the introspection data in Chapter 6, and then through a more detailed analysis of the influence of various contextual factors in Chapter 7.

# Chapter 6

## Analysis of Introspections

Examination of the email texts in Chapter 5 has identified some distinctive characteristics of the structuring and realisation of moves and acts in the emails of the international trade professionals who participated in this study. However, this only gives part of the picture in exploring the potential for international trade email communication to be considered a genre. Another perspective can be gained from reaching an understanding of the communicative purposes and strategies that influence the producers of the email texts. Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to report on analysis of the participants' introspections for the six simulations in relation to the five types of goals in the proposed goal model (outlined in Chapter 3). Prior to the presentation of the findings of the analysis on a task by task basis, there is detailed discussion of the goal model's application to the data in the next Section 6.0.

### 6.0 Application of the goal model in the analysis of introspections

The message production literature, discussed in Chapter 2.4, has highlighted some theoretical perspectives used to enhance our understanding of textual and speech planning and production processes, thereby contributing to explaining differences in messages. The theory proposes that diversity in messages is determined by variation in communicators' emphasis on different goals in relation to their perception of a situation, with the concept of multiple goals underpinning this (Wilson, 1997; Greene & Lindsey, 1989; Greene, Lindsey & Hawn, 1990; Greene & Ravizza, 1995) and based on the assumption that discourse behaviour can be explained by communicators' mental processes of goals (Bavelas, 1991).

A goal model has been developed based on the literature and applied in the analysis of introspections. In the suggested model, goal hierarchies are proposed to

comprise two general levels: macro and micro levels. Goals on the macro level are higher in the hierarchy than goals on the micro level. The hierarchy is based on Dillard's (1990) force of goals as the distinctive criteria in relation to procedural stages of interaction and function of goals, as discussed in the literature on hierarchies of goals. Therefore, macro goals are seen to exert driving force for communicators to achieve their ultimate aims in a single interaction and these goals are the main goals of the message. In contrast, micro goals exert constraining force on the message production processes and are subsidiary aims of the message or an interaction. However, the accomplishment of these subsidiary goals also contributes to the fulfilment of the macro goals.

Taxonomies of goals have also been discussed in the literature and are employed in this study. The initial taxonomy proposed for the goal model consisted of four types of goals in the two hierarchies. The influence goal or instrument goals as macro goals, and a set of three micro goals, namely, the identity goal, the relational goal, and the efficiency goal. However, after participants' intentions drawn from the introspections through thematic analysis and were categorised according to the initial taxonomy, analysis of the introspections suggested value in the inclusion of one additional type of micro goal – the subsidiary business goal. Therefore, the taxonomies of goals in the model comprise one type of macro goals - the main business goals; and four types of micro goals - the subsidiary business goals, the identity goals, the relational goals, and the efficiency goals as shown in the following explanation of each component of the goal model:

1. Main business goals (Macro goals) are the main business concerns of a single interaction or the main objectives of the business email message. These objectives are related to business activities and dependent on the business matters that engage one party to write email to another party. For example, when participants are involved in a task of enquiry about trade, their main intention may be to obtain information of a particular product they are searching for or seeking a trade opportunity from a potential trader or supplier.
2. Subsidiary business goals are a type of micro goal with concerns about business activities or practices of a certain business matter within the task.

These concerns are related to the principal business activities of the task. For example, in the same task of enquiry about trade, although participants have the main intention of getting the production information or knowing the possibility of trade, they may also have other business concerns that become additional objectives for them to fulfil. One of these concerns is about business activities. To enable them to achieve the main business goal and instigate a trade opportunity, participants may be required by the task to offer their counterpart some trade conditions such as a lower price for a large volume of trade. These intentions not only meet business practices underlying the task, but also support the achievement of the main business goal.

3. Identity goals are another type of micro goal. Identity goals are objectives focusing on social interactions related to face and politeness concerns of both interactants. These concerns may vary on one's preferences, beliefs, and judgement of social appropriateness in a certain business situation. For example, when enquiring about trade through email, participants may also have another objective about social interactions to accomplish. They may be required to make a judgement of social appropriateness by observing their own and their counterpart's face wants in the social setting of business interaction via email of the task. These intentions would direct them to address their counterpart appropriately, introduce themselves and their business if it is the first email they write to their counterpart, express their gratitude, etc in the email. Like subsidiary business goals, these intentions not only address social appropriateness in business context of the task, but also support the achievement of the main goal.
4. Relational goals are the third type of micro goals with concerns about the use of resources for the purpose of initiating, developing, or continuing a business relationship in a business situation. In the same task and situation, in the example given above, some participants have another objective regarding relationship. They may want to initiate a business relationship to encourage a trade opportunity or to get a reply from their counterpart. These intentions are most likely to be associated with the level of business relationship and interactions between the participants and their counterpart at different stages



of interaction or different circumstances. These intentions not only fulfil the aim about forming or maintain a relationship, but also support the accomplishment of the main goal.

5. Efficiency goals are the last type of micro goals in the model. Efficiency goals are objectives arising from a meticulous consideration of the 'expense' of resources such as time, effort, space of email, etc. in comparison with an estimated outcome in composing an email for a task. Such consideration also includes the concept of effectiveness of an email to lead to a desired result. For example, some participants in the task of enquiring about trade may want to avoid writing a long email to their counterpart in the first encounter with a hope of getting a quick reply from their counterpart. In such a situation, they may be required to make a judgement of space and length of email, time, and effort they are going to invest on writing it and the response they are going to receive. This judgement shapes their intention, whether they want to be either brief in the wording, concise in the text length, or clear in the message of their email. These intentions deriving from such awareness and judgement demand another effort for participants to accomplish whilst achieving the main business goal.

As mentioned in the discussion of the data analysis in Chapter 3 - Methodology, participants' instantaneous introspective reports of their plans in writing emails for the six tasks have been analysed thematically and conceptually with the observed plans and intentions being categorised using the five goal types explained above. The analysis of participants' insights into their intentions during the process of producing a text in their engagement with a task has been suggested by the literature to be able enhance our understanding textual and discourse production, and therefore of communicative purposes and intentions. Given the focus in the study of genres on the presence of shared communicative purposes (Swales, 1990) and practices, such qualitative process-oriented data can provide a different window on the discourse community under investigation in this study, international trade professionals.

The comparative analysis in this chapter focuses on participants' explicit target, strategies classified in relation to the goals together with the reasons provided

for pursuing the strategies selected. Similarities and differences in participants' emphasis on the five goals, their strategies, and reasons are reported and used to substantiate analysis of the email text and context. The reported responses and strategies are classified for each task in relation to whether they reveal participants explicitly choosing to focus on a particular goal, or to reject a particular goal.

## **6.1 Task: Enquiring about trade**

This task of enquiring for product information is assigned to only three groups of participants; the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians, and the Thais interacting with Australian counterpart (Thai1). Participants are required to request product information from their counterpart. The task is situated in different sequences of communicative events for the three groups of participants. For the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants, the task is in the first sequence of communicative event and for the Thais interacting with Australian counterpart (Thai1), it is in the third sequence after they have traded a product with their Australian counterpart. The comparative analysis is therefore between the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian first and then includes the Thai1. The focus of the analysis is on what was explicitly mentioned in the plans in relation to the five types of goals in the proposed goal model (refer to Table 6.1 for the detail).

Table 6.1 Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Enquiring about trade

Goals	Strategies			Reasons	
	Australian [Com Event I]	Non-Thai Asian [Com Event II]	Thai I [Com Event 2]	Australian	Non-Thai Asian Thai I
Main Business goal	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Request product information (13) - Ask for samples (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (16)</b> - Request product information (16)	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Request product information (13) - Specify needed details (1) - Offer 2 choices: supply product or introduce another supplier (1)	- More important than image projection (1)	
Subsidiary business goal	<b>Goal Targeted (7)</b> - Show interest in the product (7)  <b>Goal Rejected (1)</b> - Get product information & Try samples first (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (8)</b> - Show interest in the product (8) - Use expression of interest as reason for request of product information (4)	<b>Goal Targeted (2)</b> - Show interest in the product (2) - Indicate an urgency to obtain product information (1)		
Identity goal	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Introduce business (14) - Provide business credentials (8) - Allocate source of contact (4) - Judge counterpart's credibility (ex. Test reader's expertise, Request counterpart's business credentials, Check reader's business success from other sources) (3) - Be formal (3) - Be semiformal (less formal than business letter) (1) - Express politeness (8)  <b>Goal Rejected (3)</b> - Not introduce business (1) - Not provide business credentials (3)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Introduce business (14) - Provide business credentials (8) - Allocate source of contact (4) - Learn how to address in counterpart's language (1) - Avoid disclosing too much business credentials (1) - Judge counterpart's credibility (4) - Be formal (ex. Dear sir) (3) - Express politeness (7)	<b>Goal Targeted (7)</b> - Be formal (1) - Be semiformal (similar to the previous email of selling deal) (2) - Express politeness (4) - Express politeness through the request of assistance in product enquiry (1) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (neutral language) (6)	- Most important to express politeness (1) - To project a positive image (ex. using the Internet) (3) - For attraction, credibility, negotiation, relationship establishment (6) - For response (2) - For trade (1) - Due to first email contact (2) - Due to bilateral benefits (1) - Due to familiarity with reader's ethnic culture (Thai) (1) - No intention to introduce business due to focus on getting product information & Expect counterpart to introduce themselves (1) - Not important to provide business credentials (1) - No intention to provide business credentials due to expecting counterpart to check one's business credibility from other agent (1)	- Too early to be informal (1) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to having both roles (3) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles to keep consistency in use of language (2) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to previous role of seller (2)

<i>Relational goal</i>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (8)</b> - Establish business relationship (8)</p> <p><b>Goal Rejected (4)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (4)</p>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (3)</b> - Establish business relationship (3)</p> <p><b>Goal Rejected (7)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (7)</p>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (7)</b> - Offer another business help (3) - Establish business relationship (4)</p> <p><b>Goal Rejected (2)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (2)</p>	<p>- Important at the start of trade (1) - For future trade, long term trade (1) - Expect to receive a response for further email contact, further trade, further trade partnership (11) - Expect stronger relationship later (2) - No intention of establishing relationship due to too early in first email (1) - No intention of establishing relationship due to focus on getting product information (1) - Depend on response &amp; trade (2)</p>	<p>- For future trade, trade network, negotiation (3) - Expect to receive a response (ex. quick response, by adding urgency) for further trade partnership (9) - No intention of establishing relationship due to too early in first email (2) - No intention of establishing relationship due to focus on getting product information (2) - Depend on response &amp; trade (1)</p>	<p>- For future trade, long term trade, negotiation, mutual benefits, personal relationship (4) - Due to having previous email exchanges (2) - Reciprocal request of help (1) - No intention of establishing relationship due to too early (1)</p>
<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Keep email brief/concise but clear (14) - Use point form (1) - Be direct (10) - Use simple English (12) - Use website &amp; attachment to introduce business &amp; provide credentials (4) - Attain to details of request (1) - Be efficient (7) - Use 'catchy' writing &amp; 'proper' language to task (4) - Use pictures of products (1)</p>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Keep email brief/concise but clear (12) - Use point form (2) - Limit numbers of paragraphs (1) - Be direct (5) - Use simple English (9) - Use website &amp; attachment to introduce business &amp; provide credentials (2) - Attain to details of request (1)</p> <p><b>Goal Rejected (2)</b> - No intention to be efficient (2)</p>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Keep email brief/concise but clear (4) - State main topics of email (1) - Be direct (3) - Use simple English (6) - Be efficient (1)</p> <p><b>Goal Rejected (1)</b> - No intention to be efficient (1)</p>	<p>- To save time for both parties (6) - To avoid confusion (2) - For attraction (1) - Due to email (lack of personal contact) (2) - Due to first email contact (3) - Due to business email principles (1) - Consider counterpart's English (5)</p>	<p>- To save time for both parties (2) - To get a quick reply (1) - For easy reading (1) - Due to email (1) - Due to first email contact (3) - Due to business email principles (4) - Clarity most important (1) - Efficiency less important than trade (1) - English less important than trade (1) - Consider counterpart's English (2) - No concern with reader's nationality (1) - Expect counterpart to have good English (1) - More direct with English native speaker (1) - No concern with email length (1) - No intention to be efficient due to first email contact (1) - No intention to be efficient due to elaborating details to establish trust &amp; share business basis (1)</p>	<p>- To save time &amp; space in email (2) - To avoid confusion (1) - Due to having previous contacts (1) - Consider counterpart's English (1) - No concern with English grammar &amp; spelling (1) - No translation from Native language to English (1) - Use business English (1) - Focus on communicative English (1) - No intention to be efficient due to focus on the previous trade (1)</p>

\*\*

Goal Targeted = Participants explicitly reported that they had the strategy

Goal Rejected = Participants explicitly reported that they did not have the strategy

### 6.1.1 Key Findings

#### 1. Main business goal

Most of the participants of the three groups focused on this goal and intended to request product information. There is not much difference in their strategies to achieve the goal.

#### 2. Subsidiary business goal

About half of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians wanted to show interest in the product and a quarter of the Non-Thai Asians reported using the expression of interest in product as a reason to support their request of product information. Only a few Thais reported the strategy.

#### 3. Identity goal

High proportion of the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants emphasised identity-related strategies regarding managing image and trust to boost business opportunity and relationship.

Only half of the Thais mentioned this goal and not specifically introducing themselves. They also reported using language regardless of either the role of a buyer or a seller due to having both roles and the intention to use neutral language consistently.

#### 4. Relational goal

About half of the Australians and the Thais reported relational-targeted strategies while some rejected the goal. Only the Thais emphasised reciprocity of trade due to previous trade in the earlier communicative events.

About half of the Non-Thai Asians rejected the goal and only a few intended to establish relationship with their counterpart. Those participants who

reported their rejection of the goal reasoned that it was too early and they focused on enquiry about trade.

Participants of the three groups expected further trade, trade networks, negotiation, and response

#### 5. Efficiency goal

Most participants of the three groups reported strategies related to this goal. Their similar strategies are in the choice of simple and appropriate English words, brevity & clarity of message, directness, email structure, use of website & email attachment, and specificity of their request.

#### 6.1.2 Conclusion

1. Participants of the three groups focus on the main business goal of enquiring product information and efficiency goal.
2. Most of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians also focus on the identity goal.
3. Only the Thais demonstrate reciprocity of trade related to sequence of communicative event. There is evidence showing the influence of sequence of communicative event on the Thai's awareness of previous email exchange and reciprocal trade with their counterpart.

### 6.2 Task: Answering a trade enquiry

The task is assigned to all four groups of participants. Participants are required to attend to their counterpart's product enquiry and the task is situated in different sequence of communicative event for the four groups. For the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants, the task is third in the sequence after they have traded a product with their Thai counterpart. For the Thais interacting with Australian

counterpart (Thai1) and the Thais interacting with Thai counterpart (Thai2), it is first in the sequence. Other details such as the product, their identity & business, and their counterpart's details & email correspondence are provided in the task. Refer to Table 6.2 for the detailed analysis of the introspections.

### 6.2.1 Key Findings

#### 1. Main business goal

Most participants of the four groups targeted this goal and shared the main strategy of 'Give product information' despite some small differences in other strategies through which they expressed their concern of the product enquiry and sales. However, while all groups tended to focus on the quality of product information, the Non-Thai Asians were also concerned with the quantity.

Only the Australians showed strong emphasis on reciprocity of trade due to their previous trade with their counterpart in earlier communicative events.

#### 2. Subsidiary business goal

Only a few participants of the four groups targeted this goal. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians reported their strategy to offer reciprocal trade conditions. The Thai2s reported a different strategy to present product in person due to being in the same country.

#### 3. Identity goal

A high proportion of the Australians, the Thai1s, and the Thai2s emphasised this goal compared with less than half of the Non-Thai Asians. The Thai1s contributed the first communicative contact with their counterpart as a reason for their focus on this goal.

**Table 6.2a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Answering a trade enquiry**

Goals	Strategies			
	Australian [Com Event 3]	Non-Thai Asian [Com Event 3]	Thai I [Com Event 1]	Thai 2 [Com Event 1]
<i>Main Business goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (16)</b> - Give product information (16) - Provide attractive details (4) - Promise to source the product further (2) - Ask for further details of the enquiry (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Give product information (14) - Provide attractive detail (2) - Provide enough details (3) - Show eagerness in offering product (1) - Ask for further details of the enquiry (2) - Discuss credit terms later (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Give product information (15) - Provide attractive details (5) - Attract counterpart with service (1) - Encourage counterpart to buy product (1) - Ask for further details of the enquiry (3) - Give more product information after receiving response (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Give product information (15) - Provide attractive detail (1) - Provide brochure (1) - Ask for further details of the enquiry (2)
<i>Subsidiary business goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (3)</b> - Offer negotiation on price (1) - Indicate benefits & special conditions (1) - Offer reciprocal credit terms (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (3)</b> - Offer negotiation on price (1) - Offer reciprocal credit terms (1) - Offer samples (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (2)</b> - Offer negotiation on price (1) - Offer samples (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (2)</b> - Offer negotiation on price (1) - Offer special conditions (1) - Offer to present product in person due to being in the same country (1)
<i>Identity goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (12)</b> - Be formal (1) - Be semiformal (between formal business letter & informal personal email) (1) - Be informal (1) - Express politeness (9) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (6) - Use language regarding buyer/ seller roles (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (5)</b> - Be formal (1) - Be informal (1) - Express politeness (4) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Introduce business (13) - Provide business credentials (8) - Judge counterpart's credibility (ex. Check counterpart's business) (7) - Ask counterpart to introduce their business (1) - Be formal (5) - Be semiformal (between formal business letter & informal personal email) (1) - Be informal (ex. in word choice) (1) - Express politeness (3) - Express appreciation of counterpart's interest in product (5)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Introduce business (10) - Provide business credentials (9) - Ask counterpart to introduce their business & company profile (1) - Ask for face-to-face meeting (1) - Be formal (2) - Be informal (3) - Express politeness (2) - Express appreciation of counterpart's interest in product (8)
<i>Relational goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (9)</b> - Establish business relationship (9)  <b>Goal Rejected (2)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (7)</b> - Establish business relationship (7)  <b>Goal Rejected (1)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Establish business relationship (10) - Use friendly language (1)  <b>Goal Rejected (2)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Establish business relationship (10)  <b>Goal Rejected (4)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (4)



<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (13)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (8)</li> <li>- Use point form (1)</li> <li>- Middle way between long business letter &amp; short personal email (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (6)</li> <li>- Use simple English (3)</li> <li>- Use small words (1)</li> <li>- Choice of words (ex. 'help you') (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (2)</li> <li>- Use website &amp; attachment to give product information (7)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief &amp; direct (3)</li> <li>- Friendly (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (9)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (5)</li> <li>- Be direct (3)</li> <li>- Use simple English (3)</li> <li>- Be efficient (2)</li> <li>- Use website &amp; attachment to give product information (3)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (2)</li> <li>- Try to give enough product information (1)</li> <li>- No concern with length (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (13)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (8)</li> <li>- Be direct (1)</li> <li>- Use simple English (6)</li> <li>- Be careful with grammar &amp; vocabs (2)</li> <li>- Use proper English (in email, attachment file, company website) (2)</li> <li>- Be efficient (6)</li> <li>- Use website &amp; attachment to give product information &amp; to introduce business &amp; provide credentials (11)</li> <li>- Answering all questions (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (14)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (11)</li> <li>- Be direct (2)</li> <li>- Use simple English (4)</li> <li>- Use business English (2)</li> <li>- Use good English (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (4)</li> <li>- Use website &amp; attachment to give product information &amp; to introduce business &amp; provide credentials (10)</li> </ul>
------------------------	---	--	---	--

**Table 6.2b: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Answering a trade enquiry**

Goals	Reasons			
	Australian	Non-Thai Asian	Thai 1	Thai 2
<i>Main Business goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reciprocal trade (4)</li> <li>- Need more email exchanges (1)</li> <li>- Hesitate to give product information due to lack of trust risk in trading (1)</li> <li>- Have negotiation power due to counterpart's need of product (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reciprocal trade (1)</li> <li>- Focus more on projecting a positive image &amp; establishing relationship (1)</li> </ul>		
<i>Subsidiary business goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offer reciprocal credit terms due to relationship (1)</li> </ul>			
<i>Identity goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be formal to project a positive image (professional one) (1)</li> <li>- Be informal due to business relationship (1)</li> <li>- Business manners to be polite (1)</li> <li>- For trade (1)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to relationship (1)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to having similar attitude in both roles (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be formal due to counterpart's formal enquiry (1)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles to keep consistency in use of language (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Main concern to introduce business (1)</li> <li>- To project a positive image (professional &amp; friendly) (9)</li> <li>- Judge counterpart's credibility to avoid fake agent (1)</li> <li>- Due to competitive business (2)</li> <li>- Need more email exchanges to build trust in counterpart (2)</li> <li>- Realise counterpart as an international company (1)</li> <li>- Be formal due to business (1)</li> <li>- Be formal due to concern with counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- Business manners to be polite (2)</li> <li>- For trade (3)</li> <li>- Due to first email contact (6)</li> <li>- To establish relationship (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To project a positive image (4)</li> <li>- Due to first email contact (5)</li> <li>- Be informal due to email (1)</li> <li>- For trade (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's formal enquiry (1)</li> <li>- Concern with politeness more than efficiency &amp; effectiveness (1)</li> <li>- Good manners to show appreciation of counterpart's interest in product (1)</li> </ul>

<i>Relational goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bilateral relationship (1)</li> <li>- For future negotiation of the buying deal (2)</li> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- Due to having previous trade (1)</li> <li>- Due to reciprocal trade (4)</li> <li>- No intention of establishing relationship due to too early in first email (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For future trade (1)</li> <li>- To be trade partner (1)</li> <li>- Due to having previous trade (1)</li> <li>- Still need more trade (1)</li> <li>- No intention of establishing relationship due to too early in first email (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal relationship more than business relationship (1)</li> <li>- To build trust (1)</li> <li>- For future trade (4)</li> <li>- Due to first email contact (2)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's expression of relationship (1)</li> <li>- No intention of establishing relationship due to too early in first email (1)</li> <li>- No intention of establishing relationship due to focus on business (1)</li> <li>- Expect to receive a response to check counterpart's interest &amp; requirement of product &amp; trade conditions before give more product information after receipt of reply (9)</li> <li>- Expect to receive a response (50%) despite assuming counterpart to send similar enquiries and receive many replies from other agents (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- For trade (1)</li> <li>- Due to first email contact (1)</li> <li>- No intention of establishing relationship due to too early in first email (3)</li> <li>- Expect to receive a response (7)</li> <li>- Expect to receive a response (50%) due to competitive business (1)</li> <li>- Expect to receive a response (50%) despite assuming counterpart to send similar enquiries and receive many replies from other agents (1)</li> </ul>
<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid confusion (1)</li> <li>- Due to email, website, attachment (4)</li> <li>- Due to previous provision of business credentials &amp; contact (1)</li> <li>- No intention of being brief &amp; direct due to establishment of business relationship in previous trade (3)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To save time &amp; space in email (3)</li> <li>- To avoid annoying counterpart (1)</li> <li>- Due to having established business relationship &amp; common ground in previous trade (1)</li> <li>- Due to need of further details of reader's enquiry (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's use of simple English (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be brief due to focus more on business (provide product information) (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid confusion (3)</li> <li>- To save time for both parties (2)</li> <li>- Due to email (2)</li> <li>- Due to first email contact (1)</li> <li>- Due to business communication (1)</li> <li>- Use simple English due to contact with international agents (1)</li> <li>- Use persuasive language due to competitive business (1)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (5)</li> <li>- No concern with counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's own English (1)</li> <li>- No concern with good English due to email (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To save time for both parties (2)</li> <li>- To avoid confusion (2)</li> <li>- To avoid annoying counterpart (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's brief, concise, clear, direct &amp; using simple English (2)</li> <li>- Due to email, website, attachment (6)</li> <li>- Due to being in the same country &amp; possible phone contact (1)</li> <li>- Use good English to attract counterpart (1)</li> <li>- No concern with good English (2)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (2)</li> <li>- No concern with counterpart's English (7)</li> <li>- Concern with one's own English (1)</li> </ul>

Only the two Thai groups reported business introduction and expressing appreciation of counterpart's interest in the product. While the Thai1s focused on mutual business introduction and formality, the Thai2s focused on

expressing appreciation of their counterpart's product enquiry, and expected a face-to-face meeting.

#### 4. Relational goal

Higher proportion of the two Thai groups than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians intended to establish relationship with their counterpart.

#### 5. Efficiency goal

High proportion of the Australians and both two Thai groups tended to focus on this goal compared with only about half of the Non-Thai Asians.

The two Thai groups emphasised the use of website and attachment and were concerned with their English.

Participants across the four groups had concerns about time constraint, email space, message clarity, use of website and attachment, sequence of communicative event, compliance with counterpart's email writing styles and business location, and the possibility of using phone contact instead of email.

### 6.2.2 Conclusion

1. All four groups focus on the main business goal.
2. A much higher proportion of the Australians, the Thai1s, and the Thai2s than the Non-Thai Asians emphasised the identity goal and the efficiency goal.
3. More participants in the two Thai groups expressed their intention to establish a relationship than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians.

4. There is evidence showing the influence of sequence of communicative events on the Australians' strategy to offer reciprocal trade conditions and the Thai1s' business introduction and formality.
5. The similar location of the counterpart' s business has an influence on the Thai2s' expression for a meeting in person.
6. It is interesting to note two similarities in the use of language in relation to roles and in the expectation of a response. All four groups intend to use language according to their role of a trader and expect a response from their counterpart.

### **6.3 Task: Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment**

The task is assigned to three groups of participants, the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1s. Participants are required to negotiate for a price reduction and a deferred payment in order to purchase product from their counterpart. The task is situated in different sequence of communicative event for the three groups. For the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants, the task is second in the sequence. For the Thai1s, it is fourth in the sequence after they have traded a product with their Australian counterpart. Refer to Table 6.3 for the detailed analysis of the introspections.

#### **6.3.1 Key Findings**

##### **1. Main business goal**

All participants of the three groups targeted this goal and reported to request a price reduction and a deferred payment.

**Table 6.3a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment**

Goals	Strategies		
	Australian [Com Event 2]	Non-Thai Asian [Com Event 2]	Thai 1 [Com Event 3]
<i>Main Business goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (16)</b> - Request price reduction & credit terms (16) - State price too high & use it to negotiate for desired credit terms (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (16)</b> - Request price reduction & credit terms (16)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Request price reduction & credit terms (15)
<i>Subsidiary business goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Provide reasons (8) - Offer further negotiation (2) - Offer future trade (5) - Offer volume purchase (2) - Indicate bilateral benefits (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (11)</b> - Show interest in product (2) - Provide reasons (9) - Provide market potentials (2) - Offer volume purchase (3) - Offer future trade (4) - Indicate bilateral benefits (1) - Ask for samples (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (12)</b> - Show interest in product (2) - Provide reasons (7) - Provide market potentials (1) - Offer volume purchase (6) - Offer future trade (1) - Show willingness to buy more expensive product from counterpart than to buy cheaper from other agents (1)
<i>Identity goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Provide business credentials (3) - Be formal (2) - Be informal (ex. Friendly, Personal) (7) - Express politeness (12) - Express appreciation of product information (5)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Provide business credentials (2) - Judge counterpart's credibility (ex. Test reader's expertise) (1) - Be semiformal (ex. Formal in language & Informal in email format) (2) - Be informal (1) - Express politeness (7) - Express appreciation of product information (9) - Avoid imposing requests (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Be formal (ex. Word choice) (1) - Be semiformal (ex. Formal in language & Informal in email format) (2) - Express politeness (ex. Word choice 'would like' instead of 'want') (6) - Express appreciation of product information (2) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (7) - Express some confidence in negotiation as buyer (1) - Avoid imposing requests (1)
<i>Relational goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Establish business relationship (13) - Offer to meet in person (1) - Propose a long term relationship (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (6)</b> - Establish business relationship (6) - Show interest in establishing relationship (1) - Share business interest & benefits as trade partner (1)  <b>Goal Rejected (2)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (2) - Get counterpart's agreement first (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (11)</b> - Establish business relationship (11) - Use friendly language (ex. 'Dear Elizabeth' instead of 'Dear Mrs. Blair') (2) - Share business interest & benefits as trade partner (1) - Ask for assistance in the request (3)

Goals	Strategies		
	Australian [Com Event 2]	Non-Thai Asian [Com Event 2]	Thai 1 [Com Event 3]
Efficiency goal	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (12)</li> <li>- Outline 2 requests (1)</li> <li>- Use point form (for proper response) (1)</li> <li>- Minimize number of paragraphs (3 paragraphs) (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (8)</li> <li>- Use simple English (7)</li> <li>- Be efficient (5)</li> </ul>	<b>Goal Targeted (11)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (9)</li> <li>- Use point form (2)</li> <li>- Minimize number of paragraphs (3; positive, negative, conclusion) (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (5)</li> <li>- Use simple English (6)</li> <li>- Be careful with language in negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (2)</li> </ul>	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (5)</li> <li>- Be direct (8)</li> <li>- Use simple English (2)</li> <li>- Use conversational English (1)</li> <li>- Use good English (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (3)</li> <li>- Provide more information in the request (1)</li> </ul>
	<b>Goal Rejected (4)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be direct (2)</li> <li>- No intention to use simple English (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient (1)</li> <li>- Elaborate requests (1)</li> </ul>	<b>Goal Rejected (3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No concern with length (1)</li> <li>- No intention to use simple English (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient (1)</li> </ul>	<b>Goal Rejected (1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (1)</li> </ul>

**Table 6.3b: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Requesting price reduction and credit payment**

Goals	Reasons			Thai I
	Australian	Non-Thai Asian		
<i>Main Business goal</i>				
<i>Subsidiary business goal</i>				
<i>Identity goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To project a positive image (4)</li> <li>- Informal due to counterpart's informal email (1)</li> <li>- Informal to establish relationship (1)</li> <li>- For negotiation (5)</li> <li>- For future trade (1)</li> <li>- Very important to be polite (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To project a positive image (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's polite email (1)</li> <li>- For negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Be semiformal due to relationship (1)</li> <li>- Avoid imposing requests due to second email (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide reasons to give more information, to enable counterpart to understand one's own situation, to save time in reaching an agreement, to avoid imposing requests (2)</li> <li>- Expect reciprocal credit agreement (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First concern to express politeness (1)</li> <li>- For negotiation (2)</li> <li>- Business interest &amp; practices more influential on negotiation than politeness (1)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to having both roles (3)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles despite having buyer negotiation power (1)</li> </ul>
<i>Relational goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For negotiation (5)</li> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- Due to new relationship (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More important to establish relationship than to be efficient (1)</li> <li>- For negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Still too early according to Japanese culture (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For negotiation (1)</li> <li>- For future trade (4)</li> <li>- Due to previous trade (4)</li> <li>- Expect more relationship in this email than in previous email (1)</li> </ul>	
<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid confusion (2)</li> <li>- To save time (3)</li> <li>- For negotiation (2)</li> <li>- For a proper &amp; complete reply (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's use of simple English (1)</li> <li>- Due to having exchanged information (1)</li> <li>- Due to email, website (3)</li> <li>- Due to business (1)</li> <li>- Due to new relationship (2)</li> <li>- Concern with counterpart's understanding (1)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- No concern with counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be direct to avoid offending counterpart (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be direct due to second email (unfamiliar with counterpart) (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient due to providing reasons &amp; business credentials (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid confusion (1)</li> <li>- To save time (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's use of point form &amp; simple English (2)</li> <li>- Due to negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Due to having exchanged information (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient due to providing reasons &amp; establishing relationship (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient due to focus more on requests (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For a proper &amp; complete reply (1)</li> <li>- Provide more information in the request to enable counterpart to capture the situation to save time in negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's being direct (to familiarize with counterpart) (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be brief due to providing reasons (1)</li> </ul>	



## 2. Subsidiary business goal

Most participants of the three groups targeted this goal. The majority reported the strategy of 'Provide reasons' and shared some other strategies aiming at attracting the counterpart's interest such as 'Show interest in product,' 'Offer further negotiation,' 'Offer volume purchase,' 'Offer future trade,' 'Provide market potentials,' 'Indicate bilateral benefits,' etc.

