

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

With an attempt to investigate, compare and contrast move structures and politeness strategies in English business e-mail correspondence in internal communication between Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations in order to provide some suggestions for writing effective intercultural business e-mail messages, this research addresses three questions: 1) what are the features of business e-mail messages written by Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations?; 2) are there any differences in move structures and linguistic realizations in these English e-mail messages? If yes, - can the differences be explained in terms of variability in culture e.g. low and high context cultures? If no, - what are the reasons for that? Is it possible that business discipline or corporate culture prevails over the national culture of e-mail composers?; 3) do the business e-mail messages contain any recognizable electronic discourse and exhibit a new genre of international English written communication?

This chapter presents the findings of the study conforming to answer the research questions. In order to understand the nature of texts it is necessary to study the way texts are related to their medium of communication in special interest settings, this chapter starts with the features of business e-mail messages. The second part exhibits the similarities and differences in move structures and politeness strategies in the body of English e-mail messages written by Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations. The last part reveals the attitudes of the informants towards business e-mail writing. Consequently, this research can conclude that the business e-mail messages contain a recognizable electronic discourse and exhibit a new genre of international English written communication.

4.2 Features of Business E-mail Messages

Nowadays, e-mail may be the most important, unique method for written business communication. Of all the functions on the internet, it is the most prevalent and perhaps the most powerful. Research in business settings reveals that more employees are now required to perform a larger share of correspondence themselves using the email (Louhiala-Salminen, 1996; Gains, 1999; Gimenez, 2000). People find it familiar and safe because e-mail is similar in many respects to writing letters, but more convenient. Due to its advantages, communication via e-mail seems to be especially indispensable to business organizations. Many of the business organizations have developed their own in-house e-mail systems both for local and international communications.

The features of business e-mail messages being discussed here are the important components of the e-mail messages. An e-mail message can be analyzed into seven core elements: (1) the sender's name, (2) the receiver's name, (3) the subject line (4) the date and time, (5) the opening salutation that introduces the body of the message, (6) the body of the message, and (7) the closing salutation and sender identification. The sender's name, the receiver's name, the subject line, and the date and time are the obligatory structural elements. Their order can vary depending on the e-mail program and whether the message has been sent or received. The body of the message including opening and closing salutation is what most people consider the actual "message" itself. However, the other components of the message can also be tiny gems of communication.

4.2.1 Sender's Name

The e-mail address from which the message has been sent is placed automatically. Most business people set their e-mail username in their e-mail system and leave it that way. It reflects the ongoing identity that one wishes to present online. The name chosen usually is one's full name.

4.2.2 Receiver's Name

The e-mail address(es) to which the message is being sent is typed manually or selected from an address book. An e-mail message can have multiple addressees, listed at the top of the header, and their circulation may be fixed by particular distribution lists, tied to a particular institution or a department within it or tied to a particular group of network users. Below the receiver's name (To:.....), the optional elements available are the person(s) who are to receive a carbon copy of the message (Cc:). The sender may use the "blind carbon copy" (bcc.) option, in the case that the sender does not want the prime addressee to know whom the message is circulated to. Business people make extensive use of the carbon copy facility as a way to bring people to witness the event and as a response to the new demands of "accountability" in international business communication (Gimenez, 2005). The receiver(s) of carbon copy is usually knowledgeable enough in the matters being talked about to be able to contribute to making the most appropriate decision. However, in the opening, only the prime receiver(s) is greeted, not the witness(es).

4.2.3 Subject Line

The subject line is used to summarize or introduce the major purpose contained in the body of the message. The use of "re:" for reference and "fw:" for forwarded in the subject line can be an interesting dynamic interchange between e-mail correspondents. It introduces the series of embedded e-mail messages which is attached below. The optional elements are an attachment symbol appearing if a file is attached to the message and a priority symbol showing if a priority is given to the message.

4.2.4 Dateline

The date and time when the message is sent is inserted automatically by the e-mail software. The position of the dateline in incoming e-mail messages varies depending on the software.

4.2.5 Opening Salutation

Similar to writing letters, different salutations convey slightly different emotional tones and levels of intimacy. Here is a sample of some opening salutations:

- *Dear* is a somewhat formal opening, highly reminiscent of letter writing. It is appropriate for respectful formality, especially in business setting.

- *Hello* is a more causal, friendly greeting, with a hint of politeness and respect, a very handy and all-purpose opener.