Explanations given only by a few Thais for their inclusion of reasons show that the reasons might have been used to convince the counterpart to comply with their requests by providing the counterpart with additional information so that the counterpart could understand their situation and decide to agree to their requests faster without realising the pressure of the requests. The Thais also expected to receive similar credit term offer as they had given to their counterpart in an earlier trade transaction.

## 3. Identity goal

Most of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians targeted this goal compared with only two-thirds of the Thais. While the Australians specifically focus on politeness and informality, the Non-Thai Asians concentrated on expressing appreciation for product information. A few Non-Thai Asians reported their effort to avoid imposing requests. Only the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians mentioned the strategy of 'Provide business credentials'.

## 4. Relational goal

A high proportion of the Australian and the Thais emphasised relationship compared with less than half of the Non-Thai Asians, who reported some slightly different strategies. Reasons given by participants suggest that the Australians tended to use relationship to benefit trade negotiation while the Thais used it to benefit future trade and realised the impact of previous trade and interaction.

## 5. Efficiency goal

A high proportion of participants across the three groups targeted this goal and shared most of the main efficiency-related strategies.

Participants across the three groups reported their awareness of time constraint, possible confusion, negotiation process and outcome, business communication rules, email medium, and information exchange. The three groups also tried to comply with their counterpart's email. However, some participants had no intention to be efficient due to their focus on the requests and provision of reasons. A few Australian and Non-Thai Asian participants did not try to be efficient or direct due to their perception of the relationship as too early and their avoidance of offending the counterpart.

### 6.3.3 Conclusion

1. The three groups focused mainly on the main business goal, subsidiary business goal, identity goal, and efficiency goal in this task.
2. Diverse approaches to business negotiation are evident in the participants' introspections.
3. Some strategies related to the identity goal and the relational goal are used for business negotiation in this task.
4. Introspections show that participants have concerns stemming from the email medium and their perception of the negotiation process and outcome, confusion avoidance and compliance to counterpart's email.
5. Some participants focus more on the negotiation task than the efficiency goal.

## **6.4 Task: Answering request of a price reduction and a deferred payment**

The task is assigned to all four groups of participants and they are required to negotiate the counterpart's request of a price reduction and a deferred payment. They are to refuse one of the requests and agree to the other. The task is situated in a different sequence of communicative events for some of the four groups. For the Australian and for the Non-Thai Asian participants, the task is fourth in the sequence after they have traded a product with their Thai counterpart. For the Thai1s and Thai2s, it is second in the sequence. The detailed analysis is presented in Table 6.4.

### **6.4.1 Key Findings**

#### **1. Main business goal**

Most participants across the four groups targeted this goal. The Australian and Non-Thai Asian participants preferred granting their counterpart's request before declining, while the Thai1s preferred declining before granting and the Thai2s equally preferred either order. Data shows that these preferences are rather participants' choices, than their response to the counterpart's order of requests.

Given reasons demonstrate that these preferences are most likely influenced by participants' awareness of the state of mind of the counterpart, their attempt to attract the counterpart's interest, and their writing strategy.

#### **2. Subsidiary business goal**

More than half of the participants from the four groups reported and shared their strategies regarding this goal, such as providing reasons, setting purchase conditions, offering reciprocal credit terms, offering further negotiation, offering personal commission, stressing long term relationship, etc. Most of the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1s preferred the 'providing reasons' strategy.

**Table 6.4a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Answering requests for a price reduction and a credit payment**

Goals	Strategies			
	Australian [Com Event 4]	Non-Thai Asian [Com Event 4]	Thai I [Com Event 2]	Thai 2 [Com Event 2]
<i>Identity goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (12)</b> - Apologise to decline (1) - Be formal (4) - Be informal (6) - Be informal in granting request (2) - Friendly, casual, personal (ex. 'Best wishes') (1) - Friendly + business writing style (1) - Express politeness (9) - Be polite in granting request (1) - Be less polite in declining request (2) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (5)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Apologise to decline (2) - Be formal (1) - Be semi-formal (1) - Express politeness (7) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (5) - Use language regarding buyer/ seller roles (2) - Word choice (ex. 'would you please', 'can you', 'could you') (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Apologise to decline (1) - Be formal (1) - Be semi-formal (by using conversational language) (1) - Be informal (2) - Express politeness (5) - Be polite in declining request (1) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (5)	<b>Goal Targeted (6)</b> - Be formal (2) - Express politeness (4) - Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles (1)
<i>Relational goal</i>	<b>Goal Targeted (9)</b> - Continue establishing business relationship (9) - Establish business & personal relationship (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Continue establishing business relationship (10) - Word choice (ex. 'we' in stead of 'I' or 'you', 'our' instead of 'your' or 'my') (1) - Ask for bilateral contribution to relationship (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (8)</b> - Establishing business relationship (8)  <b>Goal Rejected (3)</b> - No intention to establish relationship (3)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Establishing business relationship (10)

**Table 6.4a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Answering requests for a price reduction and a credit payment**

Goals	Strategies			
	Australian [Com Event 4]	Non-Thai Asian [Com Event 4]	Thai 1 [Com Event 2]	Thai 2 [Com Event 2]
Main Business goal	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No concern with order of answers (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Grant before Decline (9)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with positive answer (5)</li> <li>- Respond to counterpart's order of requests (3)</li> </ul> <p><b>Decline before Grant (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- End with positive answer (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask for an explanation (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (14)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No preferred order (4)</li> </ul> <p><b>Grant before Decline (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with positive answer (7)</li> <li>- Conclude nicely (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Decline before Grant (3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- End with positive answer (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No preferred order (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Grant before Decline (5)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with positive answer (4)</li> <li>- Soft Decline (1)</li> <li>- Use marketing strategy in negotiation (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Decline before Grant (9)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respond to counterpart's order of requests (4)</li> <li>- End with positive answer (4)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No concern with Grant or Decline (1)</li> <li>- Just answer counterpart's requests (1)</li> <li>- Be flexible (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Grant before Decline (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with positive answer (6)</li> <li>- Use marketing strategy in negotiation (by delaying answers) (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Decline before Grant (6)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respond to counterpart's order of answers (1)</li> <li>- End with positive answer to please counterpart (2)</li> <li>- Use marketing strategy in negotiation (1)</li> </ul>
Subsidiary business goal	<p><b>Goal Targeted (11)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide reasons (4)</li> <li>- Set purchase conditions (4)</li> <li>- Stress existing relationship (2)</li> <li>- Stress long term relationship (2)</li> <li>- Offer reciprocal credit terms (1)</li> <li>- Refer to third party (1)</li> <li>- Convince counterpart of product quality (1)</li> <li>- Show effort to accommodate counterpart's requests (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (11)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide reasons (11)</li> <li>- Set purchase conditions (3)</li> <li>- Stress existing relationship (2)</li> <li>- Offer reciprocal credit terms (2)</li> <li>- Offer further negotiation (2)</li> <li>- Offer immediate shipment (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide reasons (12)</li> <li>- Set purchase conditions (7)</li> <li>- Convince counterpart of product quality (4)</li> <li>- Offer personal commission (1)</li> <li>- Stress existing relationship (1)</li> <li>- Stress long term relationship (1)</li> <li>- Offer samples (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (11)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide reasons (7)</li> <li>- Set purchase conditions (6)</li> <li>- Offer samples (1)</li> </ul>

<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (13)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (9)</li> <li>- End with a brief conclusion (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (8)</li> <li>- Use simple English (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (4)</li> <li>- By order of answers to shorten negotiation (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (9)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (7)</li> <li>- Be direct (3)</li> <li>- Use simple English (ex. word choice) (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No concern with length &amp; focus more on messages (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (12)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (5)</li> <li>- Be careful in quoting price &amp; credit terms (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (8)</li> <li>- Be direct n granting request (1)</li> <li>- Provide exact answers (1)</li> <li>- Use simple English (5)</li> <li>- Word choice (soft decline) (1)</li> <li>- Use conversational language (1)</li> <li>- Use business English (1)</li> <li>- Avoid translating L1 to L2 (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (5)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be direct (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (10)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (5)</li> <li>- Be clear in quoting price &amp; credit terms (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (4)</li> <li>- Be direct in declining request (1)</li> <li>- Use simple English (6)</li> <li>- Word choice (avoid 'no' or 'not', soft, nice, simple words known among Thais) &amp; Grammar (6)</li> <li>- Use business English (2)</li> <li>- Use correct English (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (2)</li> <li>- Cover only important issues &amp; use phone (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be direct (2)</li> </ul>
------------------------	---	---	--	---

**Table 6.4b: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Answering requests for a price reduction and a credit payment**

Goals	Reasons			
	Australian	Non-Thai Asian	Thai 1	Thai 2
Main Business goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start wit positive answer to impress counterpart &amp; to influence &amp; to soften Decline (5)</li> <li>- Give something and Ask for something (1)</li> <li>- Recognise counterpart's needs (3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with positive answer to impress counterpart (7)</li> <li>- Give something and Ask for something (1)</li> <li>- Conclude nicely to soften Decline (1)</li> <li>- End with positive answer to please counterpart &amp; to influence request for an order of product &amp; to emphasise Decline to shorten negotiation (3)</li> <li>- Negotiation as a critical matter &amp; not routine (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start with positive answer to impress counterpart &amp; to soften Decline (4)</li> <li>- Need to know counterpart more (1)</li> <li>- End with positive answer to soften Decline &amp; to please counterpart (4)</li> <li>- Focus more on Decline than Grant (1)</li> <li>- Give something and Ask for something (1)</li> <li>- Expect reader to compromise (1)</li> <li>- Expect further negotiation (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have positive view of counterpart (1)</li> <li>- Expect further negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Start with positive answer to impress counterpart &amp; to soften Decline (6)</li> <li>- Expect further negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Expect future business (1)</li> <li>- Expect meeting in person due to being in the same country (1)</li> <li>- Aware of competitiveness in business (1)</li> <li>- Give something and Ask for something (1)</li> <li>- Focus more on Decline than Grant (1)</li> </ul>
Subsidiary business goal				
Identity goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be informal due to declining counterpart's request (1)</li> <li>- Be informal due to relationship (1)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- Due to email (1)</li> <li>- Due to knowledge of counterpart's culture (1)</li> <li>- Be formal &amp; less polite in declining request to shorten negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to having previous trade (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to counterpart's formal email (1)</li> <li>- Very important to be polite (1)</li> <li>- Due to business (2)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to equal power of both roles (2)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to no concern with either buyer or seller roles (3)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to having both roles (1)</li> <li>- Use persuasive language to sell product (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to too early in relationship to be informal (1)</li> <li>- Be informal due to more familiarity with counterpart (1)</li> <li>- First concern to be polite (1)</li> <li>- Be polite due to Thai culture (1)</li> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to having both roles (4)</li> <li>- Use language regardless of buyer/ seller roles due to no concern with either buyer or seller roles (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To be consistently formal with previous email (1)</li> <li>- Be polite due to negotiation (1)</li> </ul>
Relational goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very important to establish relationship (1)</li> <li>- Relationship has influence on trade decision &amp; order of answers (3)</li> <li>- Expect long term relationship (2)</li> <li>- For future contact &amp; trade (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expect long term relationship (1)</li> <li>- Due to bilateral benefits (2 trade transactions) (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's expression of business interest in email reply (2)</li> <li>- No intention to establish relationship due to focus on negotiation (1)</li> <li>- No intention to establish relationship until having traded (1)</li> <li>- No intention to establish relationship due to too early (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to counterpart's expression of business interest in email in email reply (7)</li> <li>- For trade (1)</li> <li>- For future trade (1)</li> </ul>

<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very important to be efficient in negotiation via email (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's brief, concise, clear email (1)</li> <li>- Due to email (1)</li> <li>- Due to relationship (1)</li> <li>- Due to provision of business credentials in previous email &amp; exchanges of emails (1)</li> <li>- No concern with counterpart's English (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To get a direct answer (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's brief, concise, clear, &amp; direct email (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid confusion (3)</li> <li>- To save time &amp; space in email (2)</li> <li>- To save cost (1)</li> <li>- Due to email (1)</li> <li>- Due to trade (1)</li> <li>- Due to provision of information in previous email (1)</li> <li>- Due to expectation of further negotiation (1)</li> <li>- Due to counterpart's direct email (1)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- No concern with counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- No concern with English grammar (1)</li> <li>- No concern with spelling mistakes (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to email (3)</li> <li>- Due to similar nationality (2)</li> <li>- Due to provision of information in previous email (1)</li> <li>- To be consistently direct with previous email (1)</li> <li>- Consider counterpart's English (1)</li> <li>- No concern with counterpart's English (3)</li> </ul>
------------------------	---	--	---	---



### 3. Identity goal

One-third of the Thai2s reported strategies related to this goal in comparison to two-thirds of the other three groups.

Participants across the four groups reported no intention to change their use of language when they adopt either a buyer or a seller role, except a few Non-Thai Asians who realised the situation-specific role of a seller. Given reasons show that participants see no power difference between the role of a buyer and that of a seller in this trading situation and that they perform the general role of a trader that covers both roles of a buyer and a seller.

### 4. Relational goal

Over half of participants across the four groups explicitly aimed at the relational goal. A few Thai1s did not target the goal reasoning that they focused on negotiation and they were still at the beginning of their trade relations. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians emphasised extending the relationship while both Thai groups emphasised starting a relationship.

Given reasons demonstrate that the four groups expected future trade and a long term relationship. A few Australians intended to use relationship to influence trade negotiation and a few Non-Thai Asians seem to value relationship as contributing to bilateral trades.

### 5. Efficiency goal

More than half of the participants across the four groups targeted this goal and intended to write a brief email with concise words and clarity. The Australians and the Thai1s focused on being direct. The two Thai groups mentioned concern with their use of English.

Given reasons show that participants tried to comply with their counterpart's email and be consistent in their own email. Moreover, they reported the influence of previous email interaction on their goal.

#### **6.4.3 Conclusion**

1. Participants focused on all five goals in this negotiation task.
2. Introspections show that participants adopt and view the role of a trader as comprising both roles of a buyer and a seller, hence they see no power difference in relation to the situation-specific role of a buyer or a seller in this trading situation.
3. Level of relationship is associated with sequence of communicative events.
4. Participants' efforts in assimilating and maintaining consistency in email styles, and consideration of previous email interaction emerge from their communication through a series of communicative events.
5. Regarding negotiation approaches, participants use order of answers, reason, bargaining opportunity, trade condition, sales commission, relationship, reciprocal offer, third party reference, product quality, and accommodating client's needs in negotiation.

#### **6.5 Task: Dealing with problem 1**

The task is assigned to all four groups of participants, but each group is required to manage different problems. The problems for the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants to solve are their failure to ship product according to an appointed date, which incurs a delayed shipment; and their need to shorten credit payment terms in the agreement, which is not favorable to the counterpart. They are required to inform their counterpart of these changes. The problems for the Thai participants of both groups to solve are their shipment of defected product and in short amount to the counterpart without giving them a prior notice, which poses troubles to the counterpart. They are required to respond to their counterpart's notification of these problems. The task is situated in different sequence of communicative event for

the four groups. For the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians, it is fifth in the sequence but for both groups of the Thais it is sixth in the sequence. Table 6.5 presents a detailed analysis of the participants' introspections.

### 6.5.1 Key Findings

#### 1. Main business goal

Most of the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians, and the Thai1s explicitly targeted this goal compared to about half of the Thai2s. Some varying strategies are likely to be derived from different types of problems. Participants tried to keep trade in this problematic situation.

#### 2. Subsidiary business goal

Most participants across the four groups reported strategies related to this goal and shared several strategies. However, they emphasized different strategies. The majority of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians intended to provide reasons as a strategy, while the majority of the two Thai groups intended to offer solutions and convince counterpart of their business. These differences in strategies are likely due to dissimilar problems.

Participants also exhibited some problem-solving approaches through other strategies, such as offering further discussion, seeking cooperation, stressing relationship, handling problems as one team, etc.

Given reasons show that participants were concerned with their counterpart's reactions and future trade, realized their role of a trader, and wanted to demonstrate responsibility and effort to solve the problems.

**Table 6.5a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Dealing with problem 1**

Goals	Strategies			
	Australian (Problems- changes in agreement) [Com Event 5]	Non-Thai Asian (Problems- changes in agreement) [Com Event 5]	Thai 1 (Problems-defect & short product) [Com Event 6]	Thai 2 (Problems-defect & short product) [Com Event 6]
Main Business goal	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Address problems (15) - Address only one problem (5) - Avoid specifying details of problems (2)  <b>Goal Rejected (1)</b> - Cancel transaction (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Address problems (15) - Address only one problem (3) - Specifying details of problems (1) - Avoid specifying details of problems (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Address problems (14) - Address problems as one's faults (5)	<b>Goal Targeted (9)</b> - Address problems (9) - Address problems as one's faults (4)
Subsidiary business goal	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Provide reasons (8) - Offer solutions (8) - Offer further discussion (1) - Seek cooperation (2) - Convince counterpart of business (3) - Stress relationship (1) - Try to handle problems properly (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Provide reasons (9) - Offer solutions (7) - Offer further discussion (3) - Seek cooperation (5) - Show appreciation of counterpart's cooperation (indirect seek of cooperation) (1) - Convince counterpart of business (4) - Handle problems as one business team (1) - Wait for response before taking further step (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Provide reasons (5) - Offer solutions (compensation, product replacement, etc) (14) - Seek cooperation (ex. ask counterpart to return defected products, take some photos of the defective, send a report, etc.) (7) - Convince counterpart of business (by taking responsibility, promising to prevent problems, investigating, etc to build trust) (9)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Provide reasons (5) - Offer solutions (10) - Offer further discussion (1) - Seek cooperation (3) - Convince counterpart of business (12)
Identity goal	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Apologise (11) - Prefer to apologise over the phone (1) - Not apologise (1) - Be formal (4) - Be informal (personal) (1) - Express politeness (3) - Avoid being rude (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (11)</b> - Apologise (9) - Not apologise (1) - Be formal (1) - Be informal (in apology) (1) - Express politeness (6)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Apologise (14) - Apologise with word choice (ex. 'apologise,' 'regret') (3) - Apologise twice (2) - Be formal (1) - Be informal (in apology) (1) - Express politeness (3) - Avoid specifying details of problems (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Apologise (15) - Apologise with word choice (ex. 'apologise' more polite & serious than 'sorry', 'we do really apologise for the ...', 'do apologise', 'sorry for mistakes') (5) - Prefer to apologise over the phone (1) - Express politeness (4)
Relational goal	<b>Goal Targeted (11)</b> - Keep business relationship (11) - Show honesty (1) - Address only one problem (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (10)</b> - Keep business relationship (10) - Keep relationship with all parties involved (1) - Show honesty, trust & confidence (1) - Address only one problem (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (12)</b> - Keep business relationship (12) - Also keep personal relationship (1) - Try to improve the damaged relationship (1) - Distant problems from personal relationship (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (9)</b> - Keep business relationship (9) - Try to improve the damaged relationship (1)

**Table 6.5b: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Dealing with problem 1**

Goals	Reasons		
	Australian	Non-Thai Asian	Thai 1
<i>Main Business goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address only one problem to keep business (5)</li> <li>- As middle party – Third party's fault (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address only one problem to keep business (2)</li> <li>- Avoid specifying details of problems due to trading reasons (1)</li> </ul>	
<i>Subsidiary business goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern with counterpart's reaction (3)</li> <li>- Concern with future business (1)</li> <li>- Realise the negativity of problems (1)</li> <li>- As middle party – Third party's fault (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern with counterpart's reaction (2)</li> <li>- Concern with future business (1)</li> <li>- Offer solutions to show initiatives (1)</li> <li>- Show appreciation of reader's cooperation to ease tension (1)</li> <li>- As middle party – Third party's fault (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern with counterpart's reaction (3)</li> <li>- Concern with future business (2)</li> <li>- Convince reader of business to show one's concerns with problems, commitment to solve problems &amp; no intention to cause problems (1)</li> </ul>
<i>Identity goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very important to apologise (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (6)</li> <li>- Apologise due to breaking one's promise (4)</li> <li>- Apologise due to one's fault (2)</li> <li>- Apologise due to relationship (6)</li> <li>- Apologise to keep trade (1)</li> <li>- Apologise for future trade (1)</li> <li>- Apologise due to problems (1)</li> <li>- Prefer to apologise via phone due to the legal use of email (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good manner to apologise (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (9)</li> <li>- Concern with counterpart's image &amp; trade with their client (1)</li> <li>- Apologise due to breaking one's promise (4)</li> <li>- Apologise to show one's humbleness (1)</li> <li>- Apologise to show one's responsibility (1)</li> <li>- Apologise to show one's value of time with counterpart (1)</li> <li>- Apologise due to relationship (4)</li> <li>- Apologise due to problems (3)</li> <li>- Apologise to keep trade (1)</li> <li>- Apologise due to bilateral trades (1)</li> <li>- Apologise to seek cooperation (1)</li> <li>- Very important to be polite (2)</li> <li>- Do not apologise due to focus on convincing counterpart in business (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very important to apologise (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (6)</li> <li>- Avoid specifying details of problems due to concern with one's image (1)</li> <li>- Apologise due to one's fault (1)</li> <li>- Apologise due to relationship (2)</li> <li>- Apologise for future trade (1)</li> <li>- Try to use language to express apology &amp; convince counterpart besides offering solutions (2)</li> <li>- Apologise twice due to serious problems (1)</li> </ul>

<p><i>Efficiency goal</i></p>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (12)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (11)</li> <li>- Be direct (6)</li> <li>- Be efficient (3)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (3)</li> <li>- Use point form (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (4)</li> <li>- Be direct in apology (2)</li> <li>- Be efficient (1)</li> <li>- Inform problems as quickly as possible (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (5)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (4)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient (1)</li> <li>- No concern with length or time (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (4)</li> <li>- Be direct (3)</li> <li>- Be direct in apology (1)</li> <li>- Use simple English (1)</li> <li>- Use soft language (1)</li> <li>- Reply quickly (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be efficient (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (2)</li> <li>- Be direct in apology (1)</li> <li>- Reply quickly &amp; frequently (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (1)</li> </ul>
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--

<i>Relational goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For bilateral trades (1)</li> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- Expect long term relationship (1)</li> <li>- Address only one problem to keep relationship (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very important to keep business relationship (1)</li> <li>- For long term relationship (1)</li> <li>- For bilateral trades (2)</li> <li>- For future trade (1)</li> <li>- Concern with relationship (1)</li> <li>- Address only one problem to keep relationship (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- For bilateral trades (2)</li> <li>- Due to existing relationship (1)</li> <li>- Due to one's fault</li> <li>- Due to new relationship (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For future trade (1)</li> <li>- Due to one's fault (1)</li> </ul>
<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To save time (2)</li> <li>- Due to email (1)</li> <li>- Due to informing only one problem &amp; apology (1 paragraph) (1)</li> <li>- Due to having established relationship (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For solutions (1)</li> <li>- Be direct in apology to build trust (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be brief due to focus on convincing counterpart (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief due to explaining problems (inclusion of problem details, reasons, solutions, etc) (3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reply quickly due to being in the same country &amp; no time difference (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be brief due to explaining problems (1)</li> </ul>

### 3. Identity goal

Most participants of the four groups targeted this goal and intended to apologize. However, both Thai groups explicitly mentioned their concerns with expressing an apology and use of English in their apology. Interestingly, a few Thais wanted to apologize twice to emphasize their apology.

Participants' reasons show that they realized the importance of apology according to social expectations and that apology is mostly related to image concern. The apology is also related to one's act, promise, responsibility, value and other positive qualities, relationship, and trade. Some participants tried to avoid apologizing in the email due to the use of email as a legal document in court and some stated that overly apologizing in business was not appropriate.

### 4. Relational goal

About two-thirds of participants of the four groups targeted this goal and shared some strategies. In this situation where there were problems in trade, participants viewed that the relationship was affected by the problems and they tried to restore the relationship by sharing some cost or burden with their counterpart and minimizing the problems; by showing honesty, confidence, and trust; and by maintaining their personal relationship or business relationship with other parties involved in the situation. Given reasons show that participants tried to keep the relationship only for trade purposes.

### 5. Efficiency goal

Less than half of the Non-Thai Asians and the two Thai groups in comparison to about two-thirds of the Australians targeted this goal.

Several participants rejected this goal and focused on discussing the problems and solutions to convince their counterpart.



### 6.5.2 Conclusion

1. Most participants across the four groups reflected their intentions related to the main business goal, subsidiary business goal, identity goal, and relational goal. Efficiency goal is less emphasized in this situation.
2. In a problematic business situation, participants are mostly concerned with trade and reported various problem-solving approaches. These strategies vary upon types of problems.
3. Some other factors are identified to exert possible influence on participants' goals and strategies in this situation such as anticipation of interactant's reaction and future interaction.
4. Whilst most participants across the four groups intended to apologise, the two Thai groups expressed high concerns with their apology.

## 6.6 Task: Dealing with problem 2

The task is assigned to all four groups of participants but each group is required to manage different problems. The problems for the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants to handle and write email for the task are their receipt of broken products and short in amount from the counterpart. The problems for the Thai1s to solve are the counterpart's requests to change shipment date and credit payment terms in the trade contract. The problem for the Thai2s to solve is their receipt of short amount payment for their product from the counterpart. All these problems are unfavourable to participants. The task is situated in a different sequence of communicative event for some of the four groups. For both Thai groups, it is fifth in the sequence, but for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians it is sixth in the sequence, after they have posed troubles to their counterpart in the previous sequence. Table 6.6 provides a detailed summary of the findings from the analysis.

**Table 6.6a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Dealing with problem 2**

Goals	Strategies			
	Australian (Problems-defect & short product) [Com Event 6]	Non-Thai Asian (Problems-defect & short product) [Com Event 6]	Thai 1 (Problems- changes in agreement) [Com Event 5]	Thai 2 (Problem-short payment) [Com Event 5]
Main Business goal	<b>Goal Targeted (16)</b> - Address problems (16) - Specify details of problems (2) - Lodge a claim (1) - Address less negative problem first (1) - Prefer addressing problems by phone (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (13)</b> - Address problems (13) - Specify details of problems (2)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Address problems (14) - Cancel trade (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (9)</b> - Address problems (9) - Specify details of problems (1) - Prefer addressing problems by phone (2)
Subsidiary business goal	<b>Goal Targeted (16)</b> - Request explanation and/or solutions (12) - Offer further discussion (1) - Project negative results (1) - Suggest a personal visit (1) - Separate problems of 2 transactions (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Request explanation and/or solutions (14) - Mention pending problems of another trade (before informing problems of this trade) (3) - Provide reasons (2) - Refer to Third party's request of solutions (1) - Offer solutions (1) - Refer to counterpart's promise in earlier email when offering products (1) - Project negative results (1) - Stress seriousness & rejection of problems (1) - Stress bilateral trade benefits & importance of handling problems as one business (1) - End email with a positive remark (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (15)</b> - Request explanation and/or solutions (9) - Provide reasons (9) - Project negative results (on future business & by a possible cancellation of trade if no solutions) (8) - Refer to Third party's involvement (6) - Stress benefits, future & long term business (4) - Seek cooperation (3) - Suggest solutions (3) - Offer further discussion (2) - Stress mutual trust & relationship (2) - Show one's commitment in trade (1)	<b>Goal Targeted (14)</b> - Request explanation and/or solutions (14) - Suggest problems as counterpart's overlook (eg. word choice – avoid 'Short payment') (4) - Offer cooperation (1) - Avoid pressuring counterpart (1)

**Table 6.6a: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Dealing with problem 2**

Goals	Strategies			
	Australian (Problems-defect & short product) [Com Event 6]	Non-Thai-Asian (Problems-defect & short product) [Com Event 6]	Thai 1 (Problems- changes in agreement) [Com Event 5]	Thai 2 (Problem-short payment) [Com Event 5]
Identity goal	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Express negative feelings (ex. by not ending email with 'Yours faithfully, Your sincerely, or Best wishes', 'This is not acceptable to us and we request that you either...' ) (10)</li> <li>- Avoid expressing negative feelings (2)</li> <li>- Complain (6)</li> <li>- Complain by addressing problems (2)</li> <li>- Complain by lodging a claim (business complaint) (1)</li> <li>- Refer to third party's complaint &amp; negative feelings (2)</li> <li>- Avoid overly complaint (eg. verbal) (3)</li> <li>- Avoid complaining (8)</li> <li>- Use stern, stronger language (3)</li> <li>- Be formal (2)</li> <li>- Express politeness (8)</li> <li>- Not express politeness (1)</li> <li>- Mention pending problems of another trade (1)</li> <li>- Avoid mentioning pending problems of another trade (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (12)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Express negative feelings (5)</li> <li>- Avoid expressing negative feelings (1)</li> <li>- Complain (5)</li> <li>- Complain by whole email (1)</li> <li>- Complain by addressing problems &amp; requesting explanation (1)</li> <li>- Refer to third party's complaint &amp; negative feelings (4)</li> <li>- Avoid complaining (5)</li> <li>- Use authoritative tone (1)</li> <li>- Express politeness (5)</li> <li>- Not express politeness (1)</li> <li>- Use 'we' to represent company (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Express negative feelings (ex. rejecting problems, word choices 'For me it is too terrible after reading your email') (4)</li> <li>- Avoid expressing negative feelings (4)</li> <li>- Complain (5)</li> <li>- Complain by expressing negative feelings (1)</li> <li>- Avoid overly complaint (ex. by using formal language &amp; including reasons) (4)</li> <li>- Avoid complaining (10)</li> <li>- Refer to third party's negative feelings (1)</li> <li>- Use stronger language (2)</li> <li>- Be formal in complaint (2)</li> <li>- Be informal (like discussing problems between friends) (1)</li> <li>- Express politeness (5)</li> <li>- Be polite in word choice (ex. 'please') (1)</li> <li>- Be polite by avoiding expressing negative feelings (1)</li> <li>- Be less polite (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (14)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoid expressing negative feelings (3)</li> <li>- Complain (3)</li> <li>- Complain through the whole email &amp; business way (1)</li> <li>- Avoid complaining (11)</li> <li>- Avoid complaining directly to the Thai counterpart (1)</li> <li>- Be flexible &amp; compromise (1)</li> <li>- Express politeness (8)</li> <li>- Be polite by avoiding expressing negative feelings (1)</li> <li>- Be polite by being indirect (1)</li> <li>- Consistently polite with other previous emails (1)</li> </ul>
Relational goal	<p><b>Goal Targeted (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep business relationship (7)</li> <li>- Also keep personal relationship (1)</li> <li>- Address less negative problem first (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep business relationship (4)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to keep business relationship (2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep business relationship (7)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (10)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep business relationship (10)</li> <li>- Consistently greet (ex. 'Good morning' &amp; 'Thanks') (1)</li> </ul>

<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (15)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (9)</li> <li>- Be direct (12)</li> <li>- Use simple English (4)</li> <li>- Use Business English (1)</li> <li>- Use conversational English (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (3)</li> <li>- By lodging a claim to counterpart for quick solution (1)</li> <li>- Specify details of problems in attach file (1)</li> <li>- Refer to contract (2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No concern with length (1)</li> <li>- No intention to be direct (2)</li> <li>- Indirect expression of negative feelings (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (8)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (8)</li> <li>- Consistently use point form (1)</li> <li>- Be direct (2)</li> <li>- Use simple English (1)</li> <li>- Be efficient (4)</li> <li>- Refer to contract (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be brief (1)</li> <li>- No concern with length (1)</li> <li>- Indirect request of solutions (1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (4)</li> <li>- Be direct (in rejecting problems, expressing negative feelings, projecting negative results) (5)</li> <li>- Be efficient (1)</li> <li>- Refer to contract (5)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal Targeted (3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep email brief/concise but clear (2)</li> <li>- Specify details of problems in attach file (1)</li> <li>- Be careful with number in quoting amount (1)</li> <li>- Refer to contract (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Rejected (4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to be direct (4)</li> <li>- Address problems by hinting (1)</li> <li>- Indirect request of explanation (ex. 'Are there any problems? Please check whether there are any mistakes in your payment' &amp; avoid direct 'Short payment') (1)</li> </ul>
------------------------	--	---	---	--

**Table 6.6b: Summary of participants' strategies in achievement of goals for the task of Dealing with problem 2**

		Reasons		Thai 1	Thai 2
Goal		Australian	Non-Thai Asian		
Main Business goal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address less negative problem first to keep business (1)</li> <li>- Prefer addressing problems by phone before writing email to alert counterpart &amp; to avoid legal use of email (1)</li> </ul>			
Subsidiary business goal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expect explanation and/or solutions (3)</li> <li>- Suggest a personal visit to stress request of solutions (1)</li> <li>- Concern with counterpart's reaction (1)</li> <li>- Concern with problems of another trade more than this trade (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Refer to Third party's request of solutions to reduce tension between traders &amp; to keep business (1)</li> <li>- End email with a positive remark to keep business (1)</li> <li>- Concern with problems of another trade more than this trade (2)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern with solutions (1)</li> <li>- Concern with reader's reaction (2)</li> <li>- Concern with future business (1)</li> </ul>
Identity goal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angry, disappointed, uneasy (11)</li> <li>- Not complain due to relationship (4)</li> <li>- Too early to complain (3)</li> <li>- Not complain to get reader to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- Be polite to keep trade (1)</li> <li>- Not complain due to concern with problems of another trade (1)</li> <li>- Not complain due to understand problems as possible in trade (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (1)</li> <li>- Unproductive to express anger (1)</li> <li>- Use stern, stronger language to show seriousness (1)</li> <li>- Be formal to express anger &amp; disapproval (1)</li> <li>- Be polite to keep trade (2)</li> <li>- Be polite due to knowledge of reader's culture (1)</li> <li>- Expect apology (1)</li> <li>- Mention pending problems of another trade to regain one's credibility &amp; in response to reader's email (1)</li> <li>- Avoid mentioning pending problems of another trade to hide one's weakness (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angry, disappointed, unhappy, upset (7)</li> <li>- Not complain &amp; angry due to understanding problems as possible in business (4)</li> <li>- Unproductive to complain (3)</li> <li>- Not complain due to counterpart's first mistake (2)</li> <li>- Not complain due to personal relationship (1)</li> <li>- Not complain to keep trade (1)</li> <li>- Not complain to get reader to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- Not angry due to solving problems as one team (1)</li> <li>- Too early to complain (1)</li> <li>- Unproductive to express anger (1)</li> <li>- Unprofessional to express too much negative feelings (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (1)</li> <li>- Concern with problems of another trade (1)</li> <li>- Be formal to stress seriousness of problems (1)</li> <li>- Be informal (personal) due to relationship (1)</li> <li>- Be polite due to business &amp; problems involving money (1)</li> <li>- Not express politeness due to problems (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angry, disappointed, upset, stressed, worried, surprised, wonder (13)</li> <li>- Avoid expressing anger due to relationship (3)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (2)</li> <li>- Not complain to get reader to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- Not complain due to relationship (1)</li> <li>- Refer to Third party's negative feelings to keep relationship (1)</li> <li>- Not complain &amp; angry due to understanding problems as possible in business (1)</li> <li>- Too early to complain (1)</li> <li>- Avoid expressing anger to keep polite manners (1)</li> <li>- Expect counterpart to realise one's anger (1)</li> <li>- Be formal in complaint to stress seriousness of problems (1)</li> <li>- Realise one's role of trader (5)</li> <li>- Complain due to understanding complaint as acceptable in business &amp; no effect on relationship (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angry, upset, disappointed, wonder (6)</li> <li>- Not complain &amp; angry due to understanding problems as possible in business (10)</li> <li>- Not complain due to relationship (9)</li> <li>- Not complain to keep trade (2)</li> <li>- Not complain for future trade (1)</li> <li>- Not complain to get counterpart to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- Not complain due to counterpart's first mistake (1)</li> <li>- Not complain due to concern with reader's reaction (1)</li> <li>- Too early to complain (1)</li> <li>- Concern with one's image (1)</li> </ul>

<i>Relational goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to relation to problems of another trade (3)</li> <li>- No effect from problems on relationship (2)</li> <li>- To keep trade (2)</li> <li>- To get reader to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- For long term relationship (1)</li> <li>- Due to concern with counterpart's reaction (1)</li> <li>- Address less negative problem first to keep relationship (1)</li> <li>- Have trust in counterpart due to personal relationship (1)</li> <li>- Relationship depends on solutions (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No intention to keep business relationship due to focus on getting counterpart to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- Relationship depends on solutions (1)</li> <li>- No effect from problems on relationship (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No effect from complaint on relationship (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For future trade (2)</li> <li>- To get counterpart to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- No effect from complaint on relationship (1)</li> </ul>
<i>Efficiency goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to business email (2)</li> <li>- To get reader to solve problems (1)</li> <li>- Express negative feelings indirectly due to relationship &amp; problem of previous trade (1)</li> <li>- Keep email consistently brief &amp; direct with earlier emails to hide one's negative feelings (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To save time (1)</li> <li>- Due to lack of time (1)</li> <li>- Consistently use point form to stress messages &amp; keep format (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To save time (1)</li> <li>- To avoid miscommunication (1)</li> <li>- Realise one's lack of English competence (1)</li> <li>- Be direct due to established relationship (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indirect request of explanation to avoid damaging counterpart's image &amp; to get solutions (1)</li> </ul>

### 6.6.1 Key Findings

#### 1. Main business goal

Most of the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians, and the Thai1s compared with about two-thirds of the Thai2s explicitly targeted this goal. Some strategies such as addressing problems, lodging a claim, cancelling trade, etc are mentioned which are most likely dependent on the types of problems.

#### 2. Subsidiary business goal

Most participants across the four groups reported strategies related to this goal and shared a few strategies. However, they emphasised different strategies and the Thai1s reported more strategies than the other three groups. The Thai1s intended to inform the counterpart of some negative effect from the problems on their future business, refer to third party's involvement in the trade, stress future and long term business, seek cooperation, suggest solutions, offer further discussion, etc. Differences in the details of strategies tend to demonstrate different types of problems.

Introspections also demonstrate that some participants have concerns with trade, solutions, anticipation of the counterpart's reaction, pending problems in another trade, future interaction, and their interactions in the previous sequence of communication event. For example, some Australians and Non-Thai Asians reported their concern with the pending problems of another trade in the previous task and sequence of communicative event.

#### 3. Identity goal

Most participants from the four groups targeted this goal. About half of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians wanted to complain and the other half did not want to complain, while about two-thirds of the two Thai groups did not intend to complain.

About two-third of the Australians and the Thai2s compared to one-third of the other two groups focused on politeness.

Introspections show that participants across the four groups had concerns about image and relationship. Their decision to complain was based on their judgement of appropriate time, business protocols, and their counterpart's ethnic culture.

#### 4. Relational goal

A higher proportion of the Thai2s than the other three groups targeted this goal and the Non-Thai Asians had the lowest proportion with a few rejections.

Reasons provided in the introspections show that participants were concerned with current and future trade and solutions. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians seemed to focus more on trade and solutions, than relationship.

#### 5. Efficiency goal

Most of the Australians compared to half of the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1s, and only a few of the Thai2s reported strategies related to this goal.

### 6.6.2 Conclusion

1. Most of participants across the four groups targeted the main business, subsidiary business, and identity goals.
2. The Thai2s seem to focus on relationship. The Australians seem to focus on efficiency. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians seemed to focus more on trade and solutions than relationship.
3. In this problematic situation, participants have mentioned various strategies to deal with the problems. These different strategies are most likely to stem from different types of problems.
4. Introspections also show that participants have concerns with other elements in this situation, such as trade, solutions, anticipation of the counterpart's



reaction, problems of another trade, future interaction, their interactions in the previous sequence of communication event, and business communication principles.

5. In complaining, the majority of the two Thai groups intended not to make complaints. Judgement of appropriate time, business protocols, and counterpart's ethnic culture were mentioned in participants' consideration in making complaints.

# Chapter 7

## Analysis of Context

One of the specific aims of this study is to identify factors that contribute to how email texts are produced in international trade communication. To achieve this aim it is important to examine the context of the emails produced in the process of communication. In particular, the analysis of context will enable an explication of how contextual factors such as the task and its scenario, interactants, their relationship and cultural backgrounds, and the email medium itself, contribute to producing similarities and differences in participants' email texts. Through such an analysis it should then be possible to determine how these contextual factors interact to affect the email production. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to analyse the context of email texts produced for the six simulations by the four groups of participants as evident in their introspections and what is known about their background characteristics and the task requirements and to compare the similarities and differences in participants' usage preferences of moves and acts in relation to this context.

The contextual analysis adopts Leckie-Tarry's (1995) conceptual model of context and principles of pragmatic theory as outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2. Findings from the analysis of participants' introspections categorised into the five types of goals; namely, main task business goal, subsidiary business goal, identity goal, relational goal, and efficiency goal (see Chapter 6 for detailed analysis and discussion) are summarised and used to substantiate the contextual analysis, thereby enabling the study to test the robustness of the goal model and its application in the analysis of communicative purposes. The analysis of introspection enables the study to identify participants' emphasis on different types of goals and elements, such as their perception of the scenario of the task, relationship, role, proximity of their businesses, concerns with email rules, their ongoing interaction that may influence the achievement of goals and their realisation through moves and acts in the email textual

production. The identification of these elements also contributes to the proposed model of production of international trading business email communication.

The analysis includes a comparison of similarities and differences in the participants' usage preferences of moves and acts in their emails written for each simulation across the four groups. The varying percentages of differences in the usage preferences of moves and acts between groups suggest the influence of different contextual factors. The criterion for recognizing a noticeable difference between groups and discussion and analysis of such a difference is set at a minimal level of approximately 20% difference. This represents about 3 participants of the total 15 to 16 participants in each group, with the slight variation in actual percentage being due to the small difference in the number of participants from group to groups. Summary charts focusing on these identified differences in the use of moves and acts by each group of participants for each task are provided (see Figures 7.1 – 7.6 in the discussion of each task).

The analysis commences with a broad analysis of the context of the email texts across the six tasks, followed by a closer analysis of the context of emails written for individual tasks. The broad analysis of context of the emails identifies some contextual components and elements that are common across the six tasks and uses Leckie-Tarry's three components of context: *context of situation*, *context of culture*, and *context of text* to account for these. Similarities in the textual realisation of moves and acts represented in participants' patterns of usage preferences across groups are compared (see Table 7.0 in the discussion of Analysis of context of email texts across the six tasks) and possible contextual factors are identified which account for these similarities. The later closer analysis of the context of emails written for individual tasks emphasises contextual components and elements within each task, and concentrates on explicating differences in participants' patterns of usage of moves and acts in relation to contextual factors within Leckie-Tarry's framework. Throughout relevant introspections are used to support the analyses. When it is apparent the interaction of contextual factors will be highlighted and discussed.

## 7.1 Analysis of context of email texts across the six tasks

Applying Leckie-Tarry's (1995) conceptual model of context to the international trade emails written for the six tasks, it can be posited that the *context of situation*, *context of culture*, and *context of text* of international trade business email communication has provided participants with three sets of knowledge about how to interact in business activities through email discourse. These three sets of contextual knowledge reflect different abstract aspects of the environment of the email texts. The *context of situation* provides specific knowledge in relation to the trade transactions being pursued, including business interactants and their relationship to each other, and expectations of appropriate norms of interaction in the channel of communication for participants in composing their emails. The *context of culture* provides participants with knowledge in relation to the professional culture of international trade institutions, which have a collective set of rules for its members to communicate, goals to be achieved, linguistic terminologies to be used, and type of relationship to be pursued for trading purposes, as well as knowledge about communication conventions and norms for interacting within and between sociocultural groups. The *context of text* or co-text provides participants with linguistic knowledge of lexis, syntax, discourse in writing emails. These three bodies of knowledge are exploited during the realisation of the discourse and generic structures of the email texts. Participants not only interact drawing on these three sets of knowledge and, hence, reinforce such knowledge, but also contribute to the development of and change to the knowledge through feedback in their ongoing interactions. Through this dynamic process, ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings are communicated and negotiated. This results in the ongoing re-configuration of the three sets of knowledge and the setting becomes a dynamic virtual space for discourse interaction.

Within the context of these international trade email interactions, the three components of **Field**, **Tenor**, and **Mode** are posited to operate in the realisation of email texts. Analysis in the **Field** component shows that there is similarity in the **arena/activities** element of the context of emails written for the six tasks by the four groups of participants. The **arena/activities** element contains a whole range of

communicative events in which trade transactions and communication take place, within the realm of international trade business negotiation and interaction. The **semantic domain** element is similarly shared across all tasks and defines a discrete set of topics that are required to deal with the international trade business communication arena and activities. These two elements are constant in the situational context of emails written across the four groups, and the similarities in the way that participants understand and enact these elements within the context can be considered to be reflected in the realisation of moves and acts related to international trade transactions by above 80% of participants across groups (Table 7.0).

**Table 7.0: Moves and Acts used >80% by Participants across all groups**

Moves and Acts	Moves and Acts
100%	81 – 99 %
<b>Enquiring trade</b> <i>Expressing interest in trade</i> <i>Asking for trade</i> <b>Answering a trade enquiry</b> <i>Offering trade</i> <b>Negotiating trade term (s)</b> <i>Asking for price reduction</i> <i>Asking for credit payment</i> <i>Granting a request</i> <i>Declining a request</i> <b>Negotiating problem (s)</b> <i>Stating the problem (s)</i>	<b>Addressing</b> <b>Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.</b> <b>Signing</b> <i>Undertaking actions</i> <i>Asking for actions</i>

These moves and related acts are the **Enquiring trade** move and the related *Asking for trade* act, the **Answering a trade enquiry** move and the related *Offering trade* act, the **Negotiating trade term (s)** move and the related *Asking for price reduction*, *Asking for credit payment*, *Granting a request* and *Declining a request* acts, and the **Negotiating problem (s)** move and the related *Stating the problem* act. These similarities are also reflected in participants' introspections concerning their strategies related to the main business goal. Moreover, the two elements of **arena/activities** and **semantic domain** also determine the business-oriented **focus** element in the **Tenor** component across groups, which is illustrated in the use of the moves and acts related to trade transactions and in participants' emphasis on strategies related to the main

and subsidiary business goals in their introspections (see Table 7.1-7.6 provided in the discussion of each task). The business-oriented **focus** is also demonstrated in a set of formulaic moves of **Addressing**, **Expressing gratitude/ respect**, and **Signing** moves, which are realised by more than 80% of participants across all groups across the six tasks.

The *context of (professional business) culture* of international trade email communication, which is reflected in shared rules, goals, linguistic and understanding of appropriate behaviour and relationship can be seen to interact with the *context of situation* of international trade to exert influence through the **arena/activities**, **semantic domain**, and **focus** elements as shown in the similarities discussed above and in the set of formulaic moves that appeared to have been influenced by those of business letter correspondence.

Other constant elements are the **planning**, **feedback**, **contextualisation**, and **medium** in the **Mode** component of the context. The **Mode** of spontaneous written email communication across the six tasks is understood as similar across groups. The spontaneity and close to real time of the interaction via the email seem to affect the approach adopted to the **planning**, **feedback** and **contextualisation** elements, constructing a slightly delayed discussion of trade. Participants seem to have rather high levels of comparability in their approaches to these elements and demonstrate an awareness of the immediacy and spontaneity of the email correspondence, which are explicit in their introspections related to the efficiency goal and in the linguistic realisation of email texts through the **medium** element.

The similarities in these elements of the **Mode** seem to dispose participants to generate a number of strategies in producing email texts that focus on the quantity, quality, relation, and manner maxims of **Grice's Cooperative Principle**. As reported in their introspections, participants across the groups emphasise a lot of strategies categorised under the efficiency goal that relate to these maxims. The maxim of quantity is reflected in their concerns about time constraint and email space, and in their intention to compose brief emails using concise words, and being direct in their messages. The preference for hyperlinks and email attachments, which are specific to the email medium, also reflects the quantity maxim due to participants' concerns with

time and email space. The maxim of quality is shown in their intention to be honest and truthful in problematic trade scenarios. The maxim of relation is reflected in their intention to use appropriate and specific English words relevant to the trade transaction. The maxim of manner is demonstrated in their intention to be clear in their messages, use simple English words, comply with their counterpart's email and be consistent in their own email.

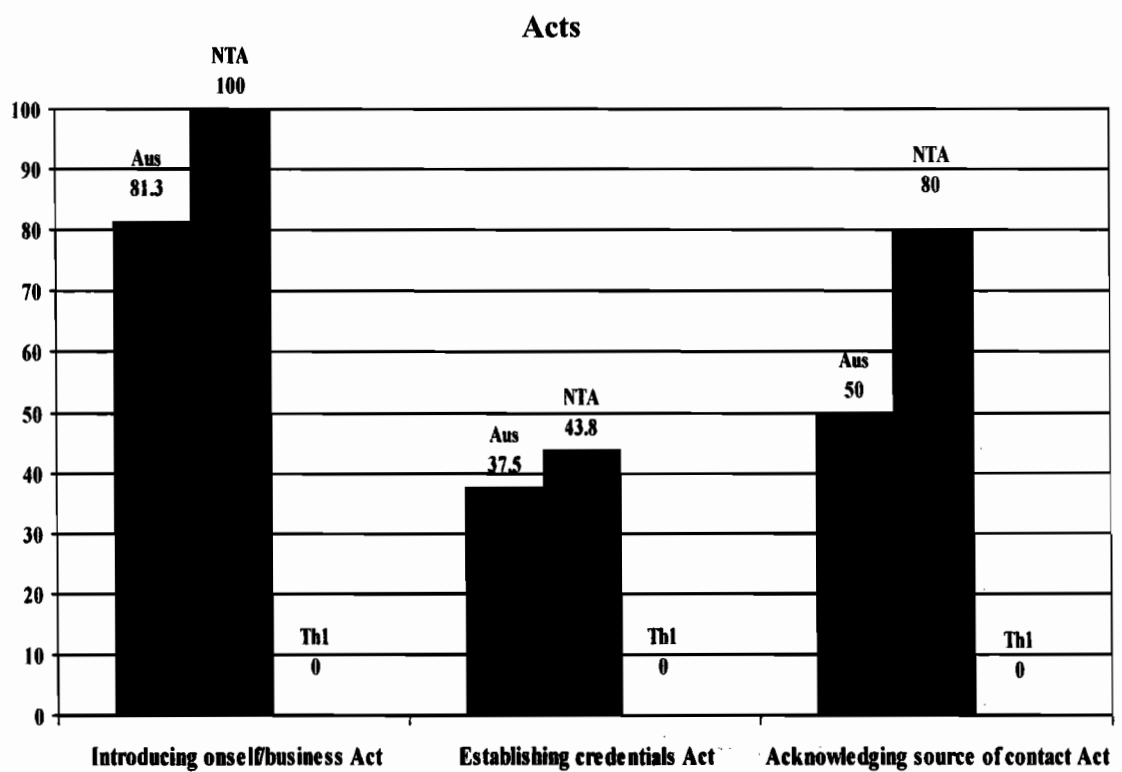
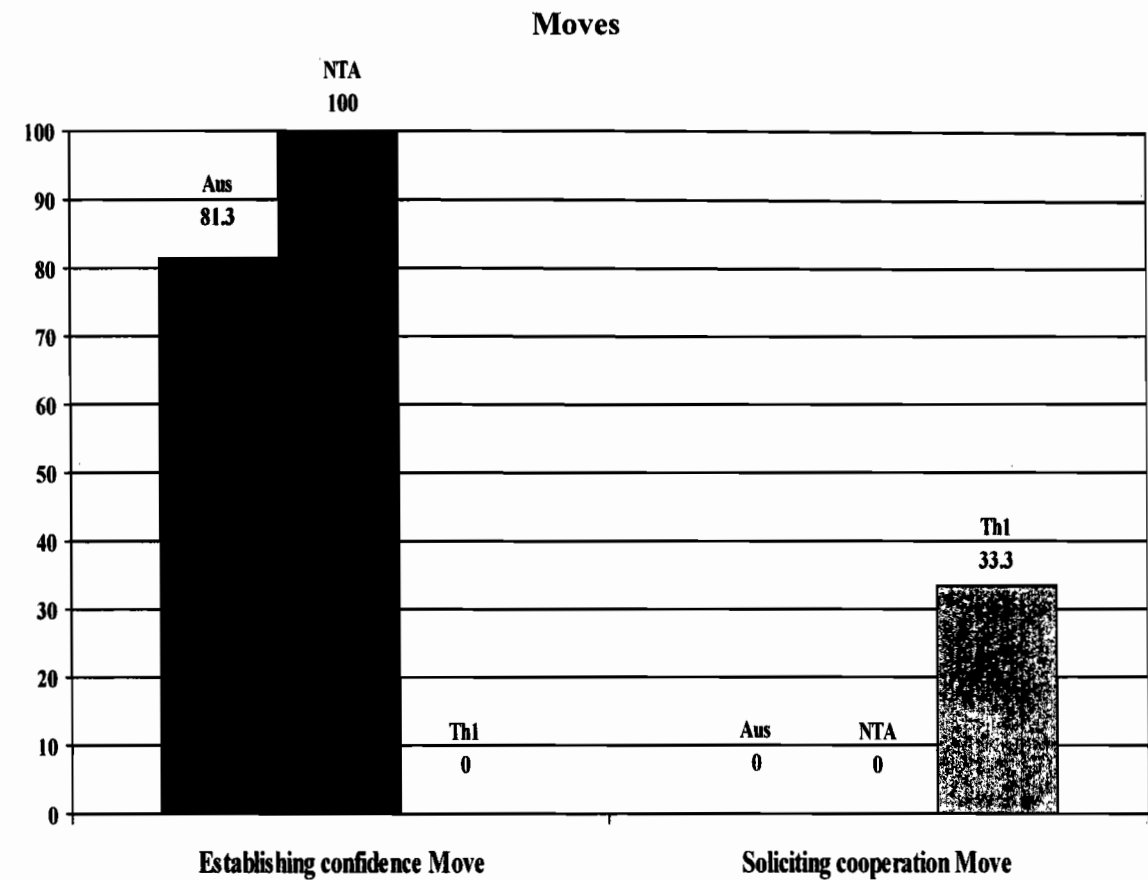
It is obvious from the introspections that participants across groups and tasks share a similar perception of the **Mode** component and this compels them to compose brief, clear, truthful and relevant emails, reflected in the short emails with sentence fragments in the linguistic realisation of moves and acts of most of the participants. This suggests influences of interaction between *context of (virtual) culture* and *context of text*.

To conclude the high degree of similarity in the choice to realise a number of the same moves and acts in the emails across the six tasks of all the participating groups can be accounted for by aspects of the meaning potential created through elements of the *context of situation*, *context of culture* and *context of text* shared by participants across groups. Yet, there are also areas of difference between the groups. The analysis in the proceeding sections focuses on these differences within individual tasks and considers how contextual elements may account for these differences.

#### 7.1.1. Enquiring about trade task

In the **Enquiring about trade** task there are differences in the **participants** element in the **Field**, that appear to relate to the higher usage of the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* act and *Acknowledging source of contact* act by the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians (refer to Figure 7.1). As all other features of the task for these two groups are identical (egs. trade transaction and its scenario, their role, sequence of communicative event, sociolinguistic and cultural background of their Thai counterpart), the differences appear to relate to their dissimilar group preferences in addressing the face wants of their counterpart and themselves. A higher proportion of the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians realise

**Figure 7.1: Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Enquiring about trade task**





this move and the specified associated acts, meaning that they are more likely to establish confidence by introducing their businesses and themselves to their Thai counterpart and referring to the trade networks where they obtain their contacts as evident in their higher usage of the move and related acts. This difference is also reflected in the Non-Thai Asians' emphasis on strategies related to image and trust in the identity goal in the introspections as shown in Table 7.1. Image and trust relate to face concerns in **Goffman's face notion** and **Brown and Levinson's politeness principles**. The Non-Thai Asians seem to address their positive face and negotiate the mutual faces between their Thai counterpart and themselves for business trust purposes more than the Australians do. It may be that they perceive less power difference and social distance between their Thai counterpart and themselves, and configure less imposition in the realisation of the move and acts than the Australians do.

Moreover, differences are also evident in the **Tenor**. Analysis of the **formality** element suggests that the difference in the level of business relations in the sequence of communicative events of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in comparison to the Thais leads to differences in the usage of the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* act and *Acknowledging source of contact* act. While the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians show some difference in their levels of usage of these move and acts due to their dissimilar group preferences as discussed above, the Thais do not include these move and acts in their emails in this task at all. The task for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians is situated in the first sequence of communicative event where they are interacting with their counterpart for the first time, while the Thais have previously been involved in replying to their counterpart's product enquiry and trade negotiation. Thus, the Thais have had the opportunity to establish a relationship with their counterpart through their previous interactions with him/her. The level of business relations is likely to be non-existent or comparatively low in the initial encounter and escalates when both sides are engaged in further email interactions through the communicative events later in the sequence. Therefore, the degree of **formality** in the first interaction between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians with their counterpart can be expected to be higher than in the communicative event of the Thais' task. These differences in degree of **formality** are also related to Goffman's **face notion** and

**Table 7.1 Summary of analysis of participants' introspection in the five goals in the task of Enquiring about trade**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Introspection</b>
<b>Main Business goal</b>	Most of the participants of the three groups focused on this goal and intended to request product information.
<b>Subsidiary business goal</b>	<p>About half of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians wanted to show interest in the product and a quarter of the Non-Thai Asians reported using the expression of interest in product as a reason to support their request of product information.</p> <p>Only a few Thais interacting with Australian counterpart reported the strategy.</p>
<b>Identity goal</b>	<p>High proportion of the Australian and the Non-Thai Asian participants emphasised identity-related strategies regarding managing image and trust to boost business opportunity and relationship.</p> <p>Only half of the Thais interacting with Australian counterpart mentioned this goal and not specifically introducing themselves. They also reported using language regardless of either the role of a buyer or a seller due to having both roles and the intention to use neutral language consistently.</p>
<b>Relational goal</b>	<p>About half of the Australians and the Thais interacting with Australian counterpart reported relational-targeted strategies while some rejected the goal. Only the Thais emphasised reciprocity of trade due to previous trade in the earlier communicative events.</p> <p>About half of the Non-Thai Asians rejected the goal and only a few intended to establish relationship with their counterpart.</p> <p>Those participants who reported their rejection of the goal reasoned that it was too early and they focused on enquiry about trade.</p> <p>Participants of the three groups expected further trade, trade networks, negotiation, and response</p>
<b>Efficiency goal</b>	Most participants of the three groups reported strategies related to this goal. Their similar strategies are in the choice of simple and appropriate English words, brevity & clarity of message, directness, email structure, use of website & email attachment, and specificity of their request.

Brown and Levinson's **politeness principles**. In the more formal context with no established business relationship as is the case for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in this task, the high social distance between them and their counterpart is likely to influence them to address their positive face by including the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* act, *Establishing credentials* act, and *Acknowledging source of contact* act to introduce themselves and provide business credentials to promote the business confidence of their counterpart. The lower degree of social distance and greater degree of solidarity and thus lesser role-related power differential between the Thais and their counterpart in contrast predisposes them to consider enacting the **Soliciting cooperation** move (see Figure 7.1).

Introspections related to the identity goal of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians reflect these differences as a high proportion of both groups reported their intention to introduce themselves, provide business credentials, and identify their source of contact, while the Thais did not report these intentions. The high degree of **formality** in the Australians' and the Non-Thai Asians' task is also shown in the introspections related to the relational goal of both groups in that only about half of the Australians and a few Non-Thai Asians targeted the relational goal with some participants of the two groups explicitly rejecting the goal and indicating that it was premature to be trying to build an ongoing relationship (see Table 7.1).

Analysis in the **role** element in the context of the Thai group's task shows that their adoption of dual roles of a buyer and a seller in the same email may affect their use of the **Soliciting cooperation** move. They are engaged in two trade transactions, one of which requires them to sell their product to the counterpart and the other requires them to enquire for product information in order to purchase it from their counterpart. Writing an email with the dual roles is likely to balance the role-related power difference according to Brown and Levinson's politeness principles. This need to preserve balance between roles is reflected in the Thai's explicit intention reflected in their introspections classified under the identity goal to use neutral language regardless of the role they are adopting.

The analysis of context of this task suggests that the differences in the extent of use of the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* act

and *Acknowledging source of contact* act between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are most likely the result of some differences in group preferences, perhaps reflecting different meaning potential preferences due to *context of (national and regional) culture*. The much larger differences in the use of the **Establishing confidence** move and related acts and the **Soliciting cooperation** move between the Thais and the other two groups tend to be primarily influenced by differences in the level and nature of their relationships with their counterpart related to differences in the *context of situation* because of the different ordering of tasks for each group.

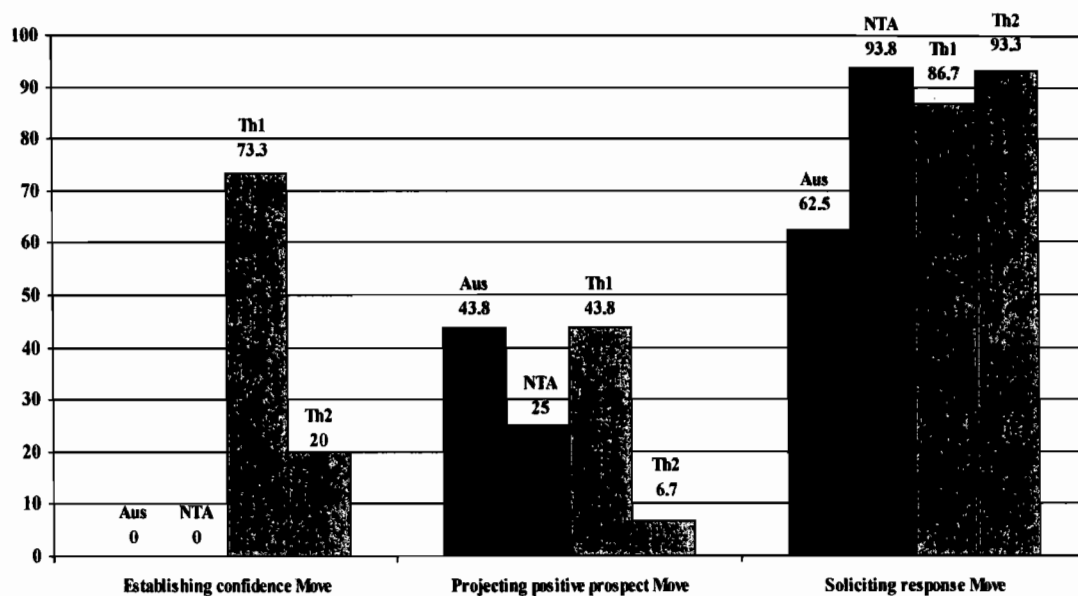
The analysis demonstrates that dissimilar group preferences accounted for by *context of (national and regional) culture*, and level of relationship and participants' role accounted for by *context of situation* contribute to the differences in the usage preferences in some moves and related acts of the three groups in this task. This suggests interplay between the task and its scenario and one of the above contextual factors having influence on the variations in email texts of the three groups.