- *Hi* is a slightly more casual, friendlier greeting than “Hello”. It is probably not appropriate for the first e-mail exchange with a stranger.

- Addressing the reader with his/her name is a “let’s get to the point” opening with a hidden ordering tone. The person who addresses his/her reader with his/her name usually has a higher status than the reader. Sometimes there is an almost ominous tone to this greeting, as if the sender is trying to get the reader’s attention in preparation for some unpleasant discussion.

- No opening salutation at all at the beginning of the message would seem to indicate a convention for use of this system that may have evolved from the very clear heading format. In an ongoing, back-and-forth correspondence, there may be no greetings at all throughout a string of exchanged e-mails. Although each e-mail message looks like a letter that traditionally starts off with an opening salutation, in many cases it is a segment of an ongoing conversation.

4.2.6 Body of the Message

The body of the message is the most complex component of the e-mail. Skills and styles of writing e-mail messages affect the relationship of the correspondents, and the relationship influences the quality of the writing. The structure of the e-mail body reflects one’s cognitive, personality style, and situation, and influences how the reader reacts to the writer. One can reply to an e-mail with the original message included in the text by hitting “reply”. E-mail can also be forwarded to other users, possibly with a quick note added at the top. People who are

compulsive may strive for well organized and logically constructed messages with few spelling or grammatical errors.

Messages can vary widely in length, organization, flow of thought, sentence structure, grammar sophistication, complexity of vocabulary, spelling errors, the use of abbreviations, emotion icons, and other unique keyboard characters. Spelling errors, punctuation ignorance, and all lowercase characters seem to be a common characteristic of e-mail messages. None seems to be concerned about it as long as it does not cause misunderstanding.

Like any subculture, the world of e-mailing has developed a unique language. This means using ordinary words and first personal pronouns, eliminating wordiness, long lead-ins such as “I am writing this e-mail to inform you that...”, and wordy phrases “due to the fact that...”. On the positive side, the beauty of e-mail is that people have the opportunity to contact people from around the world. The challenge, however, is that people from around the world have different customs for conversing and developing relationships. Despite the cultural differences, the delight of doing international e-mail is to discover that there is a universal e-mail language, for example, pls. (please), yr (your), rgds (regards), cud (could), asap (as soon as possible), btw (by the way), fyi (for your information), and :) (smile).

4.2.7 Closing Salutation and Sender Identification

Whereas the opening salutation is the way people start, the closing salutation is the way they exit from their message. A contrast between the opening and closing salutations may be significant. Many times, it was found that closing salutations were not aligned with opening salutations. “Best regards”, “Regards” or other similar closing salutations were rather safe, all-purpose tools borrowed from the world of postal mail but less formal.

Almost invariably, the sender’s name follows the closing salutation, which demonstrates how the closing salutation is intrinsically connected to the identity of the sender. Leaving out the closing salutation and/or sender’s name may be an omission with meaning. The ending could appear especially bureaucratic or

impersonal if the person inserts his signature block and nothing else. Many e-mail systems offer the option of creating a signature file that will be placed automatically at the bottom of the message unless that feature is turned off. Business people usually place factual or identifying information into that file such as their full name, position, institutional affiliation, postal address, phone number, e-mail address, etc.

4.3 Move Structures

The most common pragmatic function of business correspondence is persuasion (Vergaro, 2004), in other words, getting the addressee to act in some way. Communicative purposes affect the choice of medium. Ghadessy and Webster (1988) regarded business letters as a genre of persuasive writing and specified three basic types of letter, namely informative, requesting, and directive. As for e-mail, this present study provides some evidence consistent with Ziv (1996) and Akar and Louhiala-Salminen (1999) who reported that e-mail, either initiate or respond to communication, often associates with “giving information” and “making a request” (for information). Strategic linguistic choices can be a significant predictor of persuasive success because different people require different strategies to achieve their communicative purposes. At the macro-linguistic level, rhetorical structures can be explored using the notion of “move”. Interpreting the rhetorical structure of the e-mail messages highlights the cognitive aspect of language organization since specialist writers seem to be consistent in the way they organize their overall message in a particular genre. The business e-mail messages in this research are composed of seven moves as follows:

Move 1 Opening Salutation

Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain

Step 1 Referring to the event / previous contact

or Step 2 Acknowledging the existence of the previous mail

Move 3 Introducing Purposes

Step 1 Providing information / Responding to the previous mail

and/or Step 2 Introducing the offer

and/or Step 3 Requesting

and/or Step 4 Enquiring

Move 4 Attaching Documents

Move 5 Soliciting Response

Move 6 Ending Positively

Move 7 Closing Salutation

The present study includes the opening and closing to the move structure since having or not having both the opening and the closing or either of them has some implications. No opening salutation at all at the beginning of the message may indicate a convention for use of e-mail that may have evolved from the very clear heading format. In an ongoing, back-and-forth correspondence, there may be no greetings at all throughout a string of exchanged e-mails. Leaving out the closing salutation and/or sender's name may be an omission with meaning. The ending could appear especially bureaucratic or impersonal if the person inserts his signature block and nothing else.

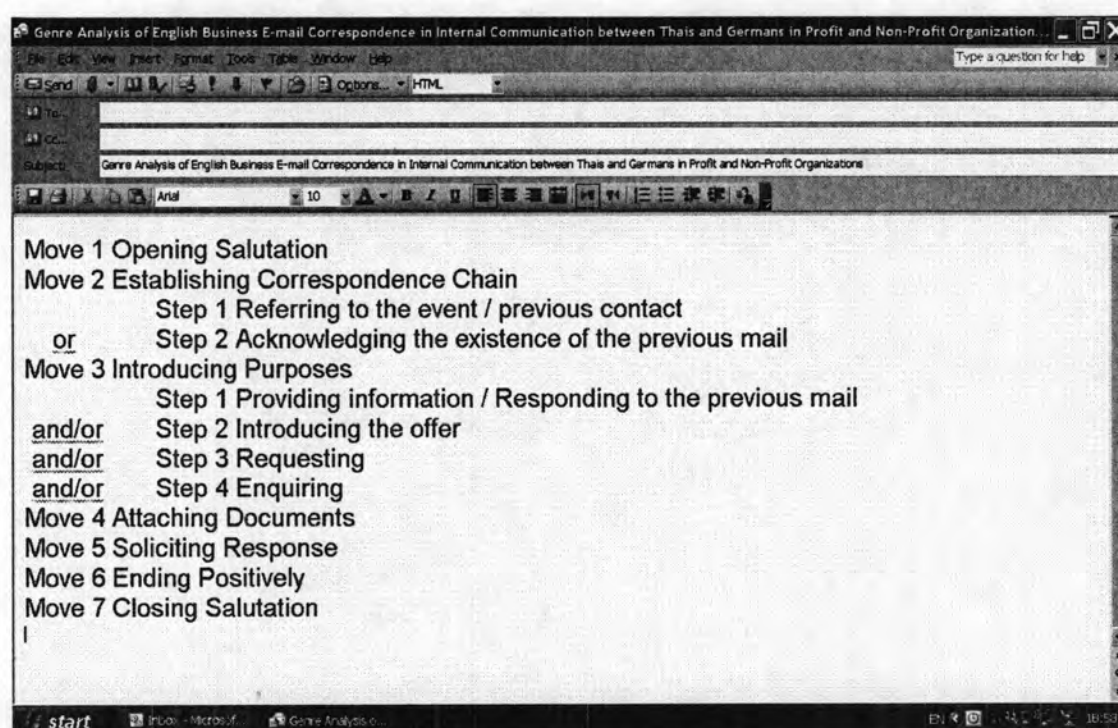
The moves were not made obligatory in order to allow for flexibility. The rhetorical structure in business e-mail messages is flexible. The moves in the body of the message can recur more than once and do not always occur linearly in these positions. Some messages contained almost every move while the others had only a few. The writers may choose to omit a particular move or vary the order of the moves or steps to suit their particular rhetorical purpose. Innovation is needed in emerging business situations, as is also the case in the actual business world.

Table 4.1: Definition of the moves

Move	Definition
1. Opening Salutation	The writer identifies the target and invites the target to read the letter.
2. Establishing Correspondence Chain	The writer furthers business relations by referring to the previous contact or acknowledges the existence of the previous mail.
3. Introducing Purposes	The writer introduces the purposes of the message using individual strategy to have the reader act.
4. Attaching Documents	The writer lists documents attached with the message.
5. Soliciting Response	The writer encourages the reader to respond in some way.