### 7.1.2 Answering a trade enquiry task

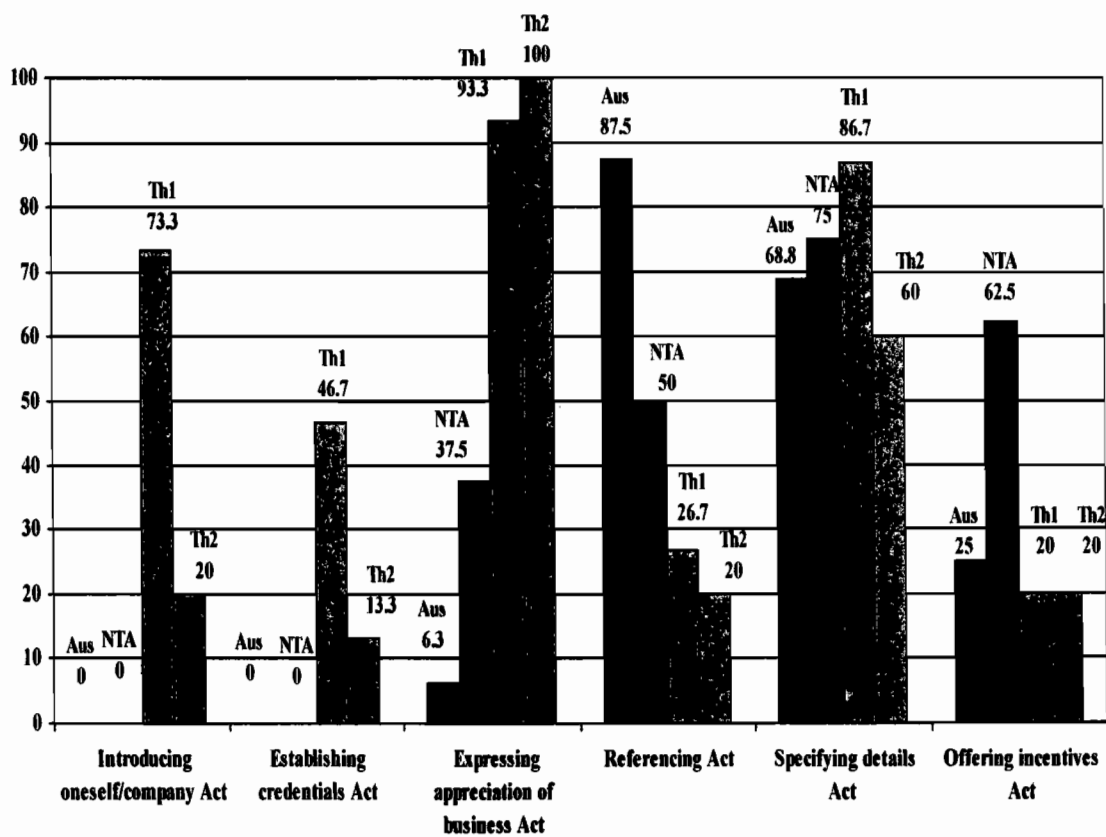
The analysis of the context of the **Answering a trade enquiry** task shows that there are some differences in its contextual elements. The difference in the **participants** element in the **Field** appears to be related to the higher usage of the **Soliciting response** move, the *Expressing appreciation of business* act, and the *Offering incentives* act of the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians and to the higher usage of the *Referencing* act of the Australians than that Non-Thai Asians (refer to Figure 7.2). As the task requirements and order are identical for both these groups all these differences seem to relate to their dissimilar group preferences for handling this task. The very high level of preference for including the **Soliciting response** move and the quite strong preference also to include the *Offering incentives* act suggest that they tend to be more insistent in demanding a reply and more directly proactive in trying to elicit a positive response than the Australians. The preference of more than a third of the Non-Thai Asians to include the *Expressing appreciation of business* act compared to

**Figure 7.2: Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Answering a trade enquiry task**

### Moves



### Acts



only 1 of the Australians suggests that they tend to be more expressive than the Australians and to see the addressing in this way of positive face wants as being important. In contrast, the Australians tend to focus more on convincing their counterpart of the future trade prospect or potential, as shown in their higher usage of the **Projecting positive prospect** move. The Australians also tend to emphasise clarity of their message in the email structure and ensuring that basic factual information is correctly conveyed as evident in their much higher usage preference for the *Referencing* act than the Non-Thai Asians, which is also reflected in their introspection related to the efficiency goal (refer to Table 7.2).

As discussed in the previous task, business relations are nourished by the degree of interactions between email interactants. This communicative event and task is the first sequence of interaction for the two Thai groups and their counterpart. So for them in this task the level of business relationship is comparatively lower than that of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians who have engaged in some previous interactions with their counterpart. This means that the level of **formality** element in the **Tenor** is likely to be higher in the context of the task for both Thai groups, which leads them to realise the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* and *Establishing credentials* acts, and have much higher usage of the *Expressing appreciation of business* act to address face concerns. The significantly high usage of the moves and related acts by the two Thai groups in this task is also related to Goffman's **face notion** and Brown and Levinson's **politeness principles**. As discussed in the usage of these move and acts by the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in the **Enquiring about trade** task, the high social distance between the two Thai groups and their counterpart in this context where they are interacting with their counterpart for the first time is likely to have influenced them to include these particular moves and related acts. These differences are also reflected in the introspections of the two Thai groups related to the identity and relational goals, which show that they focused on business introduction, expressing appreciation of counterpart's interest in trade, and establishing relationship with their counterpart.

Analysis in the **formality** element in the context of the task for the two different Thai groups, Thai1 and Thai2, also shows that the Thai participants seem to conceive of the need for a higher degree of **formality** when they interact with a

**Table 7.2 Summary of analysis of participants' introspection in the five goals in the task of Answering a trade enquiry**

Goals	Introspection
<b>Main Business goal</b>	<p>Most participants across the four groups focused on the strategy of 'Give product information' despite some small differences in other strategies through which they expressed their concern of the product enquiry and sales.</p> <p>However, while some participants across the four groups intended to present attractive details of product, some Non-Thai Asians also focused on quantity of product information and some Australians emphasised reciprocity of trade due to previous trade in the earlier communicative events.</p>
<b>Subsidiary business goal</b>	<p>Only a few participants across the four groups explicitly discussed this goal.</p> <p>Reported strategies are offering negotiation on price, offering reciprocal credit terms, etc.</p>
<b>Identity goal</b>	<p>High proportion of the Australian and the two groups of Thai participants emphasised identity goal compared with less than half of the Non-Thai Asians.</p> <p>Only the two Thai groups reported business introduction and expressing appreciation of counterpart's interest in the product.</p> <p>The Thais interacting with Australian counterpart focused on mutual business introduction and formality.</p> <p>The Thais interacting with Thai counterpart focused on expressing appreciation of their counterpart's product enquiry, and expected a face-to-face meeting.</p>
<b>Relational goal</b>	<p>Higher proportion of the two Thai groups than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians intended to establish relationship.</p>
<b>Efficiency goal</b>	<p>High proportion of the Australians and both two Thai groups emphasised efficiency-related strategies compared with only about half of the Non-Thai Asians.</p> <p>The two Thai groups emphasised the use of website and attachment and were concerned with their English.</p> <p>Participants across the four groups had concerns about time constraint, email space, message clarity, use of website and attachment, sequence of communicative event, compliance with counterpart's email writing styles and business location, and the possibility of using phone contact instead of email.</p>

foreign partner (Thai1) than when they interact with a counterpart who shares their similar national socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds (as is the case for Thai2). According to Brown and Levinson's **politeness model**, it is possible that their assumption of the out-group or different nationality of the counterpart increases their conception of the level of social distance between them. The higher degree of social distance may lead to the much higher usage preference for the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* and *Establishing credentials* acts, the **Projecting positive prospect** move, and the *Specifying details* act by the Thai1s than Thai2s. The emphasis on business introduction and formality of the Thai1s is also reflected in their introspections related to the identity goal. These differences suggest the influence of counterpart as a factor, and, specifically, whether the counterpart is viewed as belonging to the same or a different sociocultural group.

Moreover, analysis of the context suggests that how the task positions the trader in their turn at correspondence is a salient factor, and that the exclusion of the *Acknowledging source of contact* act in the **Establishing confidence** move of the two Thai groups in this, their first task in their sequence, in comparison to that of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in their first task of **Enquiring about trade** supports this. The task for the two Thai groups is situated in a context where they reply to the counterpart's approach and, therefore, this act is not necessary.

The fact that the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians have two trade transactions in dealing with a trade enquiry and negotiating another trade in the same email increases the number of topics for them to cover. This seems to affect the **focus** element and results in their remarkably higher usage of the *Referencing* act to separate the two trade transactions compared to the two Thai groups whose task contains only one trade transaction. Also, having two transactions to perform in the context possibly contributes to their much lower usage of the *Expressing appreciation of business* act than the two Thai groups. These differences suggest the influence of number of transaction requirements within a task in some move and act preferences.

The analysis of context of this task, discussed above, demonstrates that the differences in use of the **Soliciting response** move, the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the *Expressing appreciation of business* act, the *Referencing* act, and the *Offering*



*incentives* act between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are most likely to be affected by their particular group preferences, reflecting the influence of *context of (national/regional) culture* on potential meanings to be communicated and realised in the related moves and acts. The differences in the use of the **Establishing confidence** move and related acts, the **Projecting positive prospect** move, and the *Expressing appreciation of business* act of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in comparison to the Thai1s and Thai2s have been accounted for by differences in their levels of relationship due to the different ordering of their task, reflecting differences in the *context of situation*. These differences in the *context of situation* are also most likely to have contributed to the differences in the use of the **Establishing confidence** move and related acts, the **Projecting positive prospect** move, and the *Specifying details* act between the two Thai groups due to their different, in versus out group counterpart. The differences in the use of the *Expressing appreciation of business* act and the *Referencing* act of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in comparison to the Thai1s and Thai2s seem most satisfactorily accounted for by the number of trade transactions within their emails, which also reflects differences in the *context of situation*. Accordingly, differences in group preferences for a number of the moves and acts have been accounted for by *context of (national and regional) culture*, and level of relationship, counterpart and number of trade transactions in the *context of situation*. This suggests interplay between the task and its scenario and one or more of the above contextual factors in leading to the variations in inclusion of certain moves and acts in email texts of the four groups.

### 7.1.3. Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment task

Analysis of the context of the **Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment** task shows that there are differences in a few contextual elements. The differences appear to be in the degree of **formality** element in the context of the task for the three groups. As discussed in the analysis of context for the previous tasks, the degree of **formality** depends on the level of business relations developed through interactions along a sequential series of communicative events. The Thai1 group has established a closer level of business relationship with their counterpart in the context of this task as it is later in the sequence of tasks for them than for the Australians and

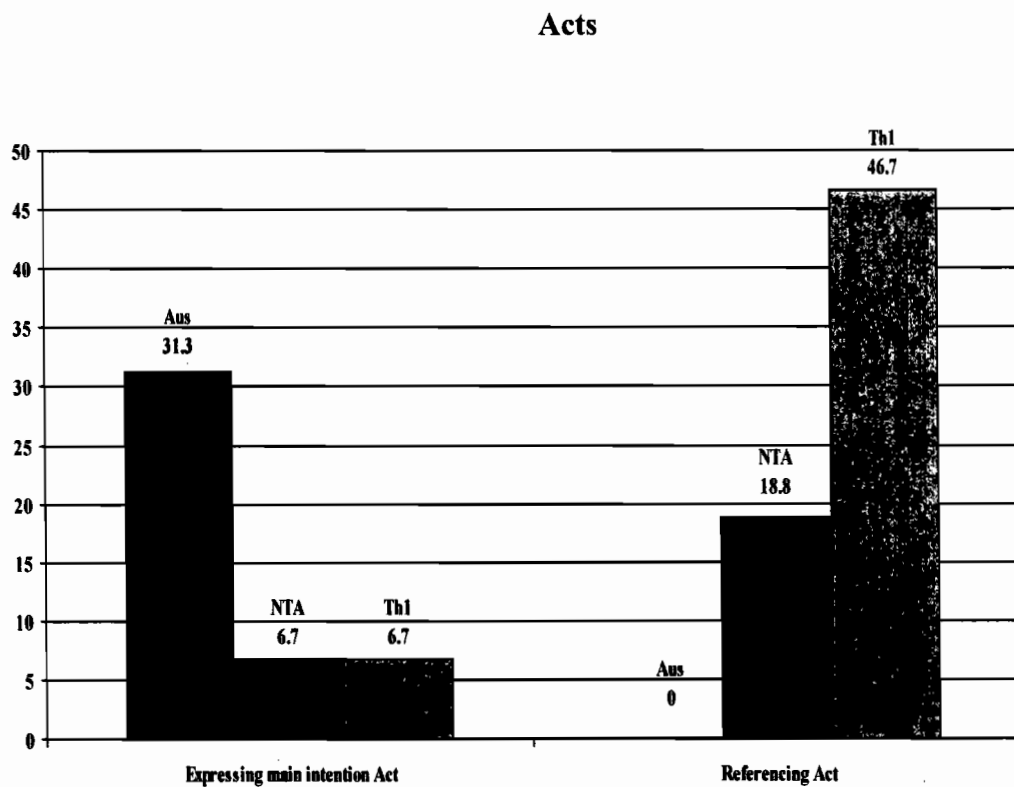
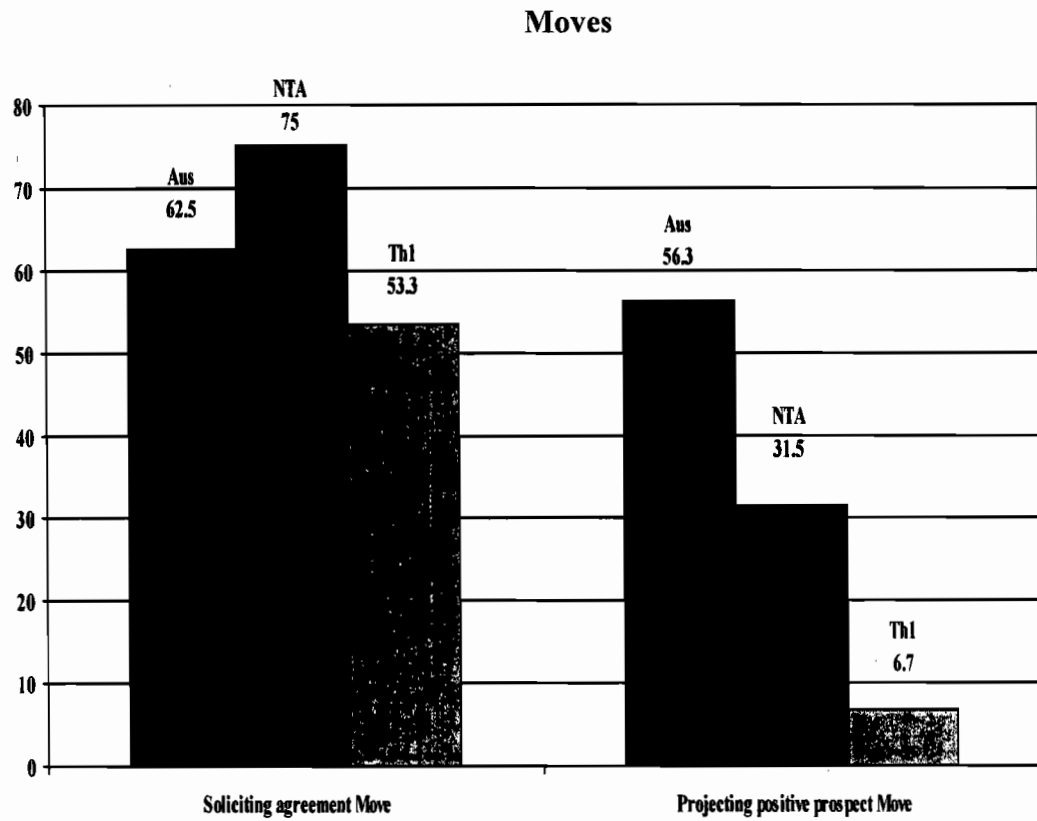
the Non-Thai Asians. Prior to negotiating another trade transaction in this task, the Thais have interacted with their counterpart and reached an agreement on a earlier trade transaction. This suggests a lower degree of **formality** in their context that may lead to their lesser focus on explicitly seeking agreement and further trade through the lower realisation of the **Soliciting agreement** move and the **Projecting positive prospect** move than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians (see Figure 7.3). The **role** element in the context for the Thais, where they have taken both roles of a buyer and a seller through their previous interactions with the counterpart, is also likely to be related to their perception of lower power difference between them and their counterpart and may influence their less usage of these two moves than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians. These differences also correspond to the Thais' introspections related to identity and relational goals in which they focus on emphasising the nature of their business relationship and intention to use neutral language regardless of either the buyer or seller roles (see Table 7.3)

Another difference in the context is in the **participants** element between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians. This appears to be reflected in the Australian participants' higher usage of the **Projecting positive prospect** move and the *Expressing main intention* act. These differences suggest their dissimilar group preferences in handling this task with the Australians preferring an approach that is direct and focussed towards the prospects for a positive outcome, whereas the Non-Thai Asian group has a slightly higher preference for achieving mutual understanding, evident in their greater use of the **Soliciting agreement** move.

There is also a slight difference in **focus** element in the context of the three groups. The Thais have two trade transactions to accomplish in the context of their email while the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians have only one. As discussed in the analysis of context in the **Answering a trade enquiry** task, having two trade transactions may necessitate the Thais to realise the *Referencing* act more than the other the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians.

The analysis of context of this task suggests that the differences in the use of the **Projecting positive prospect** move and the *Expressing main intention* act between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are most likely to stem from the influence of

**Figure 7.3: Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment task**



**Table 7.3 Summary of analysis of participants' introspection in the five goals in the task of Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Introspection</b>
<b>Main Business goal</b>	All participants across the three groups said that they would request for a price reduction and a deferred payment.
<b>Subsidiary business goal</b>	About half of each group reported 'Provide reasons' strategy and some mentioned other strategies aiming at attracting the counterpart's interest such as 'Show interest in the product,' 'Offer further negotiation,' 'Offer volume purchase,' 'Offer future trade,' 'Provide market potentials,' 'Indicate bilateral benefits,' etc.
<b>Identity goal</b>	<p>Most of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians targeted this goal compared with two-thirds of the Thais. While the Australians specifically focus on politeness and informality, the Non-Thai Asians concentrated on expressing appreciation of product information. A few Non-Thai Asians reported their effort to avoid imposing requests. Only the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians mentioned the strategy of 'Provide business credentials'.</p> <p>About two-thirds of the Thais mentioned strategies related to this goal. They also reported their use of language regardless of buyer or seller roles.</p>
<b>Relational goal</b>	<p>High proportion of the Australian and the Thais emphasised relationship compared with less than half of the Non-Thai Asians and reported some slightly different strategies.</p> <p>The Australians focused on using relationship to influence trade negotiation while the Thais planned to use relationship to benefit future trade.</p>
<b>Efficiency goal</b>	<p>High proportion of participants of the three groups targeted this goal and shared most of the main efficiency-related strategies.</p> <p>Participants across the three groups reported their awareness of time constraint, possible confusion, negotiation process and outcome, business communication rules, email medium, and information exchange. The three groups also tried to comply with their counterpart's email. However, some participants had no intention to be efficient due to their focus on the requests and provision of reasons. A few Australian and Non-Thai Asian participants did not try to be efficient or direct due to their perception of the relationship as too early and their avoidance in offending the counterpart.</p>

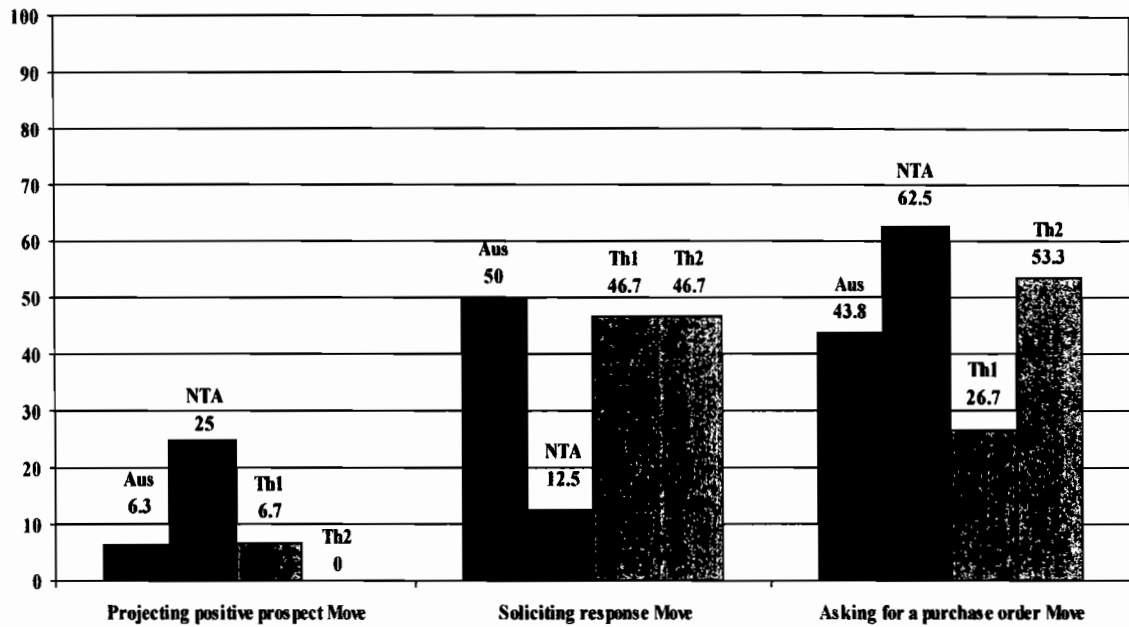
the differences in the *context of (national/regional) culture*, whereas the lower usages of the **Soliciting agreement** move and the **Projecting positive prospect** move of the Thais than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians reflects different levels of development in the relationship with their counterpart. The Thais' higher usage of the *Referencing* act than the other two groups is attributed to the number of trade transactions in the task of their email. Overall, the *context of situation* of the emails accounts for the differences in the use of these moves and act between the Thais and the other two groups. In accounting for the differences in the usage preferences for some moves and related acts across the three groups in this task, the interplay between the task and its scenario and at least one of the above contextual factors appears to account for the variations in moves and acts in the email texts of the three groups.

#### 7.1.4. Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment task

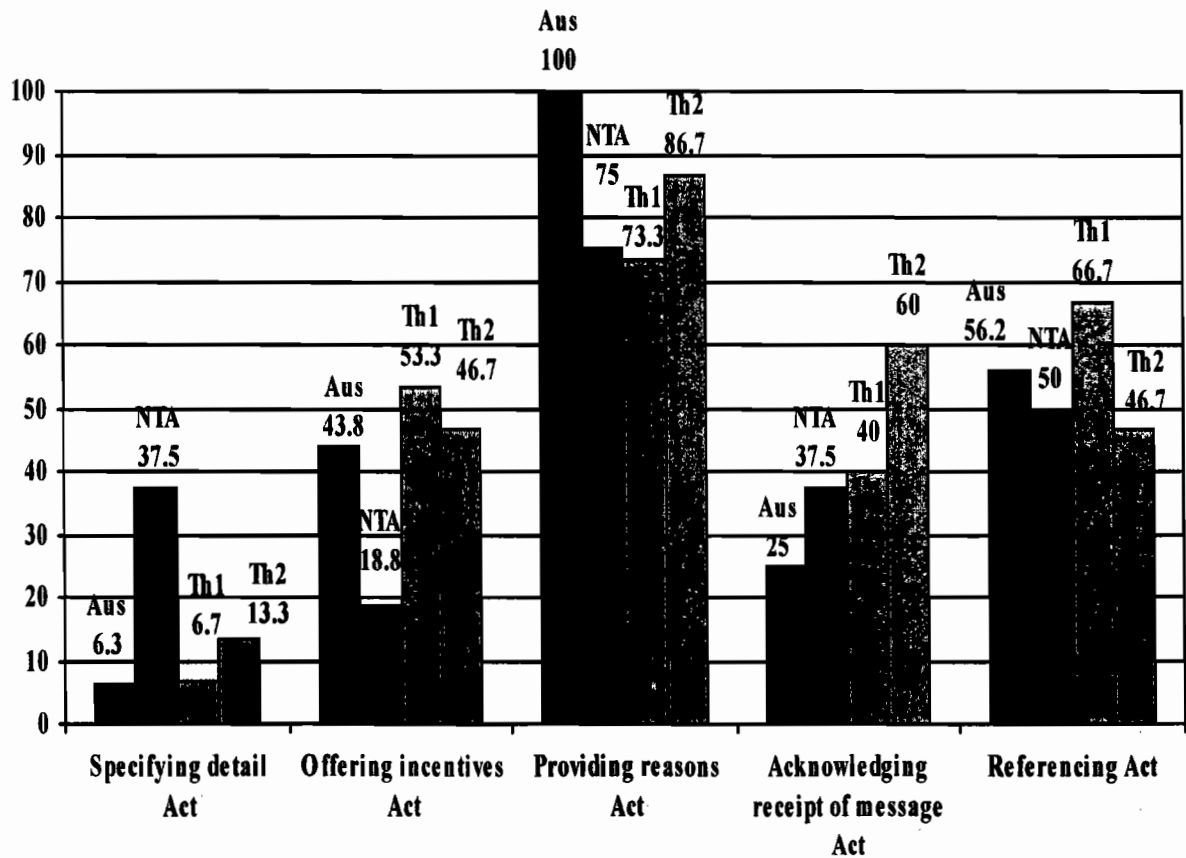
Analysis of the context of the **Answering requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment** task suggests that there are differences in two contextual elements: **participants** and **focus**. Differences in the **participants** element of the context are reflected in the different usages of the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the **Soliciting response** move, the **Asking for a purchase order** move, the *Specifying details* act, the *Offering incentives* act, and the *Providing reasons* act between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians (see Figure 7.4 & Table 7. 4). These differences tend to suggest their dissimilar group preferences in negotiation strategies when dealing with requests for a price reduction and a deferred payment. The higher usage preferences for the **Soliciting response** move, the *Offering incentives* act, and the *Providing reasons* act by the Australians suggests that they place greater importance on giving reasons to support their requests, and offer new enticing trade conditions, whilst more actively also seeking a reply than the Non-Thai Asians. The Non-Thai Asians' higher usages of the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the **Asking for a purchase order** move, and the *Specifying details* act indicate their preference to deal with the situation in a more instrumental exchange-oriented way with a lesser focus on explanation and inducement, and with at least some attempting to maintain their counterpart's commitment with the possibility of having more trades in the future.

**Figure 7.4: Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Answering requests for a price reduction & a deferred payment task**

### Moves



### Acts



**Table 7.4 Summary of analysis of participants' introspection in the five goals in the task of Answering requests for a price reduction & a deferred payment**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Introspection</b>
<b>Main Business goal</b>	<p>Most participants across the four groups targeted this goal.</p> <p>Most Australians and Non-Thai Asians preferred granting one request before declining the other. While the Thai1s preferred declining before granting, the Thai2s equally preferred either order.</p>
<b>Subsidiary business goal</b>	<p>More than half of participants of the four groups reported and shared their strategies regarding this goal such as providing reasons, setting purchase conditions, offering reciprocal credit terms, offering further negotiation, offering personal commission, stressing long term relationship, etc. Most of the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1s preferred providing reasons strategy.</p>
<b>Identity goal</b>	<p>One-third of the Thai2s reported strategies related to this goal in comparison to two-thirds of the other three groups.</p> <p>Participants across the four groups reported no intention to change their use of language when they adopt either the buyer or the seller roles. Some explained that they adopt the role of a trader, which covers the role of a buyer and a seller.</p>
<b>Relational goal</b>	<p>Over half of participants across the four groups explicitly aimed at relational goal. A few Thai1s did not target the goal reasoning that they focused on negotiation and they were still at the beginning of their trade relations.</p> <p>The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians emphasised extending relationship while both Thai groups emphasised starting relationship.</p> <p>A few Australians focused on using relationship to influence trade negotiation while a few Non-Thai Asians planned to use relationship to benefit bilateral trades.</p> <p>Participants across the four groups expected future trade and long term relationship.</p>
<b>Efficiency goal</b>	<p>More than half of participants across the four groups targeted this goal and intended to write a brief email with concise words and clarity.</p> <p>The Australians and the Thai1s focused on being direct. The two Thai groups mentioned concern with their use of English.</p>

The difference in the **focus** element in the context of the Thai1 group's email to that of the other three groups, as the Thai1s have two trade transactions to complete in the same email while the others have only one, means that they are engaged in dealing with more topics. This may account for them realising the **Asking for a purchase order** move less than the Australians, the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai2 group, and may also result in their lesser usage of the *Acknowledging receipt of message* act than the Thai2s. As was also observed in discussion of the context in section 7.1.2 and 7.1.3, the requirement to complete two trade transactions in the one email may have contributed to them realising the *Referencing* act more than the Thai2 group.

The analysis of context suggests that differences in the *context of (national/regional) culture* are reflected in the differences in the use of the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the **Soliciting response** move, the **Asking for a purchase order** move, the *Specifying details* act, the *Offering incentives* act, and the *Providing reasons* act between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians because of their dissimilar group preferences. The differences in the Thai1's use of the **Asking for a purchase order** move in comparison to the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians, and the Thai1's different usage preferences of the *Acknowledging receipt of message* and the *Referencing* acts from the Thai2 group appear to be due to the number of trade transactions, reflecting differences in the *context of situation*. As in the previous tasks the analysis of context suggests the interplay between the task and its scenario and at least one of the contextual factors account for the variations in the use of some moves and acts in the email texts of the four groups.

#### 7.1.5 Dealing with problem 1 task

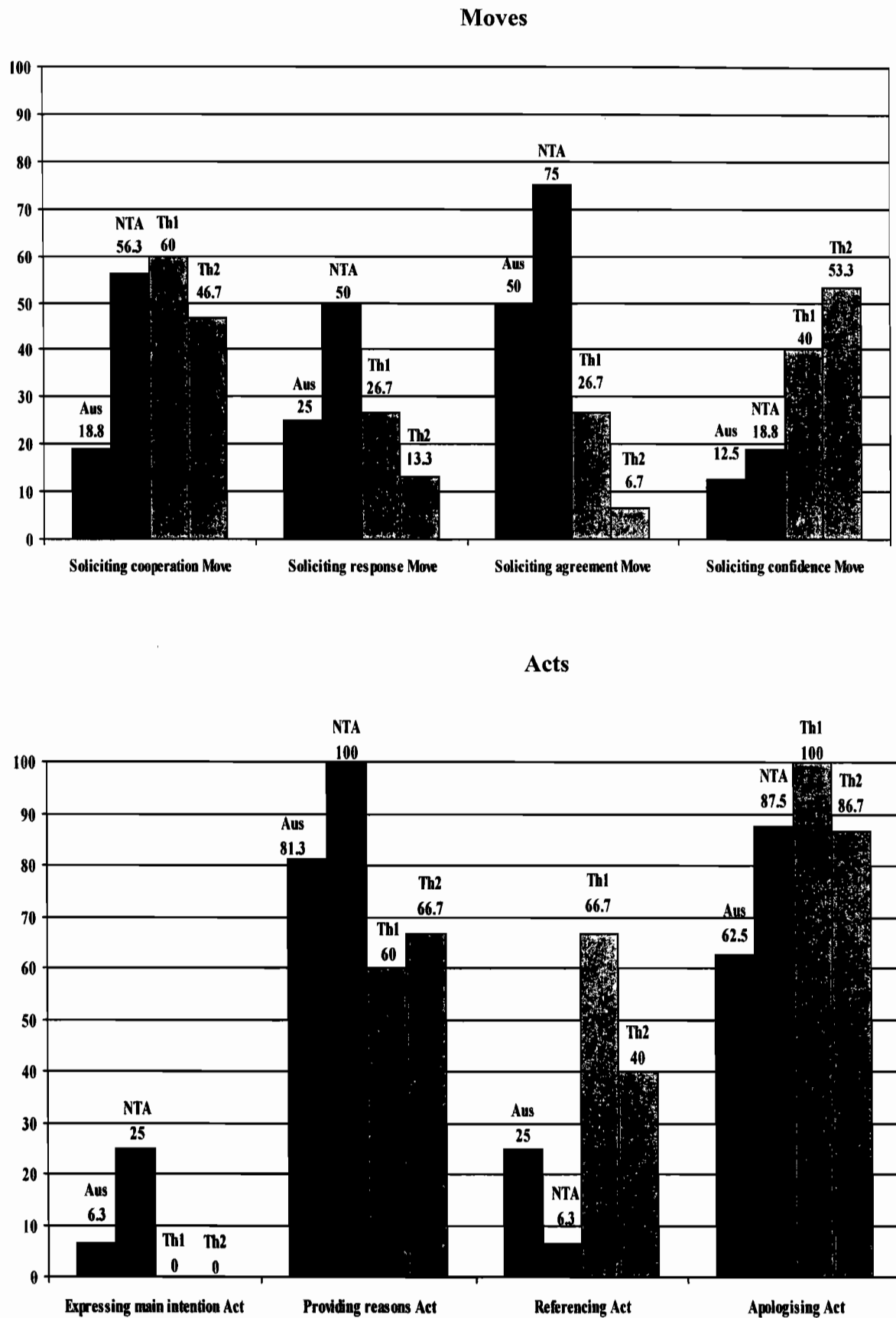
Analysis of the context of the **Dealing with problem 1** task suggests that there are differences in some contextual elements in the task for the four groups. Despite the similar task of dealing with problems in trade, there are some slight differences in the **semantic domain** element of the context as reflected in the differences in the subtle details of trade transactions or problems for participants to handle, and this may be reflected in some of the differences in the use of certain moves and acts. The details of trade transaction for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians require them



to inform their counterpart of changes in the conditions of the trade contract. To convince their counterpart to agree with the changes, they may need to use reasons to support their attempt and urge the counterpart to agree with them as shown in their higher usage of the *Providing reasons* act and the **Soliciting agreement** move than in the two Thai groups (see Figure 7.5). In contrast, the trade transaction for the two Thai groups require them to reply to their counterpart's notification of problems with their shipment of products. The details of the trade transaction necessitate them taking actions or offering solutions to the problems with the shipment and this seems to be reflected in their higher usage of the **Soliciting confidence** move than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians. Their response to the counterpart's problem notification means that they have a greater need to refer to the counterpart's notification in order to continue the negotiation and this is reflected similarly in their higher usage of the *Referencing* act than by the other groups. Introspections related to the subsidiary business goal also reflect these differences. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians emphasise providing reasons, while the two Thai groups focus on convincing their counterpart (see Table 7.5).

Another difference seems to be in the **participants** element, and these are reflected in the higher usage preferences of the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians in the **Soliciting cooperation** move, the **Soliciting response** move, the **Soliciting agreement** move, the *Expressing main intention* act, the *Providing reasons* act, and the *Apologising* act. Differences in the **participants** element may also account for the Australians' higher usage of the *Referencing* act than the Non-Thai Asians. These differences suggest some difference in group preferences for how to handle the problem in their task, which was identical for all participants across the two groups. The Non-Thai Asians are much more likely than their Australians to use most of moves and the acts that may be included and this demonstrates that they tend to focus more strongly than the Australians on being conciliatory whilst also convincing and urging their counterpart to accept and reply to their notification of the new trade conditions as shown in their higher usage of the **Soliciting cooperation**, **Soliciting agreement** and **Soliciting response** moves. Their higher usage also of the *Expressing main intention* act, the *Providing reasons* act, and the *Apologising* act suggests that they place higher importance on explaining the context for this problematic trade transaction and also on openly recognising the face imposition of the task by

**Figure 7.5: Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Dealing with problem 1 task**



**Table 7.5 Summary of analysis of participants' introspection in the five goals in the task of Dealing with problems 1**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Introspection</b>
<b>Main Business goal</b>	About half of the Thai2s expressed their intention to address the problems in comparison to most of the other three groups. There are some differences in their minor strategies due to the different kinds of problems given in the task.
<b>Subsidiary business goal</b>	<p>Most participants of the four groups targeted this goal. The majority of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians intended to provide reasons as a strategy while the majority of the two Thai groups intended to offer solutions and convince counterpart of their business. These differences in strategies are likely due to dissimilar problems.</p> <p>Participants across the four groups had concerns about their counterpart's reactions, their role of a trader, solutions of the problems, and future trade.</p>
<b>Identity goal</b>	<p>High proportion of participants across the four groups reported intentions related to this goal.</p> <p>The two Thai groups reported details of their apologizing strategies more than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians e.g. using particular apologetic words and apologizing twice to emphasize their apology.</p> <p>Participants across the four groups viewed that apology is related to one's judgment of their acts, promises, responsibility, values and other positive qualities; image concern; social expectations; relationship; and trade.</p>
<b>Relational goal</b>	About two-thirds of participants across the four groups were concerned with relationship in this problematic situation and mentioned some strategies to keep relationship e.g. sharing cost or burden with their counterpart, minimizing problems, showing honesty, confidence, and trust, etc.
<b>Efficiency goal</b>	<p>Less than half of the Non-Thai Asians and the two Thai groups compared to about two-thirds of the Australians reported strategies related to this goal.</p> <p>Some participants rejected this goal and focused on discussing the problems and solutions to convince their counterpart.</p>

apologising. Whilst many of the Australians include these same moves and acts, they do so to a lesser extent and, in contrast, appear to be more concerned with ensuring that there has been an accurate understanding achieved between them and their counterpart about the changes in trade conditions through their primary focus on the main moves and acts required for the task, and their marginally higher preference for the *Referencing* act (in comparison with the Non-Thai Asians).

Different levels in the **formality** element of the context between the two Thai groups are reflected in the differences in their usage of the **Soliciting agreement** move and the *Referencing* act. As discussed in the analysis of the **Answering a trade enquiry** task, degree of formality tends to be higher between interactants coming from different sociocultural groups due to their perception of greater social distance. The Thai1 group's interaction with their Australian counterpart is likely to influence their higher usage preferences for the **Soliciting agreement** move and the *Referencing* and **apologising** acts than the Thai2 group, suggesting the influence of counterpart.

The analysis of context suggests that both *context of situation*, particularly related to details of the trade transactions and the counterpart, and *context of (national/regional) culture*, related to differences in group preferences in negotiating strategy and reflecting different pragmatic preferences, interact to contribute to the observed variation in the use of the four moves and four acts highlighted in this task.

### 7.1.6 Dealing with problem 2 task

Analysis of the context of the **Dealing with problem 2** task suggests that there are differences in some contextual elements in the tasks for the four groups. As discussed in the analysis of context in **Dealing with problem 1** (Section 7.1.5), slight alterations in the **semantic domain** element of the context are reflected in the subtle details of the trade transaction or problems for participants to handle, and in the use of some moves and acts. The trade transaction for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians requires them to inform their counterpart of the problems with the shipment of products from the counterpart. Their initiation of the correspondence turn by informing the counterpart of the problems is likely to necessitate them to specify

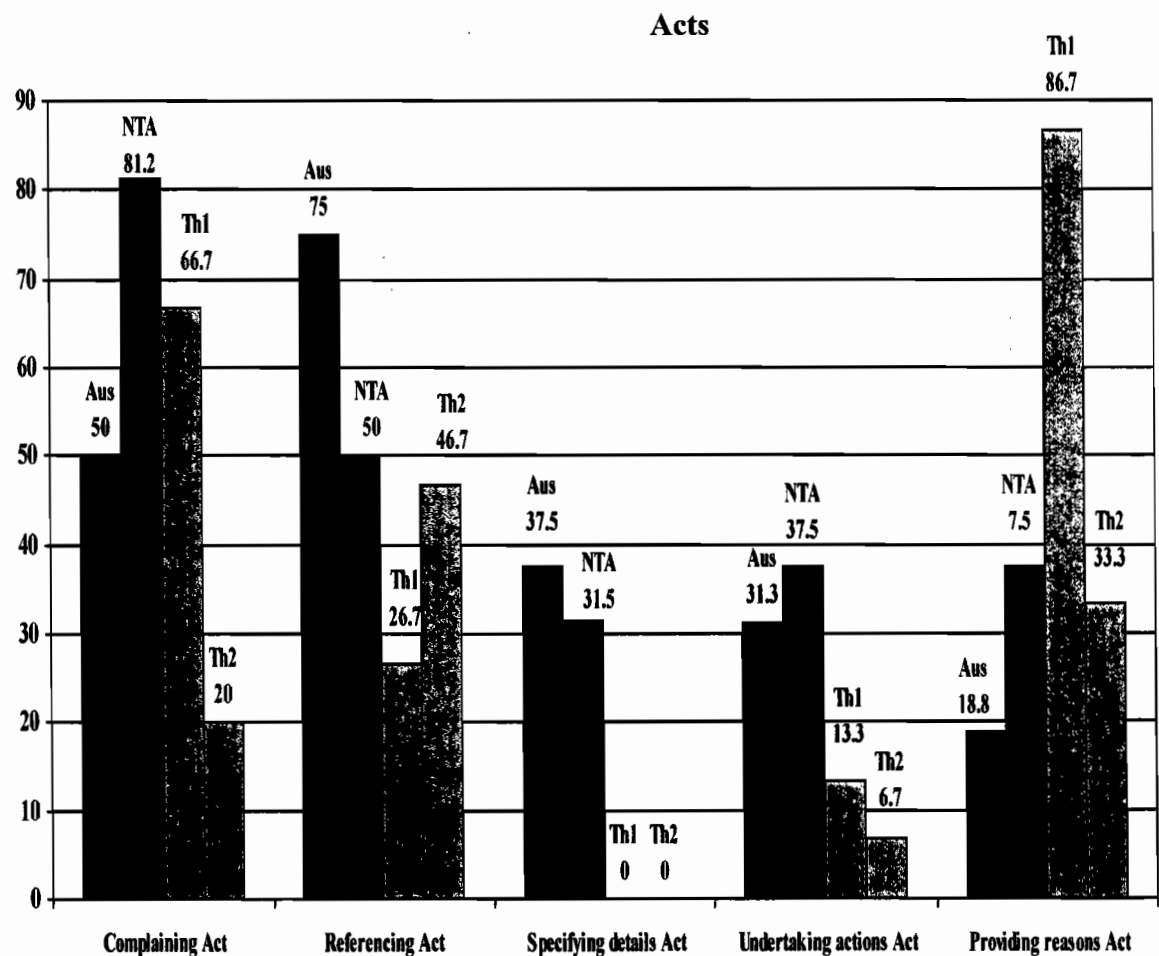
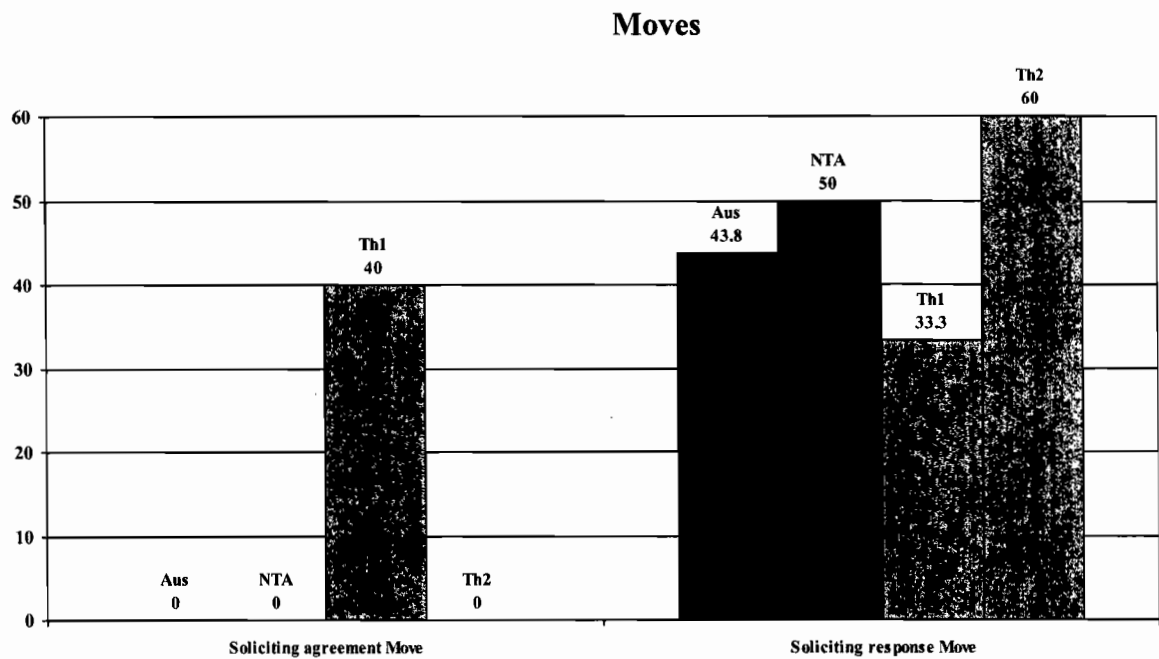
details and take some actions, which is shown in their greater likelihood to use the *Specifying details* and *Undertaking actions* acts than the two Thai groups (see Figure 7.6).

In contrast, the trade transaction for the Thai1 group requires them to respond to the notification of changes in the conditions of the trade contract from their counterpart. The details of the trade transaction predispose them to provide reasons to convince the counterpart to maintain the same trade conditions and to urge the counterpart to concede to their negotiation as shown in their significantly higher usage of the *Providing reasons* act than by the other three groups and being the only group using the **Soliciting agreement** move. The trade transaction may not necessitate them to refer to the contract as often as the trade transaction in the task for the other three groups, and this is evident in their lower usage of the *Referencing* act in comparison to the other three groups. Introspections about the subsidiary business goal also reflect the intention to use the **Soliciting agreement** move and the *Providing reasons* act by the Thai1s (see Table 7.6). Moreover, the different details of the trade transaction in the Thai2's task from those of the other three groups in that they are required to inform their counterpart of the short-amount of a payment that has been made may influence them to have a stronger preference to request a reply from the counterpart as shown in their higher usage of the **Soliciting response** move.

Another difference in the contextual element seems to be the **participants** element reflected in the differences between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians in the use of the *Referencing* act, the *Providing reasons* act and the *Complaining* act. As in the **Dealing with problem 1** task (Section 7.1.5), the Australians have a higher preference for the *Referencing* act than the Non-Thai Asians in this task, indicating their group preference for being precise in their communication. In contrast, the Non-Thai Asians have a higher preference for the *Providing reasons* act and the *Complaining* act than the Australians, suggesting their group preference of being more expressive than the Australians.

Differences in the use of the *Complaining* act between the two Thai groups reflect different levels of **formality** in the context of their task. As discussed in the **Dealing with problem 1** task, the low level of formality and social distance between communicators in the in-group interaction may lead the Thai2 group to address the

**Figure 7.6: Differences in the use of moves and acts in the Dealing with problem 2 task**



**Table 7.6 Summary of analysis of participants' introspection in the five goals in the task of Dealing with problems 2**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Introspection</b>
<b>Main Business goal</b>	About two-third of the Thais interacting with Thai counterpart expressed their intention to address the problems in comparison to most of the other three groups.
<b>Subsidiary business goal</b>	<p>Most participants across the four groups reported strategies related to this goal and shared a few strategies. However, they emphasised different strategies and the Thais reported more strategies than the other three groups. Differences in the details of strategies are due to dissimilar types of problems in the task and participants' choices of solutions.</p> <p>Most participants of the four groups focused on requesting explanation and/or solutions. The Thais also focused on providing reasons strategy.</p>
<b>Identity goal</b>	<p>High proportion of participants across the four groups reported intentions related to this goal, particularly about complaint.</p> <p>About half of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians wanted to complain and the other half did not want to complain, while about two-thirds of the two Thai groups did not intend to complain.</p> <p>About two-third of the Australians and the Thai2s compared to one-third of the other two groups focused on politeness.</p> <p>Participants across the four groups had concerns about trade, solutions, image, relationship, future interaction, anticipation of the counterpart's reaction, and problems of another trade. Their decision to complain was based on their judgement of appropriate time, business protocols, and their counterpart's ethnic culture.</p>
<b>Relational goal</b>	<p>Higher proportion of the Thai2s than the other three groups targeted this goal and the Non-Thai Asians has the lowest proportion with a few rejections.</p> <p>Participants were concerned with current and future trade and solutions. The Australians and the Non-Thai Asians focused more on trade and solutions than relationship.</p>
<b>Efficiency goal</b>	Most of the Australians compared to half of the Non-Thai Asians and the Thais, and only a few of the Thai2s reported strategies related to this goal.

negative face want of their counterpart and lower their expression of dissatisfaction to the counterpart due to the influence of context of culture where constraints of the in-group culture predispose them to be much less overt within the in-group because of the preference within the culture to place high priority on addressing their counterparts negative face want as shown in their lowest usage of the *Complaining* act in comparison to the other three groups. Introspections related to the identity goal demonstrate that they tend to emphasise politeness as also reflected in their minimal usage of the *Complaining*. These differences are more likely to stem from interaction with the in-group counterpart who share similar expectation of ethnic culture.

The analysis of context suggests that differences in the use of the *Referencing* act, the *Providing reasons* act and the *Complaining* act between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians arise from differences in group preferences when dealing with a problematic business situation and reflect differences in the *context of (national/regional) culture*. Differences in the use of the **Soliciting agreement** move, the **Soliciting response** move, the *Referencing* act, and the *Providing reasons* act of the four groups are most likely to stem from differences in details of the relevant trade transactions. Differences in the use of the *Specifying details* and *Undertaking actions* acts of the four groups are likely to be caused by differences in the correspondence turns in the email. Differences in the *Complaining* act between the two Thai groups seem to be influenced by their counterpart. These variations related to details of trade transactions, correspondence turns, and counterpart reflect differences in the *context of situation*.

The analysis demonstrates how the interplay between the task and its scenario and one or more contextual factors related to the *context of (national and regional) culture*, and *context of situation* contribute to the variation in the usage preferences for some moves and related acts across the four groups in this task.



## 7.2 Conclusion

Analysis of the context of emails written by up to four groups of participants for the six tasks in the simulations show that there are similarities, but also some differences and variability in the realisation of moves and acts. The similarities in the use of a set of moves and acts across groups and tasks has been accounted for by the shared context of international trade email communication. These similarities reflect meaning potential determined by the interaction of similarities in the *context of (professional business & virtual) culture*, the *context of situation of international trade*, and the *context of (email) text* through the three contextual components of **Field**, **Tenor**, and **Mode** and related contextual elements. However, variation in the realisation of some moves and acts in individual tasks has been shown to also be related to the influence of certain contextual factors, such as group preferences (**participants**), business relationship (**counterpart and role**), number of trade transactions in email (**co-text**), details of trade transactions (**specific arena/activities**), correspondence turns (**feedback and contextualisation**). These variations reflect differences in the *context of (national/regional) culture*, the *context of situation* and the *context of text* of specific tasks. The analysis suggests interactions between the task and its scenario and one or more of these contextual factors having influence on the variations in preferences for certain moves and acts in the email texts of the four groups.

# Chapter 8

## Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the possibility of claiming that there is a genre of international trade email communication. To consider this requires consideration of evidence of shared communicative purposes and textual structures, distinctive characteristics and evidence of shared contextual knowledge that can be employed to identify communication conventions of the international trade business email communication. The discussion includes findings from the textual analysis of moves and acts, analysis of introspections, and contextual analysis in Chapter 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The findings from the three chapters will also be integrated with concluding discussion of the context of international trade email communication and its relation to email texts. Towards the end of the chapter a refined contextual model of international trade email communication is proposed, and some suggestions are offered in the last section of the chapter about methodological, analytical, and interpretative aspects for further study of the international trade email communication.

### 8.1. International Trade Email Communication as a Genre

The main aim of this study has been to consider whether international trade email communication in English can be claimed as a genre in its own right. To determine this, a number of aspects of the communication need to be discussed drawing on the theoretical viewpoints suggested in the genre studies literature and some revisions emerging from this study. To assess whether international trade email communication can be considered to constitute a genre, three types of evidence will be considered. The first is that there are commonalities in the textual structure and communicative purposes of international trade emails. Distinctive characteristics of the international trade email communication in relation to other business communication genres are used as the second basis to endorse the claim. Finally, evidence of collective contextual knowledge that leads to the common textual

structure and communicative purposes is discussed to substantiate the claim for a genre of international trade email communication.

#### **8.1.1. Evidence of Shared Communicative Purposes and Textual Structures**

The most fundamental ground to support the claim of a genre is based on an identification of shared communicative purposes and textual structure as evident in a number of similar moves and acts from the analysis of email texts written by the four groups of participants who have different sociocultural backgrounds in the six tasks as summarised in Table 8.1. Based on Campbell and Jamieson's (1978) and Bazerman's (1994) suggestion to identify genre by established communication conventions in similar linguistic forms, textual structures, or communication styles, the study has illustrated significant similarities in the usage preferences of moves and acts across the four groups of participants in the six tasks. These major similarities in the realisation of moves and acts in the email texts suggest a common generic structure of this communication, which demonstrate some email communication conventions that can be used to validate a genre of the international trade email communication.

These communication conventions are also recognized in the similar communicative purposes as evident in participants' introspections related to the main business goal and their emphasis on certain goals across the five identified goal types in each task. These similarities suggest some common communicative purposes that shape the email generic structure and the email compositional conventions of professionals of the international trade discourse community. This proposition is in line with Swales' (1990) argument in categorising genre and Askehave and Swales' (2001) and Bhatia's (1997) recent publications substantiating the value and validity of identifying a genre based on shared communicative purposes. These similarities also contribute to the claim of the genre of international trade email communication.

The two constituents of generic structure and communicative purposes also reflect social actions as part of broader shared social and cultural practices that contribute to a genre as contended by Martin (1985), Martin and Rothery (1986), Orlikowski and Yates (1992), Orlikowski & Yates (1994), and Bazerman (1994).

**Table 8.1 Summaries of similarities and differences in the usage preferences of moves and acts across the six tasks**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Similarities in Usage Preferences of Moves &amp; Acts across groups</b>	<b>Differences in Usage Preferences of Moves &amp; Acts</b>
	100 %	61 – 80 %
	81 – 99%	Approximately 20 % or more
<b>4</b>	<b>Negotiating trade term (s)</b> <i>Granting a request</i> <i>Declining a request</i>	<i>Providing reasons</i> <i>Acknowledging receipt of message</i> <i>Referencing</i> <i>Specifying details</i> <i>Offering incentives</i> <b>Asking for a purchase order</b> <b>Projecting positive prospect</b> <b>Soliciting response</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Negotiating problem (s)</b> <i>Stating the problem (s)</i> <b>Addressing</b> <b>Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.</b> <b>Signing</b> <i>Undertaking actions</i>	<i>Apologising</i> <i>Providing reasons</i> <i>Referencing</i> <i>Expressing main intention</i> <b>Soliciting agreement</b> <b>Soliciting confidence</b> <b>Soliciting cooperation</b> <b>Soliciting response</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Negotiating problem (s)</b> <i>Stating the problem (s)</i> <b>Addressing</b> <b>Expressing gratitude/ respect/ etc.</b> <b>Signing</b> <i>Asking for actions</i>	<i>Complaining</i> <i>Referencing</i> <i>Specifying details</i> <i>Undertaking actions</i> <i>Providing reasons</i> <b>Soliciting agreement</b> <b>Soliciting response</b>

The social actions of members of this international trade email discourse community are evident in the realisation of similar moves and acts to achieve common communicative purposes of participants across the four groups in writing email to accomplish the six tasks. These communicative actions can be seen to constitute evidence of the existence of a discourse community, and reflect shared social and cultural rules, goals and linguistic systems contributing to a genre of international trade email communication.

### 8.1.2. Distinctive Characteristics of International Trade Email Communication

To verify the claim for international trade email communication as a separate genre in its own right, it is important to consider whether it has common distinctive characteristics that make it different from other business communication genres. These distinctive characteristics may be evident in the semantic content of moves and acts that stem from the type of business, or in other shared distinctive characteristics. Yates and Orlikowski (1992) suggest identification of genre needs to consider the industrial, organisational or occupational environment of texts as an important factor influencing the development and institutionalisation of genres. These distinctive features in the semantic content of moves and acts in international trade communication can be considered to distinguish it from other genres of written business communication despite some similarities in the taxonomies of moves and acts. For example, in my study I have identified some moves and related acts that are also used in other genres of written business communication, such as the **Answering a trade enquiry** move and related *Offering trade* act in my taxonomy and the **Introducing the offer** move and *Offering product or service* act in Bhatia's (1993) and Chakorn's (2002) taxonomies of moves and acts of business letters and faxes. These moves and acts may appear akin due to their slightly similar labels and contain equivalent communicative purposes in expressing business initiation. However, there are differences in the semantic content of these moves and acts. The semantic content of this move and this act in my taxonomy reflect trade transactions and practices in import/export businesses, but the semantic content in their move and act relate to a wide range of business practices. This is probably due to the broad range of business types of their letters and faxes which are drawn from financial institutions, hospitality, university, airline, insurance, etc. Chakorn's (2002) report of some difficulty in

categorising moves and acts in her study also reflects the differences in semantic content related to the variety of business types of the letters and faxes in her corpus.

Moreover, comparison between the taxonomies and semantic content of moves and acts identified in Hiranburana's (1996) study of international trade letters and faxes and those in my study of international trade emails shows that there are a number of commonalities. This suggests some moves and acts are used specifically in the international trade business communication as they are generated from the specific trade transactions and practices of this business. Therefore, type of business is a possible determinant in categorising genre and, in this study, the particular genre of international trade communication.

Two particular common distinctive characteristics of international trade email communication have been identified through this study and can be considered to warrant the claim for a genre of international trade email - hybridity and its dynamic nature. The variability in acceptable syntax in the linguistic realisation of some moves and acts, with full sentences right through to sentence fragments composed of various lengths, and the inconsistent and variable usage of the formulaic moves of the **Addressing**, the **Expressing gratitude/respect/etc.**, and the **Signing** moves, demonstrate hybridity in the international trade email genre, which merges conventions from traditional forms of written literacy (such as letters etc) with new textual practices and forms associated with the digital environment, such as hypertext and other simplified or abbreviated/reduced ways of communicating with fewer words, and drawing on formulaic elements of business letter, memo and personal email, and acceptance of the interplay of these influences within the texts to create its own range of acceptable and accepted practices. As Yates and Orlikowski (1992) have conceptualised in their study of the evolution of the genre of memo from letter form through to email, the introduction of a new medium brings changes to the existing conventions resulting in a tension between the two and a re-configuration of the generic rules, which may eventually lead to an establishment of a new genre. They identify the influence of the email medium and existing memo conventions on the elaboration of memo genre. Similarly, in my study it is possible that there is a tension and interplay of influences between business letter conventions and email rules as evident in the inconsistent uses of the set of formulaic moves that may be a

transition from formulaic letter conventions. The email rules as applied in international trade email communication may have been influenced by an earlier merge between memo and letter before they are integrated into international trade email because there are still some traces of memo format which contains addresser, addressee, subject of the message, and date of memo in the international trade email. International trade email communication therefore appears to be influenced by the interplay of business letter, memo and email, and the resultant hybridity supports the case for this form of communication as a new genre and variable syntax in the linguistic realisation of moves and acts of international trade emails.

Yates and Orlikowski (1992) have emphasised the importance of institutionalisation of a genre in determining the establishment of a genre. The key factor in this seems to be the communication practices of members within a discourse community where the genre arises. When members decide on communicating via a new channel, hybridisation also shapes their course of communication. Once they have communicated through that medium up to a point where the hybridised practice is accepted and becomes common among members of a discourse community, such practice is eventually institutionalised and a set of new rules ensure and accompanied by the emergence of a new genre to co-exist with the previous ones or to replace them. This process has been witnessed in the fax genre (Louhiala-Salminen, 1997), memo (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992), and email (Orlikowski & Yates, 1994). In particular, business email genre has been argued to involve and replace several precursor genres (Orlikowski & Yates, 1994).

Although methodological constraints meant that simulations had to be employed in my study, I consulted international trade professionals widely concerning their email practices and the simulations are designed to maximally mirror these practices. For this reason and supported by my ongoing personal observation I believe that findings of the hybrid characteristic of this communication do represent a feature that is evident not just in simulations but also in real, daily international trade email communication. Furthermore, the hybrid characteristic of international trade email communication suggests the emergence of a genre, an ongoing, evolving one.

The dynamic characteristic of international trade email is another justification of its genre. This dynamic nature is evident in the similarities and differences in the usage of moves and acts and in the inconsistent uses of formulaic moves in the international trade email. The dynamic nature of this communication has led to the generation of a range of criteria for determining the likelihood of usage of the various moves and acts in the email textual structure of this study. The application of these criteria has produced four sets of categories of moves and acts that demonstrate significant features of the composition and structuring of international trade emails (See Table xxx). The first set of moves and acts are used by 100% of participants across groups and these moves and acts are about the main trade transactions. These moves and acts are considered obligatory and function as the core of the structure of emails written for each task.

The second set of moves and acts are used by 81 – 99% of participants across groups. There are two significant groups of moves and acts in this set. The first group is formulaic moves that are less consistently used by participants across groups than the first set. Compared with the use of this set of formulaic moves in business letters, these moves are used less consistently in the international trade email. Yates and Orlikowski (1992) also report the lesser usage of these moves in their study of internal organisational memo emails. The second group of moves and acts that are used by a high proportion of participants (81 – 99%) across groups are the *Undertaking actions* and *Asking for actions* acts in the Dealing with problem (s) 1 and 2. This shows that these two acts are most likely to be included in the international trade emails written to tackle problems in trade.

A third set of moves and acts are used by approximately 61 – 80% of participants across groups in each task, meaning that there is a fairly high probability that these moves and acts will be used in international trade transactions. For example, the *Providing reason* act is likely to be used in the three trade transactions that deal with price reductions, deferred payments and problems which are caused from the email writer's side. This third set of moves and acts suggests actions international traders tend to take in each trade transaction. For example, when there are problems in trade, international trade professionals tend to express their apology through the *Apologising* act and avoid making complaints through the *Complaining* act.



The last set contains moves and acts are used by differing proportions of participants in each group in handling each trade transaction. These differences as discussed in my analysis of email texts and context suggest variations in the context of culture and context of situation that cause dynamic characteristic of the international trade email communication. The introduction of new criteria for defining the differences between sets of moves and acts in terms of their patterns of usage has enabled the study to reflect and capture the linguistic features and the communicatively dynamic nature of the email data.

The dynamic characteristic of this communication has proved that the two criteria of obligatory (100% of usage) and optional (less than 100% of usage) that have been applied in traditional genre studies are too coarse to be adopted in the analysis of the email data of this study. Application of the categorical obligatory and optional criteria in the analysis would have failed to show some fine details in the use of moves and acts and some significant features of the communication practices as such rigid two dimensional criteria would have excluded some moves and acts that can be considered generically important for the email structure and semantically crucial for the email message even though they may not be used as frequently as the obligatory ones. The tension between the application of these criteria and the flexibility in textual structure has been reported in Bhatia's (1993), Hiranburana's (1996), and Chakorn's (2002) studies of business letters. However, the criteria seem to be adapted from Hasan's approach for identifying obligatory generic structural elements within a genre (see Halliday & Hasan, 1980, 1985, 1989 for details). Applying this categorical obligatory criterion only the first set of moves and acts that are about the main trade transactions and used by 100% of participants across groups would be defined as obligatory generic structural elements in international trade email communication. The formulaic set of salutation and depart moves are not included as crucial generic structural elements to identify the genre of this communication. Whilst it is possible that the variability in inclusion of these formulaic moves could be an artefact of the simulation tasks, authentic texts gathered in the preliminary fieldwork and pilot stages of this study support the inconsistent and non-obligatory use of this set of moves. This suggests that the genre of international trade email is distinctive from business letter genres not only due to its dynamic

characteristic, but also in terms of the minimal structural requirements to achieve the communicator's communicative purpose. .

### **8.1.3. Evidence of Shared Contextual Knowledge**

The claim for a genre of international trade email communication can also be substantiated by configuration of context that leads to common textual elements and communicative purposes of this email communication. Applying Leckie-Tarry's model of context in the analysis of the context in which international trade emails are composed shows that there are shared contextual understandings in the three components of contexts: context of culture, context of situation and context of text. These shared understanding and knowledge are conceptualised to interact and determine the realisation of moves and related acts about the trade transactions that are used by above 80% (81-99% & 100%) of participants across groups in each task. These similarities in the configuration of the three components of contexts also have been shown to interact and influence participants' choice and focus on strategies related to the main business goal. Furthermore, differences in aspects of the context of tasks associated with the different ordering of tasks, differences in roles, and differences in relationships provided further evidence of shared contextual knowledge even when there were differences in different groups level of realisations of particular moves and acts. The evidence of shared contextual knowledge applied in the construction of the email texts is argued to provide further evidence of a genre of international trade email communication.

## **8.2. Context of international trade email texts**

Another aim of the study is to identify possible factors and their interactions having effect on the realisation of moves and acts. To investigate these factors and their interactions, it is important to consider the context of international trade email communication.

Findings from the analysis of context suggest a revision in my earlier conceptual framework and contextual factors derived from my review of literature as

illustrated in the synthesis of literature. In my earlier conceptual framework (see section 2.5), general contextual factors such as tasks and scenarios, interactants, relationship, email medium, cultures, and interactional principles are posited to affect realisation of moves and acts in email texts through a set of five types of goals.

The analysis undertaken on the data in this study suggests a refinement to the conceptual framework to divide these contextual factors into two groups based on their influences on the similarities and differences in the realisation of moves and acts and participants' emphasis on communicative purposes. The similarities in participants' emphasis on strategies related to the main business goal and efficiency goal that lead to their realisation of moves and acts above 80% across groups suggest the predominant contextual influences shaping generic conventions to be professional business culture, virtual culture and formulaic interpersonal communication conventions. It is posited that the interaction of these three contextual factors exerts the strongest influences on international trade business negotiation and interaction in email and these contextual factors can be categorised as general contextual factors (see Table 8.2)

**Table 8.2 Summary of Analysis of Context**

General contextual Factors	Specific contextual Factors
Professional business culture Virtual culture Communication conventions formulaic	Group preferences (National/Regional cultures) Business relationship Number of tasks in the email Correspondence turns Counterpart Role

The other contextual factors in the inventory such as national/regional cultures, business relationship, traders' roles, interactants, number of tasks in the

email, turns in email exchanges are contended to interact with trade transactions and scenarios and exert influence on the differences in participants' strategies related to the subsidiary business, identity, and relational goals that lead to the variations in their realisation of moves and acts used less than 80% of the time in each task by each group. These contextual factors are conceptualised to interact and exert influence on a more specific level in international trade business negotiation and interaction in email and are categorised as specific contextual factors as discussed in detail in the previous chapter and in the following summary.

The high ranges of differences in the usage preferences of moves and acts attributed to details of trade transaction and number of tasks suggest that these two contextual factors have significant influences on the major variations in usage of moves and acts in the email structure across groups and tasks (See Table 8.3). Only a few differences in the email structure are attributed to correspondence turns and seem to appear only in the task of Dealing with problem 2 when problems are caused and reported by which party. The three contextual factors of details of trade transaction, number of tasks and correspondence turns are about the features of the task and the ranges of differences in the usage preferences in relation to their frequencies of attributions substantiate the strong effect of trade transactions and scenarios on the international trade email communication.

Another contextual factor that contributes to a high range of differences in the usage preferences in the email textual structure is relationship. In this study, relationship is related to sequence of communicative events where the tasks are situated. It is presumed that relationship is developed through email exchanges and interactions between participants and their counterpart along sequences of communicative events. The level of relationship is also shown in the types of moves and acts. When relationship is new in the communicative event early in the sequence, participants feel obliged to express their ambition and enthusiasm to establish some relationship with their counterpart by introducing themselves and businesses, and providing information about their businesses and their trade networks from which they obtain their counterpart's contact. This results in the inclusion of the **Establishing confidence** move and related acts in whichever task is first in the

sequence of communicative events for all four groups of participants. For the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians, the ‘Enquiring about trade’ task is first in the

**Table 8.3 Attribution of differences in move and acts between groups in relation to contextual factors**

Tasks	Moves and Acts	Difference %	Inferred Factors
<b>Enquiring about trade</b>	1. Establishing confidence Move		
	– Aus = 81.3% & NTA = 100% vs. Th1 = 0%	~ 80 –100	Relationship
	– Aus = 81.3% vs. NTA = 100%	~ 20	Group preference
	2. Introducing oneself/company Act		
	– Aus = 81.3% & NTA = 100% vs. Th1 = 0%	~ 80 –100	Relationship
	– Aus = 81.3% vs. NTA = 100%	~ 20	Group preference
	3. Acknowledging source of contact Act		
	– Aus = 50% & NTA = 80% vs. Th1 = 0%	50 – 80	Relationship
	– Aus = 50% vs. NTA = 80%	30	Group preference
	4. Soliciting cooperation Move		
	– Aus & NTA = 0% vs. Th1= 33.3%	~ 35	Relationship

<b>Answering a trade enquiry</b>	1. Establishing confidence Move		
	– Aus & NTA = 0% vs. Th1 = 73.3% & Th2 = 20%	~ 20 – 75	Relationship
	– Th1 = 73.3% vs. Th2 = 20%	~ 55	Counterpart
	2. Introducing oneself/company Act		
	– Aus & NTA = 0% vs. Th1 = 73.3% & Th2 = 20%	~ 20 – 75	Relationship
	– Th1 = 73.3% vs. Th2 = 20%	~ 55	Counterpart
	3. Establishing credentials Act		
	– Aus & NTA = 0% vs. Th1 = 46.7% & Th2 = 13.3%	~ 20 – 45	Relationship
	– Th1 = 46.7% vs. Th2 = 13.3%	~ 35	Counterpart
	4. Projecting positive prospect Move		
	– Aus = 43.8% & NTA = 25% vs. Th1 = 43.8% & Th2 = 6.7%	~ 20 – 35	Relationship
	– Aus = 43.8% vs. NTA = 25%	~ 20	Group preference
	– Th1 = 43.8% vs. Th2 = 6.7%	~ 40	Counterpart
	5. Soliciting response Move		
	– Aus = 62.5 % vs. NTA = 93.8%	~ 30	Group preference
	6. Expressing appreciation of business Act		
	– Aus = 6.3% & NTA = 37.5% vs. Th1 = 93.3% & Th2 = 100%	~ 50 - 90	Relationship + Number of tasks
	– Aus = 6.3% vs. NTA = 37.5%	~ 30	Group preference
	7. Referencing Act		
	– Aus = 87.5% & NTA = 50% vs. Th1 = 26.7% & Th2 = 20%	~ 20 – 50	Number of tasks
	– Aus = 87.5% vs. NTA = 50%	~ 40	Group preference
	8. Specifying details Act		
	– Th1 = 86.7% vs. Th2 = 60%	~ 20	Counterpart
	9. Offering incentives Act		
	– NTA = 62.5% vs. Aus = 25%	~ 40	Group preference
<b>Requesting a price reduction &amp; a deferred payment</b>	1. Soliciting agreement Move		
	– Th1 = 53.3% vs. NTA = 75% & Aus = 62.5%	~ 20	Relationship
	2. Projecting positive prospect Move		
	– Aus = 56.3% & NTA = 31.5% vs. Th1 = 6.7%	~ 25 – 50	Relationship
	– Aus = 56.3% vs. NTA = 31.5%	~ 25	Group preference
	3. Expressing main intention Act		
	– Aus = 31.3% vs. NTA & Th1 = 6.7 %	~ 25	Group preference
	4. Referencing Act		
	– Aus = 0% & NTA = 18.8% vs. Th1 = 46.7%	~ 30 - 40	Number of tasks

<b>Answering requests for a price reduction &amp; a deferred payment</b>	1. Projecting positive prospect Move		
	– Aus = 6.3% vs. NTA 25%	~ 20	Group preference
	2. Soliciting response Move		
	– Aus = 50% vs. NTA = 12.5%	~ 40	Group preference
	3. Asking for a purchase order Move		
	– Th1 = 26.7% vs. Th2 = 53.3% & Aus = 43.8% & NTA = 62.5 %	~ 20 – 40	Number of tasks
	– Aus = 43.8% & NTA = 62.5 %	~ 20	Group preference
	4. Specifying details Act		
	– NTA = 37.5% vs. Aus = 6.3%	~ 30	Group preference
	5. Offering incentives Act		
	– NTA = 18.8% vs. Aus = 43.8%	25	Group preference
	6. Providing reasons Act		
	– Aus = 100% vs. NTA = 75%	25	Group preference
	7. Acknowledging receipt of message Act		
	– Th2 = 60% vs. Th1 = 40%	20	Number of tasks
	8. Referencing Act		
	– Th1 = 66.7% vs. Th2 = 46.7%	20	Number of tasks

<b>Dealing with problem 1</b>	1. Soliciting cooperation Move		
	– Aus = 18.8% vs. NTA = 56.3% & Th1 = 60 % & Th2 = 46.7%	~ 30 – 40	Details of trade transaction
	– Aus = 18.8% vs. NTA = 56.3%	~ 40	Group preference
	2. Soliciting response Move		
	– Aus = 25% vs. NTA = 50%	25	Group preference
	3. Soliciting agreement Move		
	– Aus = 50% & NTA = 75% vs. Th1 = 26.7% & Th2 = 6.7%	~ 25 – 70	Details of trade transaction
	– Th1 = 26.7% vs. Th2 = 6.7%	20	Counterpart
	– Aus = 50% vs. NTA = 75%	25	Group preference
	4. Soliciting confidence Move		
	– Aus = 12.5% & NTA = 18.8% vs. Th1 = 40% & Th2 = 53.3%	~ 20 – 40	Details of trade transaction
	5. Expressing main intention Act		
	– Aus = 6.3% vs. NTA = 25%	~ 20	Group preference
	6. Providing reasons Act		
	– Au = 81.3% & NTA = 100% vs. Th1 = 60% & Th2 = 66.7%	~ 20 – 40	Details of trade transaction
	– Au = 81.3% vs. NTA = 100%	~ 20	Group preference
	7. Referencing Act		
	– Aus = 25% & NTA = 6.3% vs. Th1 = 66.7% & Th2 = 40%	~ 20 – 60	Details of trade transaction
	– Aus = 25% vs. NTA = 6.3%	~ 20	Group preference
	– Th1 = 66.7% vs. Th2 = 40%	~ 25	Counterpart
	8. Apologising Act		
	– Aus = 62.5% vs. NTA = 87.5%	25	Group preference



<b>Dealing with problem 2</b>	1. Soliciting agreement Move	40	Details of trade transaction
	– Th1 = 40% vs. Aus & NTA & Th2 = 0%		
	2. Soliciting response Move	~ 30	Details of trade transaction
	– Th1 = 33.3% vs. Th2 = 60%		
	3. Complaining Act	~ 30	Group preference
	– Aus = 50% vs. NTA = 81.2%		
	– Th1 = 66.7% vs. Th2 = 20%	~ 45	Counterpart
	4. Referencing Act		
	– Th1 = 26.7% vs. Aus = 75% & NTA = 50% & Th2 = 46.7%	~ 25 - 50	Details of trade transaction
	– Aus = 75% vs. NTA = 50%	25	Group preference
	5. Specifying details Act	~ 35	Correspondence turns
	– Aus = 37.5% & NTA = 31.5% vs. Th1 & Th2 = 0%		
	6. Undertaking actions Act	~ 20 - 30	Correspondence turns
	– Aus = 31.3% & NTA = 37.5% vs. Th1 = 13.3% & Th2 = 6.7%		
	7. Providing reasons Act	~ 50 - 70	Details of trade transaction
	– Th1 = 86.7% vs. Aus = 18.8% & NTA = 37.5% & Th2 = 33.3%		
	– Aus = 18.8% vs. NTA = 37.5%	~ 20	Group preference

- Aus = Australian participants
- NTA = Non-Thai Asian participants
- Th1 = Thai participants interacting with Australian counterpart
- Th2 = Thai participants interacting with Thai counterpart
- (~) = Approximate

sequence of communicative event, while it is the 'Answering a trade enquiry' task for the two Thai groups. Similarly, the new relationship in the early sequence of communicative event may encourage participants to persuade their counterpart to respond to their expression of interest in initiation of trade and to concede to their negotiation as shown in the use of the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the **Soliciting agreement** move and the *Expressing appreciation of business* act. This results in the higher usage in the *Expressing appreciation of business* act of the two Thai groups than the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians and in the higher usage of the **Projecting positive prospect** move of the Thai1 than the Non-Thai Asians in their Answering a trade enquiry task. This also leads to the higher usage in the **Soliciting agreement** move and the **Projecting positive prospect** move of the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians than the two Thai groups in their Requesting a price reduction & a deferred payment task which is second sequence of communicative events. When the relationship has been established, participants do not have to include the **Establishing confidence** move and related acts or are less urged to use the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the **Soliciting agreement** move and the *Expressing appreciation of business* act. Instead, participants use the **Soliciting cooperation** move to persuade their counterpart to trade with them in a friendlier manner and less weightiness of imposition than the **Soliciting agreement** move as shown in the usage of the move by the Thai1 in the Enquiring about trade task later in the sequence of communicative event. Participants' introspections related to identity and relational goals in the three tasks also reflect these differences. The analysis has demonstrated influences of the contextual factor of relationship on the email textual structure and participants' introspections. The findings correspond to Charles' (1996) proposition that business people address their mutual official professional faces at the early stages of their business relationship and shift to more casual social faces at the later stages of their interactions. Working within the proposed refined conceptual framework for understanding the influence of contextual factors on international trade email communication, at the general level the professional business cultural contexts means that there is a shared understanding of how to interact appropriately at the level of relationship as the relationship established develops through ongoing contact, whilst at the specific level contextual knowledge about appropriate behaviour given the level of establishment/development of the business relationship within a specific interaction

contributes to the choices made about the inclusion of moves and acts associated with the relationship goal.

The contextual factor of counterpart has been attributed to divergences in the email structure between the two Thai groups, whose simulations are comparable other than the cultural background of the counterpart. The Thais who interact with an Australian counterpart (Thai1) have higher usage preferences for some moves and acts than those interacting with a Thai counterpart (Thai2) across the six tasks. For example, the Thai1 use the **Establishing confidence** move and related acts, the **Projecting positive prospect** move, and the *Specifying details* act more than the Thai2 in the 'Answering a trade enquiry' task. The higher usage preferences for the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* and *Establishing credentials* acts, which are about addressing their positive face through the introduction of their businesses and themselves as well as providing business credentials, suggest their greater effort in projecting their positive image to their Australian counterpart to build trust and a business relationship than when they interact with a Thai counterpart. This is also shown in the higher usage of the **Projecting positive prospect** move, which functions to provide a positive picture of their trade in the future. Similarly, in the 'Dealing with problem 1' task the Thai1 group have higher usage of the **Soliciting agreement** move than the Thai2 group, which suggests their effort to bring their Australian counterpart to the solutions of the problems in trade. Their higher usages of the *Referencing* act in this task and the *Specifying details* act in the 'Answering a trade enquiry' task than the Thai2 group suggest that they try to be more precise in communication by providing reference and further details about trade to their Australian counterpart. The higher usage preference in the *Complaining* act in the 'Dealing with problem 2' task of the Thai1 group than the Thai2 group suggests that they tend to overtly express their complaint to their Australian counterpart more than to the Thai counterpart. The overall higher usage preferences for these moves and acts in the three tasks by the Thai1 group than the Thai2 group supports there being a higher degree of social distance between them and their Australian counterpart due to the counterpart being an out-group or having different nationality and their business located overseas in comparison to their Thai counterpart, who are considered in-group or share similar nationality and whose businesses are located in the same country. This may result in their greater effort to overcome or fill in the social distance gap

between them and their Australian counterpart than when they interact with their Thai counterpart. This is also supported by their introspections related to identity and relational goals in the relevant tasks in which the Thai1 group focus on formality and business introduction when they interact with their Australian counterpart, and the Thai2 group emphasise politeness and relationship.

The highest frequencies of attribution of contextual factors to differences in the usage preferences of moves and acts across the six tasks shows that most of the differences are influenced by group preferences (See Table 8.4).

**Table 8.4 Ranges of differences in relation to frequencies of attribution of contextual factors across the six tasks**

Contextual Factors	Ranges	Frequencies
Details of trade transactions	20 – 70	9
Number of tasks	20 – 90	6
Correspondence turns	20 – 35	2
Relationship	20 – 100	11
Counterpart	20 – 55	8
Group preferences	20 – 40	26

These group preferences are collective behaviours and demonstrate some common traits or norms. However, the professional business culture of international trade email communication is contended to also exert influence over national/regional cultures of participants in this study. Several studies in business genres (Bhatia, 1993; Hiranburana, 1996; Chakorn, 2002) and the pragmatics of business communication, particularly intercultural business communication (Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson, 2002; Marriott, 1990, 1995; Enomoto & Marriott, 1994; Bilow, 1997; Sheer, 2000; Mulholland, 1997; Woo and Prud'homme, 1999; Sheer, 2000; Pye, 1992; Zhao, 2000; Grindsted, 1997; Yli-Jokipii, 1996), and cross-cultural computer-mediated

communication (Chang and Hsu, 1998) have attributed values of regional and national cultures to linguistic and communication variations. Most of these studies advocate the influences of regional and national culture over business (corporate, organisation, professional) culture. In contrast, it is argued in this study of international trade email communication that national/ regional cultures of participants interact with tasks and scenarios to produce inconsistency in the usage of some moves and acts that are attributed to group preferences in the six tasks, suggesting their different communication approaches of groups within certain tasks (see Table 8.5). For example, four times as many Australians as Non-Thai Asians realise the **Soliciting response** move in the 'Answering requests for a price reduction & deferred payment' task and about 30% more of the Australians than the Non-Thai Asians realise the move in the 'Answering a trade enquiry' task while twice as many Non-Thai Asians as Australians realise this same move in the 'Dealing with problem 1' task in contexts where their tasks and scenarios are directly comparable. Moves and acts that are inconsistently used by the two groups include the **Projecting positive prospect** move, the **Offering incentives** move, the *Expressing main intention* act, and the *Providing reasons* act. Having said this though, the comparatively small range of variation between the groups in these differences (between 20-40%) suggest relatively less influence of group preferences than professional business culture in international trade email communication.

Determination of the influence of national/regional cultures of participant on their communication behaviours based on analysis of their group preferences has not been straightforward. The design of the simulations to resemble actual international trade email communication in a revolving series of correspondence in an ongoing interaction has meant that the scenarios of the six tasks are not identical for the four groups. As a result, direct comparison of groups of participants' communication behaviours is not possible for every cultural/regional group. Only the scenarios of the six tasks for the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians are alike and enable direct comparative analysis of their communication behaviours. Based on the usage preferences for moves and acts attributed to their group preferences, it can be concluded that the Australians seem to focus on precise understandings in communication more than the Non-Thai Asians, as shown in their higher usage preferences of the *Referring* act across the six tasks. The act functions to address a

**Table 8.5 Attribution of usage differences in move and acts between Australians and Non-Thai Asians in relation to Group preferences**

Tasks	Moves and Acts	Difference %
<b>Enquiring about trade</b>	1. Establishing confidence Move – Aus = 81.3% vs. NTA = 100%	~ 20
	2. Introducing oneself/company Act – Aus = 81.3% vs. NTA = 100%	~ 20
	3. Acknowledging source of contact Act – Aus = 50% vs. NTA = 80%	30
<b>Answering a trade enquiry</b>	1. Projecting positive prospect Move – Aus = 43.8% vs. NTA = 25%	~ 20
	2. Soliciting response Move – Aus = 62.5 % vs. NTA = 93.8%	~ 30
	3. Expressing appreciation of business Act – Aus = 6.3% vs. NTA = 37.5%	~ 30
	4. Referencing Act – Aus = 87.5% vs. NTA = 50%	~ 40
	5. Offering incentives Act – Aus = 25% vs. NTA = 62.5%	~ 40
<b>Requesting a price reduction &amp; a deferred payment</b>	1. Projecting positive prospect Move – Aus = 56.3% vs. NTA = 31.5%	~ 25
	2. Expressing main intention Act – Aus = 31.3% vs. NTA = 6.7 %	~ 25



matter in the email and is a compositional stylistic choice. This difference can be considered to demonstrate the Australian participants' preference for a more direct communication style compared to the Non-Thai Asians, a preference that has similarly been found in Marriott's (1990, 1995, 1997) and Enomoto's (1993) studies. Analysis of the Australian participants' introspections shows that they focus on strategies related to the efficiency goal more than the Non-Thai Asians in the 'Answering a trade enquiry', 'Dealing with problem 1', and 'Dealing with problem 2' tasks where the *Referring* act is used by higher proportion of the Australians than the Non-Thai Asians. This collective preference for emphasising the efficiency goal at the expense of other goals suggests that national culture may affect preferential choices of behaviours through goals, even if it is not the predominating influence.

The Non-Thai Asians have a higher usage preference for the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* and *Acknowledging source of contact* acts, the *Expressing appreciation of business* act, the *Specifying details* act, the **Soliciting cooperation** move, the **Soliciting agreement** move, the *Apologising* act, and the *Complaining* act across the six tasks. The overall higher usage preferences for the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* and *Acknowledging source of contact* acts, and the *Expressing appreciation of business* act of the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians indicate that the Non-Thai Asians tend to address the positive face of their own and their counterpart, create trust, and initiate a relationship through the use of these moves and acts as these moves and acts contain such communicative intentions and are, specifically, used in the first email interaction or when traders try to start a trading relationship. The greater use of the **Establishing confidence** move and related *Introducing oneself/company* and *Acknowledging source of contact* acts, and the *Expressing appreciation of business* act of the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians also correspond to Hiranburana's (1996) and Chakorn's (2002) findings that this move is more frequently used in sales letters written by Asian business people to establish business relationship than by Anglo-European business people. The focus on social relations in business negotiation of Asian business professionals, such as the Japanese (Enomoto & Marriott, 1994), the Chinese (Bilow, 1997; Sheer, 2000; Woo and Prud'homme, 1999; Sheer, 2000; Pye, 1992; Zhao, 2000), the Korean and the Vietnamese (Mulholland, 1997) has been widely reported in studies in intercultural business communication. These studies ascribe the focus on



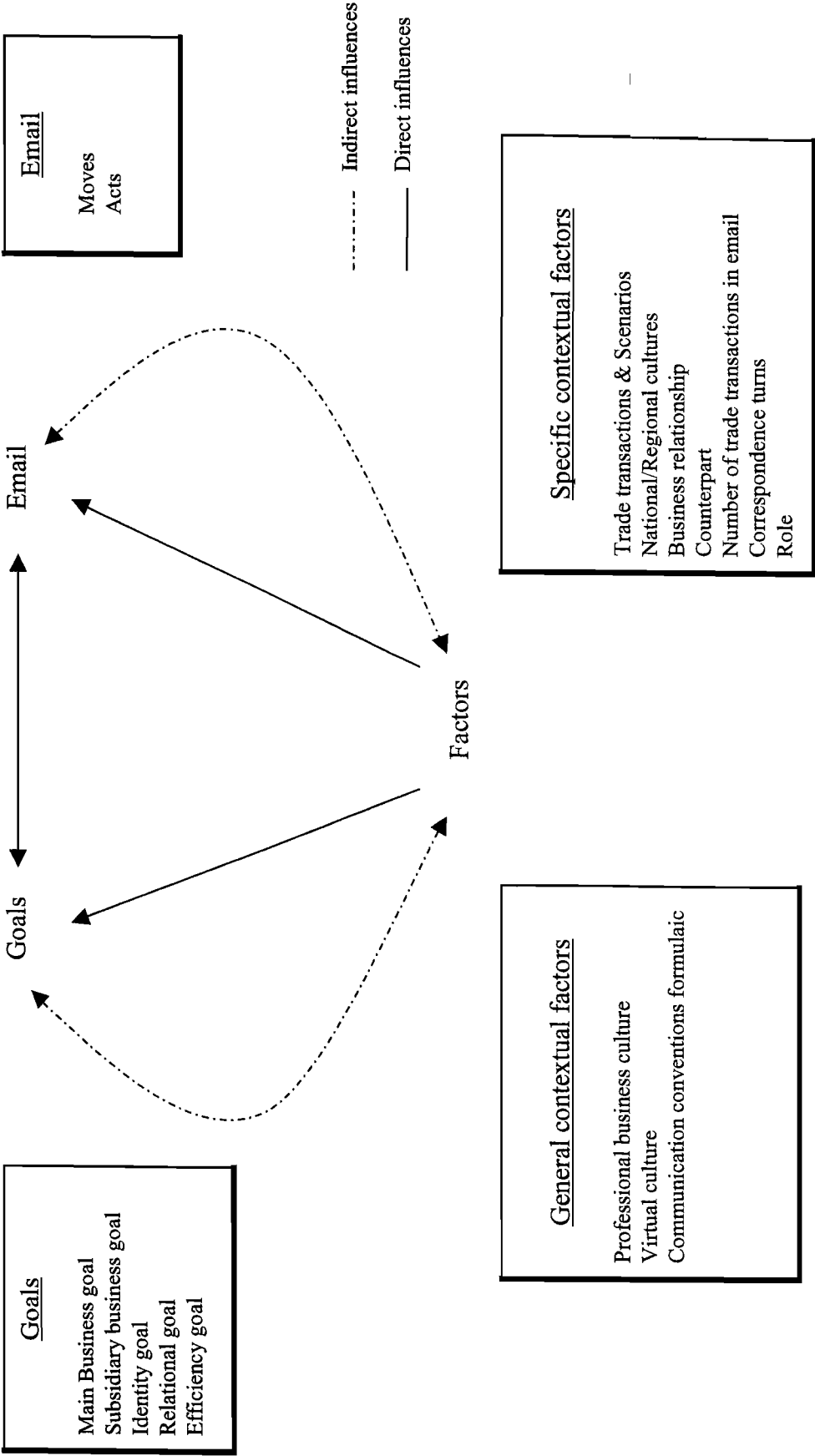
social relations of Asian cultural norms as affecting these communication behaviours. Although the focus on social relations of Asian cultural norms is not evident in the relational goal of the Non-Thai Asians' introspections to explain the collective differences in the usage of these moves and acts between the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians, the differences can be explicated by findings in other studies, such as in Yamada's (1997), Ma, Wang, Jaeger, Anderson, Wang, and Saunders's (2002), and Neumann's (1997) that the Japanese and Chinese tend to emphasise relationship-oriented goals in their discourses of business negotiation. This also suggests some similarities in the collective norms of the region that may influence preferential choices of behaviours through emphasis on goals. The overall higher usages of the **Soliciting cooperation** move, the **Soliciting agreement** move by the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians also point to the Non-Thai Asians' greater effort to persuade their counterpart to agree with them as the moves contain communicative intentions of seeking compliance from the addressee. These findings are in line with Bhatia's (1993) report in his studies of business genres that Asian business people like to negotiate more than Anglo-European business people. The difference in usage preference for the *Specifying details* act between the two groups also suggests that the Non-Thai Asians tend to provide further details to their counterpart more than the Australians. Moreover, it is evident in the higher usage preferences in the *Apologising* act and the *Complaining* act of the Non-Thai Asians than the Australians in the 'Dealing with problem 1' and 'Dealing with problem 2' tasks that in the problematic situations with trade the Non-Thai Asians tend to express their feelings more than the Australians. The textual analysis has shown that their different national/regional culture appears to have some influence on the dissimilar usage preferences of the Non-Thai Asians and Australians for certain moves and acts under specific situations.

However, these interpretations must be treated with caution due to the limitations of the simulations in this study as some tasks are not comparable for the four groups. Even though when the usage of moves and acts are comparable, such as the Australians and the Non-Thai Asians, the two groups do seem to have different group preferences in the usage of some moves and acts for certain tasks as discussed above. Given this, it is wise not to generalise too broadly about the communication styles within the four groups related to the influence of national or regional cultures on their email communication behaviours.

The analysis and discussion of the context of international trade email texts has meant that my conceptual model of international trade email communication can be refined to better illustrate processes and elements that operate in international trade email communication. The refined model (see Figure 8.6) posits that contextual factors, goals and email texts relate dynamically and interactively.. Contextual factors lead to the realisation of moves and acts in email texts through the formation of five types of goals. However, contextual factors can also lead to the realisation of email texts without channelling through goals when communicators are not conscious of their goals and do not have a plan to encode these in their email composition. The contextual factors, therefore, may exert direct influences on goals and/or email texts. During composition it is possible that communicators may make some changes in their email texts and develop or alter their goals, which results in a negotiation process between email texts and goals and the two can influence each other in a direct manner. In reverse, the email texts and goals can indirectly shape communicators' conception of contextual factors through email writing and revising process which involves judging and evaluating the situation of the trade transaction of the email and their counterpart's messages. The contextual factors are composed of two groups of general and specific contextual factors as discussed at the beginning of this section. In this model international trade email communication is conceptualised as an ongoing, dynamic and interactive process which relies on shared contextual knowledges and goals.

As the discussion has shown, the professional business culture, the virtual culture and the formulaic interpersonal compositional conventions interact through the contexts of culture, situation, and text and determine potential meanings to be communicated in the overall environment of this communication. The interaction of these contextual factors lead to communication conventions in the generic realisation of moves and acts and the format of email to achieve a collective communicative purposes among members of the electronic international trade discourse community. Variations in the generic structure of the email communication are postulated to stem from several contextual factors that are specific to individual trade transactions. In these transactions national/regional cultures, business relationship, traders' roles, counterpart, number of tasks in the email, turns in email exchanges have been shown to be important in contributing to the variability in how the genre of international

Figure 8.6 Revised conceptual model of international trade email communication



trade email communication is realised in different specific international trade scenarios.

### 8.3. Limitations and Recommendation for future research

As has been acknowledged within the study there were a number of issues and limitations that had to be grappled with in the process of designing and conducting the study. Having completed the analysis it is valuable to reflect on these and consider directions for further research on communication among international trade business professionals.

Because of the difficulties in being able to collect genuine naturalistic data for this study, a simulation was developed and used. Whilst simulation allows for an element of control, and, consequently, has been valuable in being able to compare the professionals in the four groups, and, is a widely adopted and well accepted approach in comparative discourse-oriented linguistic research, nevertheless, it cannot be considered to be an entirely satisfying approach and had some limitations. For example, the design of the simulations to maximally reflect practices in international trade email communication through a series of continuing interactions between participants and their trade counterpart, taking both roles of a buyer and a seller of products, led to a complicated arrangement of the six tasks. These complex simulations then had to be disentangled for analysis. This resulted in some emails written to cover two trade transactions, each of which is drawn for separate analysis. There is also another nature of international trade where traders purchase a product from local manufacturers to sell to overseas traders. Some international trades are therefore transacted between manufacturers and trading agents locally. This nature of trade leads to a design of simulations with some details of tasks and scenarios for the Thai2 participants to interact with their Thai counterpart different from those of the other three groups who interact with an overseas counterpart. This also results in some differences in the trade transactions for the four groups and limits the capacity for directly comparable analysis of their email texts. For example, the trade transactions in the **Enquiring about trade** and **Requesting a price reduction and a deferred payment** tasks are assigned to only the Australian, the Non-Thai Asians and the Thai1 participants who interact with their overseas counterpart. Details of

problems in the trade transactions of **Dealing with problems 1** and **2** tasks are also different between the four groups due to the nature of international trade scenarios that had been constructed to be as realistic as possible. To some extent, it could also be argued that the simulations are too simplistic compared to the actual sophisticated details of each 'real life' trade transaction. The study has shown that designing simulations to reflect actual overall transactions in international trade email communication is not without problems and can lead to complications in analysis. Moreover, even with simulations and much experimentation with the data collection methodology to yield a format that was acceptable for informants in terms of the time demand, it was not easy to recruit international trade participants due to their lack of time, understanding, and commitment to participate in a scholarly research, such as this.

Collection of both the email and introspection data posed considerable challenges, and piloting of the data collection methods went through several stages. While the ethical issue of obtaining participants' consent has been dealt with by the introduction of simulation into the study, collecting a full set of data (emails and introspections) for comparative analysis demanded participants' commitment to complete the six tasks. Several initial participants, particularly those who were overseas, withdrew their participation in the middle of the project as it proved particularly problematic being able to recruit them and ensure their full understanding of the task requirements and their fully informed consent when face to face interaction was not possible. This is an interesting irony given the study's focus on virtual communication via email, and clearly demonstrates that there are limitations in computer-mediated communication, especially in the ease that participants' trust and commitment can be gained without the ability to do some face to face relationship building between the researcher and research study participants.

Analysis of the email data has shown that a number of emails are written with ungrammatical sentence structures and varying linguistic features. Given the nature of the medium this was not surprising, but it did necessitate a refinement and clarification of the process of identifying moves and acts to deal with the characteristics of email texts as discussed in Chapter 4.

Analysis of the introspection data also shows that some introspections could not easily be related to the email texts produced, and that the quality of introspections were variable. Some participants were clearly not as conscious of their plans as others and found it difficult to express their intentions in their introspection. It is also possible that some of these participants had dealt with such trade transactions so often that writing emails for these transactions has become routinised for them and they had difficulty bringing their plans or intentions to a conscious level. Some participants were not very articulate in describing their intentions or plans, and may just have been less able to verbalise. Finally, a number of different techniques were used to collect introspections. Whilst there were no clearly apparent differences in the quality of introspections that were generated with the different techniques, it was judged to be important not to over-interpret the introspection data, especially given the need for the researcher to recognise his pivotal role in data interpretation.

Despite these issues in the design of the simulations, and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, findings from the study have shed light on our understanding of email communication practices in international trade business in the Asia Pacific region. Due to the time constraints of this project, the study was not able to investigate in detail the linguistic realisations and other lexico-grammatical features of the moves and acts in the email texts. It is therefore recommended that future research in international trade email communication should examine the sentence/phrase level and grammar of the moves and acts of this form of communication. As the study has highlighted some differences in group preferences in the structure and choice of moves and acts in email texts, it would be interesting to see whether such differences in preferences are also noticeable in the linguistic forms used to realise moves and acts, and/or whether they are more or less pronounced. As counterpart appears to be an important contextual factor, it would be interesting to undertake further research using real as opposed to 'dummy' counterparts to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of interaction. Moreover, as there seem to be some significant differences in the length of email text across the four groups of participants in this study and some sub-groups of individuals tend to adopt different styles in their approach to email composition, it is recommended that further analysis of texts be undertaken with a view to characterising and categorising these different styles. With a holistic framework of analysis, it may also be possible to identify key

factors shared by participants who have similar stylistic preferences in the linguistic realisation of moves and acts.

Finally, to determine whether it is possible to make a universal claim for a genre of international trade email communication, further research should be undertaken to investigate international trade email communication in other regions and across the globe.

# Bibliography

Ang, P. H. and Lee, B. 2002, 'Wiring an Intelligence Island: The Internet in Singapore' in S. Rao and B. C. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Cyberpath to Development in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut.

Anton, J. 2000, 'Customer Connections', *Electric Perspectives*, Vol. 25. No. 4, pp. 14-21.

Askehave, I. And Swales, J. M. 2001, 'Genre Identification and Communicative Purpose: A Problem and a Possible Solution', *Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 195-212.

Austin, J. L. 1962, *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford University Press, London.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, 'Australia's Exports Markets, 1991-2 to 2000-1', *International Merchandise Trade, Australia*, June, Catalogue No. 5422.0, Canberra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003, *Business Use of Information Technology*, Wed 26 Feb, Catalogue No. 8129.0, Canberra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2005, *Business Use of Information Technology*, 17 March, Catalogue No. 8129.0, Canberra.

Baker, A. 1998 July, 'Cyberspace Couples Finding Romance Online: The Meeting for the First Time in Real Life', *CMC Magazine*, Online Journal  
<http://www.december.com/cmc/mag/1998/jul/baker.html>

Bakhtin, M. M. 1986, *Speech Genre and Other Late Essays*, University of Texas Press, Austin TX.

Ball-Rokeach, S. J. and Reardon, K. 1988, 'Monologue, Dialogue, and Telelogue: Comparing an Emergent Form of Communication with Traditional Forms', in R. P.



Hawkins, J. M. Wiemann, and S. Pingree (eds.), *Advancing Communication Science Merging Mass and Interpersonal Processes*, Sage, London.

Bandyopadhyay, S. 2002, 'Interfirm Influence Strategies within Distribution Channels in the Emerging Indian Market', *Global Competitiveness*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 463-476.

Barbara, L., Celani, M. A. A., Collins, H., and Scott, M. 1996, 'A Survey of Communication Patterns in the Brazilian Business Context', *English for Specific Purposes*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 57-72.

Bargiela-Chiappini, F. and Harris, S. J. 1996, 'Requests and Status in Business Correspondence', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 28, pp. 635-662.

Bargiela-Chiappini, F. and Nickerson, C. 2002, 'Business Discourse: Old Debates, New Horizons', *IRAL*, Vol. 40, pp. 273-286.

Bargiela-Chiappini, F. and Nickerson, C. 2003, 'Intercultural Business Communication: A Rich Field of Studies', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 3-15.

Baron, N. 1998, 'Letters by Phone or Speech by Other Means: The Linguistics of Email', *Language & Communication*, Vol. 18, pp. 133-170.

Baron, N. 2000, *Alphabet to Email: How Written English Evolved and Where It's Heading*, Routledge, London.

Baron, N. 2001, 'Why Email Looks Like Speech: Proofreading, Pedagogy, and Public Face', in J. Aitchison and D. Lewis (eds.), *New Media Language*, Routledge, London.

Bavelas, J. B. 1991, 'Some Problems with Linking Goals to Discourse', in K. Tracy (ed.), *Understanding Face-to-Face Interaction*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.

Baxter, L. A. 1984, 'An Investigation of Compliance-Gaining as Politeness', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 427-456.

Baxter, L. A. and Babbie, E. 2004, *The Basics of Communication Research*, Thomson Wadsworth, Canada.

Baym, N. 1996, 'Agreements and Disagreements in Computer-Mediated Discussion', *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 315-345.

Baym, N. K. 1995, 'From Practice to Culture on Usenet', in S. L. Star (ed.), *The Cultures of Computing*, Blackwell, Oxford UK.

Bazerman, C. 1994, 'Systems of Genre and the Enactment of Social Intentions', in A. Freedman and P. Medway (eds.), *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Beal, C. 1992, 'Did You Have a Good Week-End? Or Why There Is No Such Thing as a Simple Question in Cross-Cultural Encounters', *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 23-52.

Beal, C. 1997, 'Keeping the Peace: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Questions and Requests in Australian English and French', in P. Trudgill and J. Cheshire (eds.), *The Sociolinguistic Reader*, Arnold, New York.

Beck, E. 1995, 'Changing Documents/Documenting Changes: Using Computers for Collaborative Writing over Distance', in S. L. Star (ed.), *The Culture of Computing*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Benoit, P. 1990, 'The Structure of Interaction Goals', in J. Anderson (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 13*, Sage, Newbury Park CA.

Berger, C. R. 1995, 'A Plan-Based Approach to Strategic Communication', in D. E. Hewes (ed.), *The Cognitive Bases of Interpersonal Communication*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.

Berger, C. R. and Kellermann K. 1994, 'Acquiring Social Information', in J. A. Daly and J. M. Wiemann (eds.), *Strategic Interpersonal Communication*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.

Berger, C. R., Knowlton, S. W., and Abrahams, M. F. 1996, 'The Hierarchy Principle in Strategic Communication', *Communication Theory*, Vol. 6, pp. 111-142.

Bertacco, M. and Deponte, A. 2005, 'Email as a Speed-Facilitating Device: A Contribution to the Reduced-Cues Perspective on Communication', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 10, No. 3, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Bhatia, V. 1993, *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings*, Longman, London.

Bhatia, V. 1997, 'Introduction: Genre Analysis and World Englishes', *World Englishes*, Vol. 16, pp. 313-319.

Biesenbach-Lucas, S. and Waesenforth, D. 1997, *On-line and Off-line Texts of Non-native Speakers: Distinguishable Text Types?*, Symposium Proceedings of E-mail, the Web, and MOOs: Developing the Writing Skills of University Students in Cyberspace, The George Washington University, Retrieved June 13, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.gwu.edu/~washweb/lucas.html>.

Biesenbach-Lucas, S. and Waesenforth, D. 1998, 'The Appropriateness of E-mail in Composition Instruction: A Linguistic and Rhetoric Analysis', in V. Darleguy, A. Ding, and M. Svensson (eds.), *New Instruction Technologies in Modern Language Teaching: Theoretical Reflection and Practical Applications*, Centre de Ressources en Langues, Lyon

Biesenbach-Lucas, S. and Waesenforth, D. 2001, 'E-mail and Word Processing in the ESL Classroom: How the Medium Affects the Message', *Language Learning & Technology*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 135-165.

Biesenbach-Lucas, S. Meloni, C., and Waesenforth, D. 2000, 'Use of Cohesive Features in ESL Students' E-mail and Word-processed Texts: A Comparative Study', *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 221-237.

Bilow, G. T. 1997, 'Spoken Discourse in the Multicultural Workplace in Hong Kong: Applying a Model of Discourse as 'Impression Management'. in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Bingham, S. G. and Burleson, B. R. 1989, 'Multiple Effects of Messages with Multiple Goals: Some Perceived Outcomes of Responses to Sexual Harassment', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 184-216.

Blum-Kulka, S. and Olshtain, E. 1986, 'Too Many Words: Length of Utterance and Pragmatic Failure', *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, Vol. 8, pp. 165-180.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., and Kasper, G. 1989, 'Investigating Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: An Introductory Overview', in S. Blum-Kulka, J. House, and G. Kasper

(eds.), *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*, Alex Publishing Corporation, New Jersey.

Bond, M. H., Zegarac, V. and Spencer-Oatey, H. 2000, 'Culture as an Explanatory Variable: Problems and Possibilities', in H. Spencer-Oatey (ed.), *Culturally Speaking*, Continuum, New York.

Boneva, B., Kraut, R., and Frohlich, D. 2001, 'Using E-mail for Personal Relationship: The Difference Gender Makes', *The American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 530-549.

Bordia, P. 1997, 'Face-to-Face versus Computer-Mediated Communication: A Synthesis of the Experimental Literature', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 99-120.

Boster, F. J. and Stiff, J. B. 1984, 'Compliance-Gaining Message Selection Behavior', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 10, No.4, pp. 539-556.

Breazeale, S. E. C. 1999, *A Meeting of Minds: The Alumni-L Listserv (R)*, Unpublished PhD, University of South Carolina.

Breznitz, S. and Liebllich, A. 1972, 'How to Simulate If You Must: Simulating the Dream-Work', in M. Inbar and C. S. Stoll (eds.), *Simulation and Gaming in Social Science*, The Free Press, New York.

Brochet, M. G. 1991, *A Casebook of International On-Line Teams*, Unpublished PhD, University of Guelph, Canada.

Brogno, J. A. E. 1999, *On the Nature of International English*, Unpublished MA, Central Missouri State University.

Brown, A. A. 2000, *Differentiating Features of Standard and Colloquial Singaporean English*, Paper presented at the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia (ALAA), The University of Melbourne.

Brown, P., and Levinson, S. C. 1987, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Burleson, B. R. and Mortenson, S. R. 2003, 'Explaining Cultural Differences in Evaluations of Emotional Support Behaviours: Exploring the Mediating Influences of Value Systems and Interactional Goals', *Communication Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 113-147.

Callot, M. and Belmore, N. 1996, 'Electronic Language: A New Variety of English', in S. C. Herring (ed.), *Computer-Mediated Communication: Linguistic, Social and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam.

Campbell, K. K. and Jamieson, K. H. 1978, 'Form and Genre in Rhetorical Criticism: an Introduction', in K. K. Campbell and K. H. Jamieson (eds.), *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*, The Speech Communication Association, Falls Church Va.

Canary, D. J. and Spitzberg, B. H. 1987, 'Appropriateness and Effectiveness Perceptions of Conflict Strategies', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 93-118.

Canary, D. J., Cody, M. J., and Marston, P. J. 1986, 'Goal Types, Compliance-Gaining and Locus of Control', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 249-270.

Case, C. J. 1996, *The Role of Electronic Messaging in the Intermediate Business Context*, Unpublished PhD, University of North Texas.

Cassel, J. and Tversky, D. 2005, 'The Language of Online Intercultural Community Formation', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Chakorn, O. 2002, *Contrastive Rhetoric of English Persuasive Correspondence in the Thai Business Context: Cross-Cultural Sales Promotion, Request and Invitation*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Warwick, Coventry.

Chang, Y. and Hsu, Y. 1998, 'Requests on E-mail: A Cross-Cultural Comparison', *RELC Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 121-151.

Charles, M. 1996, 'Business Negotiations: Interdependence Between Discourse and the Business Relationship', *English for Specific Purposes*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 19-36.

- Cherry, R. D. 1988, 'Politeness in Written Communication', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 12, pp. 63-81.
- Cheshire, J. 1994, *English around the World: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, Newcastle up Tyne.
- Chew, P. G. L. 1999, 'Linguistic Imperialism, Globalism, and the English Language', in D. Graddol and U. H. Meinhof (eds.), *English in a Changing World*, The International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), Oxford.
- Christie, F. and Unsworth, L. 2000, 'Developing Socially Responsible Language Research', in L. Unsworth (ed.), *Researching Language in Schools and Communities*, Cassel, London.
- Climent, S., Mor, J., Oliver, A., Salvatierra, M., Snchez, I., Taul, M., and Vallmanya, L. 2003, 'Bilingual Newsgroups in Catalonia: A Challenge for Machine Translation', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.
- Cody, M. J., Woelfel, M. L., and Jordan, W. J. 1983, 'Dimensions of Compliance-Gaining Situation', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 9, pp. 99-113.
- Colley, A. and Todd, Z. 2002, 'Gender-Linked Differences in the Style and Content of E-mail to Friends', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp. 380-392.
- Cook, S. L. 1997, *Mindfulness and Tolerance of Ambiguity in Online Communication*, Unpublished PhD, University of Denver.
- Couture, B. 1986, *Functional Approaches to Writing: Research Perspectives*, Ablex, Norwood NJ.
- Crookall, D. and Saunders, D. 1989, 'Towards an Integration of Communication and Simulation', in D. Crookall and D. Saunders (eds.), *Communication and Simulation: From Two Fields to One Theme*, Multilingual Matters, Philadelphia.
- Crowell, T. L. and Anderson, T. L. 2005, 'Using the Internet to Conduct Communication Research: Two Scholar's Experiences', in S. H. Priest (ed.), *Communication Impact: Designing Research That Matters*, Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, New York.

- Crystal, D. 1997, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Crystal, D. 2001, *Language and the Internet*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Crystal, D. 2003, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Daft, R. L. and Lengel, R. H. 1986, 'Organizational Information Requirement, Media Richness and Structural Design', *Management Sci.*, Vol. 32, No. 5, pp. 554-571.
- Danet, B. 2001, *Cyberpl@y: Communicating Online*, Berg, New York.
- Das, D. K. 2000, *Asian Exports*, Oxford University Press, Hong Kong.
- Davis, B. H. and Brewer, J. 1997, *Electronic Discourse: Linguistic Individuals in Virtual Space*, SUNY Press, New York.
- Dawson, R. E. 1962, 'Simulation in the Social Science', in H. Guetzkow (ed.), *Simulation in Social Science*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.
- de Geus, A. P. 1994, 'Modeling to Predict or to Learn?', in J. D. W. Morecroft and J. D. Sterman (eds.), *Modeling for Learning Organisations*, Productivity Press, Oregon.
- de Kadt, E. 1998, 'The Concept of Face and Its Applicability to the Zulu Language', *Pragmatics and Language Learning*, Vol. 29, pp. 173-191.
- de Truck, M. A. 1985, 'A Transactional Analysis of Compliance-Gaining Behavior: Effects of Noncompliance, Relational Context, and Actors' Gender', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 54-78.
- Dervin, B., Grossberg, L., O'Keefe, B. J., and Wartella, E. 1989, *Rethinking Communication Volume 1: Paradigm Issues*, Sage, Newbury Park.
- Dillard, J. P. 1990, 'The Nature and Substance of Goals in Tactical Communication', in M. J. Cody and M. L. McLaughlin (eds.), *The Psychology of Tactical Communication*, Multilingual Matters, Philadelphia.

- Dillard, J. P., Palmer, M. T., and Kinney, T. A. 1995, 'Relational Judgement in an Influence Context', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 331-353.
- Dillard, J. P., Segrin, C., and Harden, J. M. 1989, 'Primary and Secondary Goals in the Production of Interpersonal Influence Messages', *Communication Monographs*, Vol. 56, pp. 19-38.
- Dimmick, J., Kline, S., and Stafford, L. 2000, 'The Gratification Niches of Personal E-mail and the Telephone', *Communication Research*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 227-249.
- Dodd, D. 2000, 'The Word is out on Audioconferencing', *Telecommunications*, Vol. 34, No. 6, pp. 59-62.
- DuBartell, D. 1995, 'Discourse Feature of Computer-Mediated Communication: "Spoken-Like" and "Written-Like"', in B. Warvik, S. K. Tanskanen, and R. Hiltunen (eds.), *Organization in Discourse*, University of Turku, Turku.
- Dubrovsky, V., Kiesler, S., and Sethna, B. 1991, 'The Equalization Phenomenon: Status Effects in Computer-Mediated and Face-to-Face Decision-Making Groups', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 6, pp. 119-146.
- Eggins S. and Slade, D. 1997, *Analysing Casual Conversation*, Cassel, London.
- Ellington, H., Gordon, M. and Fowlie, J. 1998, *Using Games & Simulations in the Classroom*, Kogan Page, London.
- Enomoto, S. 1993, *Native Speaker Reactions to Non-Native Speakers' Deviations from Politeness Norms in Japanese Tour Guiding Situations*. Unpublished MA Thesis, Monash University, Melbourne.
- Enomoto, S. and Marriott, H. 1994, 'Investigating Evaluative Behaviour in Japanese Tour Guiding Interaction', *Multilingua*, Vol. 13, No. 1/2, pp. 131-161.
- Eustace, G. 1996, 'Business Writing - Some Aspects of Current Practice', *English for Specific Purposes*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 53-56.
- Ferrara, A. 1985, 'Pragmatics', in T. Van Dijk (ed.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis Volume 2: Dimension of Discourse*, Academic Press, London.



Ferrara, K., Bruner, H., and Whitemore, G. 1991, 'Interactive Written Discourse as an Emergent Register', *Written Communication*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 8-34.

Fitch, K. L. 2003, 'Cultural Persuables', *Communication Theory*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 100-123.

Forman, J. and Rymer, J. 1999, 'Defining the Genre of the "Case Write-up"', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 103-133.

Fraser, B. 1990, 'Perspectives on Politeness', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 219-236.

Freedman, A. and Medway, P. 1994, 'Locating Genre Studies: Antecedents and Prospects', in A. Freedman and P. Medway (eds.), *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Frow, J. 1986, *Marxism and Literary History*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Gergen, K. J. 1999, *An Invitation to Social Construction*, Sage, London.

Gibbs, D. 2000, 'Cyberlanguage: What It Is and What It Does', in D. Gibbs and K. L. Krause (eds.), *Cyberlines: Languages and Cultures of the Internet*, James Nicholas Publishers, Albert Park, Australia.

Giese, J. M. 1996, *Place without Space, Identity without Body: The Role of Cooperative Narrative in Community and Identity Formation in a Text-based Electronic Community*, Unpublished PhD, The Pennsylvania State University.

Gimenez, J. C. 2000, 'Business E-mail Communication: Some Emerging Tendencies in Register', *English for Specific Purposes*, Vol. 19, pp. 237-251.

Givon, T. 1984, *Syntax: A Functional Typological Introduction*, vol. 1, John Benjamins, New York.

Gotcher, J. and Kanervo, E. 1997, 'Perception and Use of Electronic Mail', *Social Science Computer Review*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 145-158.

- Graddol, D. 1999, 'The Decline of the Native Speaker', in D. Graddol and U. H. Meinhof (eds.), *English in a Changing World*, The International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), Oxford.
- Graddol, D., McArthur, T., Flack, D., and Amey, J. 1999, 'Englishisation: One Dimension of Globalisation', in D. Graddol and U. H. Meinhof (eds.), *English in a Changing World*, The International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), Oxford.
- Graham, J. L., Mintu, L., and Rodgers, W. 1994, 'Explorations of Negotiation Behaviors in Ten Foreign Cultures Using a Model Developed in the United States', *Management Science*, Vol. 40, No. 1, pp. 72-96.
- Greene, J. O. 1990, 'Tactical Social Action: Towards Some Strategies for Theory', in M. J. Cody and M. L. McLaughlin (eds.), *The Psychology of Tactical Communication*, Multilingual Matters, Avon UK.
- Greene, J. O. 1997, 'Introduction: Advances in Theories of Message Production', in J. O. Greene (ed.), *Message Production: Advances in Communication Theory*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.
- Greene, J. O. and Lindsey, A. E. 1989, 'Encoding Processes in the Production of Multiple-Goal Messages', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 120-140.
- Greene, J. O. and Ravizza, S. M. 1995, 'Complexity Effects on Temporal Characteristics of Speech', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 309-421.
- Greene, J. O., Lindsey, A. E., and Hawn, J. J. 1990, 'Social Goals and Speech Production: Effects of Multiple Goals on Pausal Phenomena', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, pp. 119-134.
- Greene, J. O., Smith, S. W., and Lindsey, A. E. 1990, 'Memory Representations of Compliance-Gaining Strategies and Tactics', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 195-231.
- Grindsted, A. 1997, 'Joking as a Strategy in Spanish and Danish Negotiation' in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Gruber, H. 2001, 'Theme and Intertextuality in Scholarly E-mail Messages', *Functions of Language*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 79-115.

Gu, Y. 1990, 'Politeness Phenomena in Modern Chinese', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 237-257.

Gueguen, N. 2002, 'Foot-in-the-Door Technique and Computer-Mediated Communication', *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 11-15.

Guetzkow, H. 1962, 'A Use of Simulation in the Study of Inter-Nation Relations', in H. Guetzkow (ed.), *Simulation in Social Science*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.

Gumperz, J. J. 1982, *Language and Social Identity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Gumperz, J.J. 1986, 'Introduction', in J. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes (eds.), *Direction in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, Basil Blackwell, New York.

Hale, C. and Scanlon, J. 1999, *Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age*, Broadway Books, New York.

Hale, C. L. 1986, 'Impact of Cognitive Complexity on Message Structure in a Face-Threatening Context', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 135-143.

Halliday, M. A. K. 1978, *Language as a Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*, Edward Arnold, London.

Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R. 1976, *Cohesion in English*, Longman, London.

Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R. 1980, 1985, 1989, *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective*, Deakin University Press, Geelong Victoria.

Hamada, T. 1980, *Comparative Study of Business Culture: A United States-Japanese Joint Venture Company in Japan*, Unpublished PhD, University of California, Berkely.

- Hample, D. and Dallinger, J. M. 1988, 'Individual Differences in Cognitive Editing Standards', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 123-144.
- Hanna, B. E. and Nooy, J. D. 2004, 'Negotiating Cross-Cultural Difference in Electric Discussion', *Multilingua*, Vol. 23, pp. 257-281.
- Harcourt, T. 2000, *Why Australian Needs Exports: The Economic Case for Exporting*, A Discussion Paper of the Australian Trade Commission and the Centre for Applied Economic Research (CAER), University of New South Wales, Australia.
- Harkins, B. 2000, 'Enterprise Agility: the Impact of E-commerce on the Hydrocarbon Marketplace', *Hydrocarbon Processing (International Edition)*, Vol. 79, No. 5, pp. 61-62.
- Harris, S. and Bargiela-Chiappini, F. 1997, 'The Languages of Business: Introduction and Overview', in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Harvey, D. 1989, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Blackwell, Oxford UK.
- Hassan, R. 1985, *Linguistics, Language and Verbal Art*, Deakin University Press, Geelong, Victoria.
- Hatt, D. F. 1998, *Male/Female Language Use in Computer Dyadic Interaction*, Unpublished MA, Laurentian University of Sudbury, Canada.
- Hearn, G., Mandeville, T., and Anthony, D. 1998, *The Communication Superhighway: Social and Economic Change in the Digital Age*, Allen & Unwin, NSW, Australian.
- Herring, S. 1999, *Interactional Coherence in CMC*, Proceedings of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences.
- Herring, S. 2001, 'Computer-Mediated Discourse', in D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin, and H. Hamilton (eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Blackwell, Oxford.
- Hian, L. B., Chuan, S. L., Trevor, T. M. K., and Detenber, B. H. 2004, 'Getting to Know You: Exploring the Development of Relational Intimacy in Computer-

Mediated Communication', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 9, No. 3, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Hill, K. and Monk, A. F. 2000, 'Electronic Mail versus Printed Text: The Effects on Recipients', *Interacting with Computers*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 253-263.

Hilton, C. B. 1992, 'Japanese International Business Communication: the Place of English', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Urbana, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 253.

Hiranburana, O. 1996, *Cross-Cultural Strategies and the Use of English in International Business Correspondence*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Flinders University of South Australian, Adelaide.

Holmes, M. 1995, 'Don't Blink or You'll Miss It: Issues in Electronic Mail Research', *Communication Yearbook 18*, International Communication Association, New Jersey.

Holtgraves, T. and Yang, J. 1990, 'Politeness as Universal: Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Request Strategies and Inferences Based on Their Use', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 59, No. 4, pp. 719-729.

Hultin, G. A. 1993, *Mediating the Social Face: Self Presentation in Computer Communication*, Unpublished MA, Simon Fraser University (Canada).

Hymes, D. 1974, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

Ide, S., Hill, B., Cames, Y., Ogino, T. and Kawasaki, A. 1992, 'The Concept of Politeness: An Empirical Study of American English and Japanese', in R. Watts, S. Ide, and K. Ehlich (eds.), *Politeness in Language: Studies in Its History, Theory and Practice*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.

Inbar, M. and Stoll, C. S. 1972, 'Browsing through Simulations', in M. Inbar and C. S. Stoll (eds.), *Simulation and Gaming in Social Science*, The Free Press, New York.

Inbar, M. and Stoll, C. S. 1972, 'The Decision to Simulate', in M. Inbar and C. S. Stoll (eds.), *Simulation and Gaming in Social Science*, The Free Press, New York.

Jameson, D. A. 2000, 'Telling the Investment Story: A Narrative Analysis of Shareholders Reports', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 7-38.

Kachru, B. B. 1986, *The Alchemy of English: the Spread, Functions and Models of Non-Native Englishes*, Pergamon Institute of English, Oxford.

Kang, W. 2002, 'The Engine for the Next Economic Leap: The Internet in Korea' in S. Rao and B. C. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Cyberpath to Development in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut.

Kasper, G. 2000, 'Data Collection in Pragmatics Research', in H. Spencer-Oatey (ed.), *Culturally Speaking*, Continuum, New York.

Kellermann, K. 1992, 'Communication: Inherently Strategic and Primarily Automatic', *Communication Monographs*, Vol. 59, pp. 288-300.

Kellermann, K. 2004, 'A Goal-Directed Approach to Gaining Compliance: Relating to Differences among Goals to Differences in Behaviors', *Communication Research*, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 397-446.

Kellermann, K. and Park, H. S. 2001, 'Situational Urgency and Conversational Retreat', *Communication Research*, Vol. 28, pp. 3-48.

Kellermann, K. and Shea, B. C. 1996, 'Threats, Suggestions, Hints, and Promises: Gaining Compliance Efficiently and Politely', *Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 145-165.

Kiesler, S., Siegel, J., and McGuire, T. W. 1984, 'Social Psychological Aspects of Computer-Mediated Communication', *American Psychologist*, Vol. 39, No. 10, pp. 1123-1134.

Kim, M. S. 1994, 'Cross-Cultural Comparisons of the Perceived Importance of Conversational Constraints', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 21, pp. 128-151.

Kim, Y. 1994, *Electronic Mail Users' Perceptions of Computer-Mediated vs Face-to-Face Communication: A Comparative Study*, Unpublished PhD, The Florida State University.

- Kraut, R., Mukhopadhyay, T., Szczypula, J., Kiesler, S., and Scherlis, B. 1999, 'Information and Communication: Alternative Uses of the Internet in Households', *Information System Research*, Vol. 10, pp. 287-303.
- Lakoff, R. 1973, 'The Logic of Politeness; or Minding Your P's and P's', *Chicago Linguistics Society*, Vol. 8, pp. 292-305.
- Leckie-Tarry, H. 1995, *Language and Context: A Functional Linguistic Theory of Register*, Pinter, London.
- Lee, F. 1993, 'Being Polite and Keeping MUM: How Bad News Is Communicated in Organizational Hierarchies', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 23, pp. 1124-1149.
- Lee, J. Y. 1996, 'Charting the Codes of Cyberspace: A Rhetoric of Electronic Mail', in L. Strate, R. Jacobson, and S. B. Gibson (eds.), *Communication and Cyberspace: Social Interaction in an Electronic Environment*, Hampton Press Inc., New Jersey.
- Leech, G. N. 1983, *Principles of Pragmatics*, Longman, Singapore.
- Lee-Wong, S. M. 1999, *Politeness and Face in Chinese Culture*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt.
- Leichty, G. and Applegate, J. L. 1991, 'Social-Cognitive and Situational Influence on the Use of Face-Saving Persuasive Strategies', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 451-484.
- Lennie, J., Hearn, G., Stevenson, T., Inayatullah, S., and Mandeville, T. 1996, 'Bringing Multiple Perspectives to Australia's Communication Futures: Beyond the Superhighway', *Prometheus*, Vol. 4., No. 1, pp. 10-30.
- Lewin, B. A., Fine, J., and Young, L. 2001, *Expository Discourse: A Genre-based Approach to Social Science Research Texts*, Continuum, London.
- Lindlof, T. R. and Taylor, B. C. 2002, *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1997, 'Investigating the Genre of a Business Fax: A Finnish Case Study', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 316-333.

- Lovitt, C. R. 1999, *Exploring the Rhetoric of International Professional Communication: An Agenda for Teachers and Researchers*, Baywood, New York.
- Lowenberg, P. H. 1994, 'Variation in Malaysian English: the Pragmatics of Languages in Contact', in J. Cheshire (ed.), *English around the World: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, Newcastle up Tyne.
- Lundelius, J. O. 1997, 'Language and Business: the Hong Kong Mix', *Business Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 4, pp. 112-126.
- Ma, R. 1996, 'Computer-Mediated Conversations as a New Dimension of Intercultural Communication between East Asian and North American College Students', in S. C. Herring (ed.), *Computer-Mediated Communication: Linguistic, Social and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, John Benjamins, Philadelphia.
- Ma, Z., Wang, X., Jaeger, A., Anderson, T., Wang, Y. and Saunders, D. 2002, 'Individual Perception, Bargaining Behavior, and Negotiation Outcomes: A Comparison across Two Countries', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 171-184.
- Mabry, E. A. 1997, 'Framing Flames: The Structure of Argumentative Message on the Net', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.
- Mallon, R. and Oppenheim, C. 2002, 'Style Used in Electronic Mail', *Aslib Proceedings: New Information Perspectives*, Vol. 54, No. 1, pp. 8-22.
- Mao, L. R. 1994, 'Beyond Politeness Theory: Face Revisited and Renewed', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 21, No. 5, pp. 451-486.
- Markarian, J. 2000, 'Business-to-Business E-commerce Gains Foothold in Oils Market', *Chemical Market Reporter*, Vo. 258, No. 5, p. 10.
- Marriott, H. 1990, 'Intercultural Business Negotiations: the Problem of Norm Discrepancy', *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*. Series S 7, pp. 33-65.
- Marriott, H. 1995, 'The Management of Discourse in International Buyer-Seller Negotiation', in K. Ehlich and J. Wagner (eds.), *The Discourse of Business Negotiation*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.



- Marriott, H. 1997, 'Australian-Japanese Business Interaction: Some Features of Language and Cultural Contact' in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Marschan-Piekkari, R., Welch, D., and Welch, L. 1999, 'In the Shadow: The Impact of Language on Structure, Power and Communication in the Multinational', *International Business review*, Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 421-441.
- Martin, J. R. 1985, 'Process and Text: Two Aspects of Human Semiotics', in J. D. Benson and W. S. Greaves (eds.), *Systemic Perspective on Discourse*, Vol. 1, Ablex, Norwood NJ.
- Martin, J. R. 1986, 'Intervening in the Process of Writing Development', in C. Painter and J. R. Martin (eds.), *Writing to Mean: Teaching Genres Across the Curriculum*, Applied Linguistic Association of Australia, Occasional Papers No. 9, University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Martin, J. R. 1992, *English Text: System and Structure*, Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Martin, J. R. 1997, 'Analysing Genre: Functional Parameters', in F. Christie and J. R. (eds.), *Genre and Institutions : Social Processes in the Workplace and School*, Cassel, London.
- Martin, J. R. and Rothery, J. 1986, 'What a Functional Approach to the Writing Task Can Show Teachers about "Good Writing"', in B. Couture (ed.), *Functional Approaches to Writing: Research Perspectives*, Ablex, Norwood NJ.
- Matei, S. A. 2005, 'From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Virtual Community Discourse and the Dilemma of Modernity', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 10, No. 3, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.
- May, J. L. 2001, *Pragmatics: An Introduction*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.
- McCreary, D. R. 1984, *Communicative Strategies in Japanese-American Negotiations*, Unpublished PhD, University of Delaware.
- McInerney, C. R. 1998, *Providing Data, Information, and Knowledge to the Virtual Office: Organizational Support for Remote Workers*, Unpublished PhD, State University of New York at Albany.

- McIntyre, B. T. 2002, 'Let a Hundred Modems Bloom: The Internet in Today's China' in S. Rao and B. C. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Cyberpath to Development in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut.
- McLaren, M. 1998, 'Business Communication toward Transnationalism: the Significance of Cross-Cultural Business English and Its Role', *The Journal of Business Communication, Urbana*, Vol. 35, No. 4 pp. 539-541.
- Meyer, J. R. 1994, 'Formulating Plans for Requests: An Investigation of Retrieval Processes', *Communication Studies*, Vol. 45, pp. 131-144.
- Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. 1994, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Miller, C. R. 1984, 'Genre as Social Action', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Vol. 70, pp. 151-167.
- Miller, C. R. 1994, 'Genre as Social Action', in A. Freedman and P. Medway (eds.), *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, Taylor & Francis, London.
- Mori, Y. and Phoha, V. V. 2002, 'The Internet in Japan' in S. Rao and B. C. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Cyberpath to Development in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut.
- Mulholland, J. 1997, 'The Asian Connection: Business Requests and Acknowledgements' in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Munter, M. 1998, 'Meeting Technology: From Low-Tech to High-Tech', *Business Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 2, pp. 80-88.
- Murray, D. 1996, 'Technology Is Driving the Future...the Steering Is up to Us', *TESOL Matters*, Vol. 3.
- Murray, D. E. 1988, 'The Context of Oral and Written Language: A Framework for Mode and Medium Switching', *Language in Society*, Vol. 17, pp. 351-373.
- Murray, D. E. 2000, 'Protean Communication: The Language of Computer-Mediated Communication', *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 397-421.

Neufeld, D. J., Dyck, B., and Brotheridge, C. M. 2001, *An Exploratory Study of Electronic Mail as a Rich Communication Medium in a Global Virtual Organization*, Proceedings of the 34<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences.

Neumann, I. 1997, 'Requests in German-Norwegian Business Discourse: Difference in Directness', in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Nwoye, O. 1992, 'Linguistic Politeness and Socio-Cultural Variations of the Notion of Face', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 309-328.

O' Driscoll, J. 1996, 'About Face: a Defence and Elaboration of Universal Dualis', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 1-32.

O' Keefe, B. J. 1992, 'Developing and Testing Rational Models of Message Design', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 637-649.

O' Keefe, B. J. 1988, 'The Logic of Message Design', *Communication Monographs*, Vol. 55, pp. 80-103.

O' Keefe, B. J. 1990, 'The Logic of Regulative Communication: Understanding the Rationality of Message Designs', in J. P. Dillard (ed.), *Seeking Compliance: The Production of Interpersonal Influence Messages*, Gorsuch Scarisbrick, Scottsdale AZ.

O' Keefe, B. J. 1991, 'Message Design Logic and the Management of Multiple Goals', in K. Tracy (ed.), *Understanding Face-to-Face Interaction: Issues Linking Goals and Discourse*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale.

O' Keefe, B. J. and Lambert, B. L. 1995, 'Managing the Flow of Ideas: A Local Management Approach to Message Design', in B. R. Burleson (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 18*, Sage, Thousand Oaks.

O' Keefe, B. J. and McCornack, S. A. 1987, 'Message Design Logic and Message Goal Structure: Effects on Perceptions of Message Quality in Regulative Communication Situations', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 68-92.

O' Keefe, B. J. and Shepherd, G. L. 1987, 'The Pursuit of Multiple Objectives in Face-to-Face Persuasive Interactions: Effects of Construct Differentiation on Message Production', *Communication Monographs*, Vol. 54, pp. 396-419.

O' Keefe, B. J. and Shepherd, G. L. 1989, 'The Communication of Identity during Face-to-Face Persuasive Interactions: Effects of Perceiver's Construct Differentiation and Target's Message Strategies', *Communication Research*, Vol. 16, pp. 375-404.

Orlikowski, W. J. and Yates, J. 1994, 'Genre repertoire: The Structuring of Communicative Practices in Organizations', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 541-575.

Panol, Z. S. and Rao, S. 2002, 'Taiwan: An Epicenter in the High-Tech World' in S. Rao and B. C. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Cyberpath to Development in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut.

Panteli, N. 2002, 'Richness, Power Cues and Email Text', *Information and Management*, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 75-86.

Panyametheekul, S. and Herring, S. C. 2003, 'Gender and Turn Allocation in a Thai Chat Room', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Paolillo, J. 1999, 'The Virtual Speech Community: Social Network and Language Variation on IRC', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Pare, A. and Smart, G. 1994, 'Observing Genres in Action: Towards a Research Methodology' in A. Freedman and P. Medway (eds.), *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Park, M. R. and Floyd, K. 1996, 'Making Friends in Cyberspace', *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 80-97.

Park, M. R. and Roberts, L. D. 1998, 'Making MOOsic: The Development of Personal Relationships On Line and A Comparison to Their Off-Line Counterparts', *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, Vol. 15, pp. 517-537.

Patton, M. Q. 1999, 'Enhancing the Quality and Credibility of Qualitative Analysis', *HSH: Health Services Research*, Vol. 34, No. 5, pp. 1189-1208.

- Pilegaard, M 1997, 'Politeness in Written Business Discourse: A Textlinguistic Perspective on Requests', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 28, pp. 223-244.
- Platt, J. 1994, 'Social and Linguistic Constraints on Variation in the Use of Two Grammatical Variables in Singapore English', in J. Cheshire (ed.), *English around the World: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, Newcastle up Tyne.
- Postmes, T., Spears, R., and Lea, M. 1998, 'Breaching or Building Social Boundaries? SIDE-Effects of Computer-Mediated Communication', *Communication Research*, Vol. 25, No. 6, pp. 689-715.
- Postmes, T., Spears, R., and Lea, M. 2000, 'The Formation of Group Norms in Computer-Mediated Communication', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 341-371.
- Pratt, L. A., Wiseman, R. L., Cody, M. J. and Wendt, P. F. 1999, 'Interrogative Strategies and Information Exchange in Computer-Mediated Communication', *Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No. 1, pp. 46-64.
- Pratt, W. A. 1998, *Interrogative Strategies and Relationship Development in Computer-Mediated Communication (Email)*, Unpublished MA, California State University.
- Putnis, P. 1992, *March, Cultural Generalizations: Help or Hindrance?*, Paper presented at the International Conference on English for Professional Communication, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.
- Pye, L. W. 1992, *Chinese Negotitation Style: Commercial Approaches and Cultural Principles*, Quorum, Westport CT.
- Rao, S. 2002, 'The Skill Route to Cyberspace: India's Internet Experience' in S. Rao and B. C. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Cyberpath to Development in Asia: Issues and Challenges*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut.
- Redeker, G. and van Ingen, K. 2003, *Politeness and Hedging in Email Requests among Male and Female Friends*, Proceedings of the COSWL/IGALA Conference, Michigan State University.
- Reed, D. 2001, 'Making Conversation': *Sequential Integrity and the Local Management of Interaction on Internet Newsgroups*, Proceedings of the 34<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences.

Rogers, P. S. and Lee-Wong, S. M. 2003, 'Reconceptualizing Politeness to Accommodate Dynamic Tensions in Subordinate-to-Superior Reporting', *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 379-412.

Rose, K. R. 1994, 'On the Validity of Discourse Completion Tests in Non-Western Contexts', *Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 1-14.

Rubin, D. L. 1984, 'The Influence of Communicative Context on Stylistic Variation in Writing', in A. D. Pelligrini and T. Yawkey (eds.), *The Development of Oral and Written Language in Social Contexts*, Ablex, Norwood NJ.

Saeki, M. and O' Keefe, B. J. 1994, 'Refusals and Rejections: Designing Messages to Serve Multiple Goals', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 67-103.

Sanders, R. E. and Fitch, K. L. 2001, 'The Actual Practice of Compliance Seeking', *Communication Theory*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 263-289.

Sarantakos, S. 2005, *Social Research*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York.

Sasaki, M. 1998, 'Investigating EFL Students' Production of Speech Acts: A Comparison of Production Questionnaires and Role Plays', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 30, pp. 457-484.

Sbisa, M. 1995, 'Speech Act Theory', in J. Verschueren, J. Ostman, and J. Blommaert, (eds.), *Handbook of Pragmatics. Manual*, Benjamins, Philadelphia.

Schoop, M. and Quix, C. 2001, *Doc.Com: Combining Document and Communication Management for Negotiation Support in Business-to-Business Electronic Commerce*, Proceedings of the 34<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences.

Searle, J. R. 1969, *Speech Acts*, Cambridge University Press, London.

Searle, J. R. 1979, *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Shaw, D. F. 1997, 'Gay Men and Computer Communication: A Discourse of Sex and Identity in Cyberspace', in S. G. Jones (ed.), *Virtual Culture: Identity and Communication in Cyberspace*, SAGE, California.

Sheer, V. C. 2000, 'Conflict Processes in China' s International Export Trading: Impact of the Chinese Culture and the Trading Culture', *Intercultural Communication Studies*, Vol. 9, pp. 47-69.

Sheer, V. C. and Chen, L. 2003, 'Successful Sino-Western Business Negotiation: Participants' Accounts of National and Professional Cultures', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 40, No. 1, pp. 50-86.

Shoham, S. G. and Pinchevski, A. 1999, 'The Medium is the Barrier', *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, Issue 2.

Short, J. A., Williams, F., and Christie, B. 1976, *The Social Psychology of Telecommunication*, Wiley, New York.

Siegel, J., Dubrovsky, V., Kiesler, S., and McGuire, T. W. 1986, 'Group Processes in Computer-Mediated Communication', *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Vol. 37, pp. 157-187.

Sillince, J. A., McDonald, S., Lefang, B. and Frost, B. 1998, 'Email Adoption, Diffusion, Use and Impact within Small Firms: A Survey of UK Companies', *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 231-242.

Sinclair, J. M. and Coulthard, M. 1975, *Towards an Analysis of Discourse*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Sintupong, T. 1997, *Status, Needs and Problems of Internet Usage in Export Business*, Unpublished MA, Chulalongkorn University.

Smith, S. W., Cody, M., LoVette, S., and Canary, D. J. 1990, 'Self-Monitoring, Gender and Compliance-Gaining Goals', in M. J. Cody and M. L. McLaughlin (eds.), *The Psychology of Tactical Communication*, Multilingual Matters, Philadelphia.

Sproull, L. and Kiesler, S. 1991, *Connections: New Ways of Working in the Networked Organization*, The MIT Press, Massachusetts.

St John, M. J. 1996, 'Business is Booming: Business English in the 1990s', *English for Specific Purposes*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 3-18.

Stage, C. W. 1996, *An Examination of Organisational Communication Cultures in American Subsidiaries Doing Business in Thailand*, Unpublished PhD, Arizona State University.

Straus, S. 1997, 'Technology, Group Process, and Group Outcomes: Testing the Connections in Computer-Mediated and Face-to-Face Groups', *Human-Computer Interaction*, 12, pp. 227-266.

Strauss, J. and Hill, D. J. 2001, 'Consumer Complaints by Email: An Exploratory Investigation of Corporate Responses and Customer Reactions', *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 63-73.

Subramanian, S. 1999, *Design and Verification of Secure E-commerce Protocols*, Unpublished PhD, The Ohio State University.

Sullivan, M. A. 1998, 'Video Conferencing Revolutionizes International Carpet Trade at Domotex Show in Hannover, Germany', *Business America*, Vol. 119, No. 6, pp. 13-14.

Suzuki, S. 1994, *Transmission of Organizational Cultures in International Organizations: Impacts of Interpersonal Communication Patterns on Intergroup Coorientational States of Values and Beliefs*, Unpublished PhD, University of Minnesota.

Suzuki, S. 1997, 'Cultural Transmission in International Organizations: Impacts of Interpersonal Communication Patterns in Intergroup Contexts', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 147-180.

Swales, J. M. 1990, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Swangtoonsatic, C 2000, *Two Cultures on E-mail: Different Communicative Styles between Australians and Thais*, Unpublished MA, Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne.

Tan, G. 2004, *The Newly Industrialising Countries of Asia: Development and Change*, Eastern University Press, Singapore.

Taylor, S. 2001, 'Locating and Conducting Discourse Analytical Research', in M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, and S. J. Yates (eds.), *Discourse as Data: A Guide for Analysis*, Sage in association with The Open University, London.



- Tella, S. 1992, *Talking Shop via E-mail: A Thematic and Linguistic Analysis of Electronic Mail Communication*, Research Report 99, University of Helsinki.
- Thomas, J. 1997, 'Discourse in the Marketplace: The Making of Meaning in Annual Reports', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 47-66.
- Thompson, L. and Nadler, J. 2002, 'Negotiating via Information Technology: Theory and Application', *The Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 58, No. 1, 109-124.
- Tidwell, L. C. and Walther, J. B. 2002, 'Computer-Mediated Communication Effects on Disclosure, Impressions, and Interpersonal Evaluations: Getting to Know One Another a Bit at a Time', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 317-348.
- Tracy, K. 1990, 'The Many Faces of Facework', in H. Giles and W. P. Robinson (eds.), *Handbook of Language and Social Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Tracy, K., Craig, R. T., Smith, M., and Spisak, F. 1984, 'The Discourse of Requests: Assessment of a Compliance-Gaining Approach', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 10, No.4, pp. 513-538.
- Trosborg, A 1995, *Interlanguage Pragmatics: Requests, Complaints and Apologies*, Mouton de Gruyter, New York.
- Tsai, M. 2002, *The Presentation of Self in A Text-Based Virtual Environment: A Case Study of Tanet Elephant-Fan Association (TEA) on NTUEE Maxwell Bulletin Board System (BBS) in Taiwan*, Unpublished MA, Georgetown University.
- Turkle, S. 1984, *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit*, Simon & Schuster, New York.
- Turkle, S. 1995, *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*, Simon & Schuster, New York.
- Ulijin, J. M., Lincke, A., and Karakaya, Y. 2001, 'Non-Face-To-Fact International Business Negotiation: How is National Culture Reflected in this Medium?', *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 126-137.

Varner, I. I. 2000, 'The Theoretical Foundation for Intercultural Business Communication: A Conceptual Model', *Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 39-58.

Ventola, E. 1987, *The Structure of Social Interaction: A Systemic Approach to the Semiotics of Service Encounters*, Frances Pinter, London.

Voiskounsky, A. E. 1997, 'Telelogue Conversations', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Waldron, V. R. 1997, 'Toward a Theory of Interactive Conversational Planning', in J. O. Greene (ed.), *Message Production: Advances in Communication Theory*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.

Waldron, V. R. and Applegate, J. L. 1994, 'Interpersonal Construct Differentiation and Conversational Planning: An Examination of Two Cognitive Accounts for the Production of Competent Verbal Disagreement Tactics', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 3-35.

Waldron, V. R., Cegala, D. J., Sharkey, W. F., and Teboul, B. 1990, 'Cognitive and Tactical Dimensions of Conversational Goal Management', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, pp. 101-118.

Walther, J. B. 1992, 'Interpersonal Effects in Computer-Mediated Interaction', *Communication Research*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 52-90.  
Walther, J. B. 1993, 'Impression Development in Computer-Mediated Interaction', *Western Journal of Communication*, Vol. 57, pp. 381-398.

Walther, J. B. 1994, 'Anticipated Ongoing Interaction versus Channel Effects on Relational Communication in Computer-Mediated Interaction', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 473-501.

Walther, J. B. 1996, 'Computer-Mediated Communication: Impersonal, Interpersonal, and Hyperpersonal Interaction', *Communication Research*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 3-43.

Walther, J. B. 1997, 'Group and Interpersonal Effects in International Computer-Mediated Collaboration', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 342-369.

- Walther, J. B. and Tidwell, L. C. 1995, 'Nonverbal Cues in Computer-Mediated Communication, and the Effect of Chronemics on Relational Communication', *Journal of Organizational Computing*, Vol. 5, pp. 355-378.
- Walther, J. B., and D'Addario, K. P. 2001, 'The Impacts of Emoticons on Message Interpretation in Computer-Mediated Communication', *Social Science Computer Review*, Vol. 19, pp. 323-345.
- Watts, R. J. 2003, *Politeness*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Werkhofer, K. 1992, 'Traditional and Modern Views: the Social Constitution and the Power of Politeness' in R. Watts, S. Ide, and K. Ehlich (eds.), *Politeness in Language: Studies in its History, Theory and Practice*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Wick, N. B. 1997, *Speech Community in the Virtual World: The Case of Listserv*, Unpublished PhD, University of Washington.
- Wierzbicka, A. 1991, *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: The Semantics of Human Interaction*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Wignall, D. L. 1993, *Computer-Mediated Human Communication: The Identification of Verbal Orality in Written Discourse*, Unpublished PhD, University of Denver.
- Wilson, S. R. 1997, 'Developing Theories of Persuasive Message Production: The Next Generation', in J. O. Greene (ed.), *Message Production: Advances in Communication Theory*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.
- Wilson, S. R. and Kang, K. H. 1991, 'Communication and Unfulfilled Obligations', *Communication Research*, Vol. 18, No.6, pp. 799-825.
- Wilson, S. R. and Putnam, L. L. 1990, 'Interaction Goals in Negotiation' in J. A. Anderson (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 13*, Sage, New Berry Park.
- Wilson, S. R., Aleman, C. G., and Leatham, G. B. 1998, 'Identity Implications of Influence Goals: A Revised Analysis of Face-Threatening Acts and Application to Seeking Compliance with Same-Sex Friends', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 64-97.

Witmer, D. and Katzman, S. 1997, 'On-Line Smiles: Does Gender Make a Difference in the Use of Graphic Accents?', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Online Journal <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc>.

Woo, H. S. and Prud'homme, C. 1999, 'Cultural Characteristics Prevalent in the Chinese Negotiation Process', *European Business Review*, Vol. 99, pp. 313-322.

Yamada, H. 1997, 'Organisation in American and Japanese Meetings: Task versus Relationship', in F. Bargiela-Chiappini and S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Yate, J. and Orlikowski, W. 1993, *Knee-Jerk Anti-Loopism and Other E-mail Phenomena: Oral, Written, and Electronic Patterns in Computer-Mediated Communication*, Unpublished manuscript, MIT Sloan School of Management, Retrieved June 2, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://ccs.mit.edu/CCSWP150.html>.

Yates, J. and Orlikowski, W. J. 1992, 'Genres of Organizational Communication: A Structural Approach to Studying Communication and Media', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 299-326.

Yates, S. J. 2001, 'Researching Internet Interaction: Sociolinguistics and Corpus Analysis', in M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, and S. J. Yates (eds.), *Discourse as Data: A Guide for Analysis*, Sage in association with The Open University, London.

Yli-Jokipii, H. 1996, 'An Approach to Contrasting Languages and Cultures in the Corporate Context: Finnish, British, and American Business Letters and Telefax Messages', *Multilingua*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 305-327.

Young, L. 1994, *Crosstalk and Culture in Sino-American Communication*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Yule, G. 1996, *Pragmatics*, Oxford University Press, Hong Kong.

Zachry, M. 2000, 'Conceptualizing Communicative Practices in Organizations: Genre-Based Research in Professional Communication', *Business communication Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 4, pp. 95-101.

Zegarac, V. and Pennington, M. C., 2000, 'Pragmatic Transfer in Intercultural Communication', in H. Spencer-Oatey (ed.), *Culturally Speaking*, Continuum, New York.

Zhao, J. J. 2000, 'The Chinese Approach to International Business Negotiation', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 37, pp. 209-237.

Zhenhua, H. 1999, 'The Impact of Globalisation on English in Chinese Universities', in D. Graddol and U. H. Meinhof (eds.), *English in a Changing World*, The International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), Oxford.

Zhu, Y. 2000, 'Rhetorical Moves in Chinese Sales Genres, 1949 to the Present', *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 156-172.

# Appendix

## **Six simulations for Australian and Non-Thai Asian participants to interact with a Thai counterpart**

### *Simulation 1*

Instruction:

Welcome to the project. The following is situation 1. Please read the situation and first write a brief report telling me

1. WHAT you plan to write in your email to the person in this situation,
2. HOW you are going to write it and
3. WHY.

Then write your email after the brief report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 1

You are working as a trade officer in an international trading company called Global One (Australia). You are searching for bronze handicraft from other trading agents to supply to your customer. You have found an interesting Thai trading agent listed on the Webpage of the Department of Thai Export Promotion. You have never had business transaction with this agent before. You then decide to write an email to approach them asking for details of the product and prices as well as other necessary information. Please feel free to act or do anything in this situation. Here are the agent name and contact person:

Company name: Chevalier Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

Contact person: Khun Montri Teerap

end

## Simulation 2

Instruction:

Welcome to situation 2. Chevalier Trading has replied your email as attached herewith. Please read their email and situation 2 and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you plan to write in your email
2. HOW you are going to write (strategies)
3. WHY you write it that way

Then write your email after the plan and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

### Situation 2

After receiving Chevalier Trading (Thailand)'s first email, you consider the agent to be a reliable and creditable trading firm. However, you find their quoted prices are too high. You also want them to give you a 90-day credit on payment terms under letter of credit (LC). (Please ignore prices or details of products and website as they are not included in the simulated situation)

You then write an email to them accordingly. Please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

CHEVALIER TRADING (THAILAND)'S REPLY EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We thank you for your email and appreciate your interest in our high quality products.

For the details of our bronze handicraft, we would like to invite you to visit our particular webpage at:  
<http://www.ChevalierTradingTh.bronzeware>.

There, you will find all you may want to know about our bronze products including sizes in all measurement and their pictures. Prices quoted in Aus\$ are attached herewith this email.

However, C&F and CIF prices will be available once we know port of destination and we ask for payment under LC at sight.

We think our products will be just what your customers want and we look forward to the opportunity of doing business with you.

Best regards,

Montri

Chevalier Trading (Thailand)

### Simulation 3

Instruction :

Welcome to situation 3. Chevalier Trading (Thailand) has replied to your email as attached herewith. Please read their email and situation 3 and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you plan to write
2. HOW you are going to write
3. WHY you write it that way

Then write your email and send it back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 3

Upon receiving email response from Chevalier Trading (Thailand) regarding the price and payment terms, you consider that it is a good deal and decide to make a purchase order (Please ignore details).

At the same time, you also want to sell electric heaters to them. Write an email to them accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

CHEVALIER TRADING (THAILAND)' S REPLY EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Dear ,

We thank you for visiting our webpage and for your interest in our bronzeware.

However, while the credit term of 90 days under LC is possible and we appreciate your order, we feel we must point out that our quoted prices have already been cut to the minimum possible and that the fine quality brozeware like ours are unobtainable elsewhere at these rates.

We hope you will find our terms satisfactory, and we look forward to your first order.

Also, our overseas customer wants to purchase electric heaters and i am looking for a potential supplier. Therefore, if you have the product, i would like you to send your catalogue to us via email. I appreciate that if you kindly send the details of your products and the FOB prices in US\$ to us urgently and i hope we can deal a good business together in the future.

Yours Faithfully,

Montri

Chevalier Trading (Thailand)



### Simulation 4

Instruction :

Welcome to situation 4. Chevalier Trading (Thailand) has replied your email as attached herewith.

Please read their email and situation 4 and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you plan to write in your email
2. HOW you are going to write (writing strategies)
3. WHY you write that way

Then write your email after the report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 4

After reading Chevalier Trading (Thailand)'s email, reply to them expressing your different view on the payment terms. You are willing to give them 90-day credit on payment terms under letter of credit (LC). However, you accept their requested price and you urge them to place an order. Write an email to them accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

CHEVALIER TRADING'S REPLY EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Dear ,

Thank you for making an order of our bronze products.

Regarding your electric heaters, we have carefully considered your price and detail of the product. Unfortunately, we can only consider placing an order if you give us price reduction of 10%. We would also appreciate it if you could consider giving us a 120 days credit term under LC. Please understand that our customer in USA requires the credit term, so we ask for your cooperation in order to deal business in long run.

Regards,

Montri

Chevalier Trading (Thailand)

### Simulation 5

Instruction :

Welcome to situation 5. Chevalier Trading has replied your email as attached herewith. Please read their email and situation 5 and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write
2. HOW you are going to write your email - writing strategies
3. WHY you write it that way

Then write your email after the report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 5

After Chevalier Trading has agreed to make a purchase contract of electric heaters from you, your supplier informs you today that they are having a problem in the production line and hence can not ship the electric heaters on the appointed date. Moreover, your supplier is also asking for a change in the payment terms from 90-day credit to at sight under LC due to some current financial difficulty. You then write an email to Chevalier Trading accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

CHEVALIER TRADING'S REPLY EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

Thank you for yr email. We have contacted our US customer and we decide to purchase electric heaters from you under the agreed conditions. Kindly arrange the first shipment of 5 x 20'containers to Atlanta on 16/1/2003. Details will be forwarded to you and LC will be issued accordingly.

Regards,

Montri

Chevalier Trading (Thailand)

### Simulation 6

Instruction:

Welcome to situation 6. Please read the situation and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write
2. HOW you are going to write your email - writing strategies
3. WHY you write it that way

Then write your email after the report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 6

You have received an email from your customer saying that the bronze handicrafts shipped to them are short of amount and many bear defects. You have bought these bronze handicrafts from Chevalier Trading. Short amount shipment is possible for you to talk with your customer but defect merchandise is unacceptable. Write email to Chevalier Trading accordingly.

Please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

CHEVALIER TRADING'S EMAIL ATTACHED HERE;

Dear ,

Regarding the electric heaters, we will also contact our buyer for such changes. Will reply soon.

Regards,

Montri T.

### **Six simulations for Thai participants to interact with an Australian counterpart**

#### Simulation 1

Instruction:

Welcome to the project. The following is situation 1.

Please read the situation and first write a brief PLAN telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write such as asking for price deduction, etc
2. HOW you are going to write such as short/long, types of words, etc

3. WHY you write it that way - because you want to be polite, keep relationship, gain business profits, emphasising your role, expressing your...., etc

Then write your EMAIL after the brief plan and send BOTH back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 1

You are working as a trade officer in an international trading company named Chevalier Trading (Thailand). Your company trades on a variety of products including Thai bronze handicrafts.

Your company has its own web site containing details and pictures of products on  
- <http://www.ChevalierTrading.co.th> -

You are approached by an international trading firm in Australia called Global One (Australia). Please reply accordingly and feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

GLOBAL ONE (AUSTRALIA)'S EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Chevalier Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

To:

Hello

I with Global One (Australia)-International Trading Company.

I am searching for Thai bronze handicraft products.

While searching, I saw your company name listed on the web page of Department of Thai Export.

Please feel free to contact me or direct other trading agents/ colleges to supply information of Bronze handy crafts.

If this is your business or your friends,

Please send Descripton of products (Images-Text)

Along with competative pricing.

All Commissions will be paid in a timely manner.

Thank you for your time, may this be continued and profitable for all.

Thank You

Mrs Elizabth Blair

Sales Manager

Global One (Australia)

<http://globalone.com>

## Simulation 2

Instruction:

Welcome to the project. The following is situation 2. Please read the situation and first write a brief report telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write such as asking for price deduction, etc
2. HOW you are going to write such as short/long, types of words, etc
3. WHY you write it that way - because you want to be polite, keep relationship, gain business profits, emphasising your role, expressing your..., etc

Then write your email after the brief report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

### Situation 2

After reading Global One (Australia)'s response email, you reply expressing your different idea towards the price. However, you are willing to give them a 90-day credit on payment terms under letter of credit (LC) and you urge them to place an order.

At the same time, you are also searching for electric heaters to supply to your customer in the US from them and need some detail of their heaters as well as other necessary information. Write an email to them accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

GLOBAL ONE (AUSTRALIA)'S EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Chevalier Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

To:

Hello ,

I have had a good look at your website, you have an impressive range of Bronze products on offer. After viewing the pricing shown on your site I must ask you if these are the lowest prices that you can offer. The clients that I am acting for have been in this business for some time and have informed me that you may have published your prices above the minimum that you would accept for ongoing, large orders. My clients are requesting that you issue us a more competitive price list or more appropriate discount than 10 % on your prices. We would also like to arrange a 90-day credit on payment, with a letter of credit (LC) from a prime bank.

Let us come to some agreement, as I am sure that this venture will prove to be profitable and satisfying for both your selves and us.

Thank You and Regards

Mrs Elizabeth Blair

Global One (Australia)

### Simulation 3

Instruction:

Welcome to the project. The following is situation 3. Please read the situation and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you plan to write in your email - asking, etc
2. HOW you are going to write - short/long, types of words, etc
3. WHY you do it that way - because you want to be polite, keep relationship, business profits, negotiation ground, etc

Then write your email after the brief report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 3

After reading Global One (Australia)'s email and looking at their website regarding the electric heaters, you think the prices need to be adjusted and you also want them to give you a 120-day credit on payment terms under LC. You then write an email to them accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

GLOBAL ONE (AUSTRALIA)'S EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Hello ,

Regarding your bronze products.

After consideration of your 90 credit acceptance my clients have agreed to your price and discount.

A complete order list is attached with this email.

Please forward appropriate documentation to commence the transaction process.

I am also interested in providing you with our Electric Heaters that we currently have on offer.

These fine appliances are Australian made with 1 Year warranties and International standards.

Our company can also offer you the same 90 Day Credit on L/C.

Please view the information shown on our web site for more complete heater product specs.

<http://www.globalone.com/electrical/index.htm>

I look forward to your reply.

Regards

Elizabeth

### Simulation 4

#### Instruction:

Welcome to the project. The following is situation 4. Please read the situation and first write a brief report telling me

1. WHAT you plan to write in your email in this situation,
2. HOW you are going to write it and
3. WHY

Then write your email after the brief report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 4

Upon receiving email response from Global One (Australia) regarding the price and payment terms, you consider it is a good deal and decide to make a purchase order. You then write an email to them accordingly and please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

GLOBAL ONE (AUSTRALIA)'S EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Hello ,

We have decided to accept your request of price reduction.

The price changes are under the condition that you are prepared to make ongoing orders, a minimum of 4 x 20' container per month for 6 months, would allow me to give you the price reduction. However it is important to note that we can offer you only 90 days credit with L/C. This is the maximum term for credit that we can offer.

Please consider the fact that we have generously accepted your prices for bronze handicrafts.

I am looking forward to your reply.

Elizabeth

### Simulation 5

#### Instruction:

Welcome to situation 5. Please read the situation and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write such as asking for price deduction, etc
2. HOW you are going to write your email - writing strategies

3. WHY you write it that way - because you want to be polite, keep relationship, gain business profits, emphasising your role,etc

Then write your email after the brief report and send them back to me. Kindly complete the task within one week after you have received this situation or earlier if you can possibly do so.

#### Situation 5

You have made a purchase order to buy electric heaters from Global One (Australia) and today they have sent you the below email. Whereas other changes are possible for you to talk with your customer, any change in the payment term is UNACCEPTABLE. Write email to them accordingly. Please feel free to act or do anything in this situation.

GLOBAL ONE (AUSTRALIA)'S EMAIL ATTACHED HERE:

Hello ,

After a recent communication with our supplier of electric heaters they have informed me that the price reductions you have requested for their product would only be available to you 90 days credit on L/C is not available at these prices. L/C at sight is acceptable.

Due to a large number of orders, the electrical heater supplier informed me that shipping date must be ammended. I have confidence in their ability to deliver the product as soon as the back log of orders are filled.

The electric heater supplier has assured me that the prices you have requested can be met, providing that the payment is L/C at sight.

I will inform you of the soonest delivery time asap.

Thank you for your patience.

Elizabeth Blair

#### Simulation 6

Instruction:

Welcome to situation 6. Please read the situation and first write your plan telling me

1. WHAT you are going to write such as asking for price deduction,etc
2. HOW you are going to write your email - writing strategies
3. WHY you write it that way - because you want to be polite, keep relationship, gain business profits, emphasising your role,etc