Move	Definition
6. Ending Positively	The writer ends the message with goodwill.
7. Closing Salutation	The writer closes the message in a conventional manner and signs his or her name in a respectful manner, thus claiming ownership of the message.

Figure 4.1 Components of an e-mail message



A sample of e-mail messages in each category is given below. The symbol // (double slashes) divides the boundary of each move and the / (single slash) separates the steps within the move.

A message written by Thai staff in a profit organization (PTH3)

Von (From): Thai secretary
Gesendet (Sent): Montag (Monday),
 8. September 2003 10:29 – *Automatically inserted* } Structural Component
An (To): German secretary
Betreff (Subject): Hotel Reservation

Dear Ms. (Surname),//

refer to your hotel reservation at Hilton Hotel by email dated 29 August 2003,// I have contacted the hotel and found that the email address is the old one. It doesn't work anymore.// I have already made the reservation for Mr. (Surname) and Mr. (Surname) as the attached detail below.// After I receive the reservation confirmation, I will send you by fax.//

any questions, please feel free to contact me.//

Best regards,//

(Name Surname)
COMPANY
 Position
 Office address
 Tel.
 Fax.
 Email:

Sender Identification

Move 1 Opening Salutation

Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain
 Step 1 Referring to the previous contact

Move 3 Introducing Purposes
 Step 1 Providing Information

Move 4 Attaching Documents
 Move 3 Step 1 Providing Information

Move 5 Soliciting Response

Move 7 Closing Salutation

This message was written by a Thai secretary in a long-established German subsidiary in Thailand. The purpose of this message was to provide information to a German secretary in the same organization. This message was sent via German e-mail system because the structural elements of this message displayed in German. This message consisted of almost every move, except Move 6 Ending Positively. The opening and closing salutations reflected distant relationship between the correspondents. Move 2 shows that the correspondents have been contacted regarding this matter before. The writer provided detailed information in the attachment and ended the message with Move 5 Soliciting Response which could be implied that the writer required the reader's response. The sender identification in this message seems to be the signature block placed automatically at the bottom of the message.

A message written by a German staff in a profit organization (PGR7)

<p>From: German Merchandiser Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2004 5:15 PM To: Thai Coordinator Cc: Co-workers Subject:</p>	}	Structural Component
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Dear (Name),//

Move 1 Opening Salutation

I contacted a company in France called "(name of the company)" by E-mail.

Move 3 Introducing Purposes
 Step 1 Providing Information

Yesterday I got a call from (Name Surname) (Tel. No.) who was interested in 2 tons of baby corn. I told her that we do not have any stock right now but she could contact PP. However, 2 tons is quite a bit. She actually wanted to send me the specification she needs but did not do so on Friday anymore./

Please contact her on Monday and check out what she needs. This might be interesting./ The E-mail address I sent to is: (e-mail address).//

Move 3 Introducing Purposes
 Step 3 Requesting
 Step 1 Providing Information

Regards,//

Move 7 Closing Salutation

(Name) - Sender Identification

This message was written by a German merchandiser in a trading company. The purpose of this message was to make a request. This message contained only three moves, namely Move 1 Opening Salutation, Move 3 Introducing Purposes and Move 7 Closing Salutation. The opening and closing salutations convey that the correspondents are familiar with each other. In this message, the writer provided the information signaling the coming request and simply ended the message with additional information that could facilitate the reader in doing her favor.

A message written by a German staff in a non-profit organization (NPGR7)

<p>From: German Secretary Sent: Monday, October 27, 2003 5:38 PM To: Thai Contract Coordinator Cc: German Senior Expert Subject: AW: Your Tentative Schedule during 17-18.11.03 in Bangkok</p>	}	Structural Component
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Dear (Ms Name Surname)//

Move 1 Opening Salutation

Thank you for your mail and your kind help to make the hotel reservation for (Mr Surname).//

Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain
Step 1 Acknowledging the existence of the previous mail

He will arrive in Bangkok by TG 0316 on 15 November at 05:35 a.m. He will leave from Bangkok by LH 0773 on 18 November at 23:10 o'clock (11:10 p.m.)//

Move 3 Introducing Purposes
Step 1 Providing Information

It would be very glad if you could send a pick up service to the airport from your office for (Mr Surname).//

Move 3 Introducing Purposes
Step 3 Requesting

Thank you in advance.//

Move 6 Ending Positively

With kind regards//
(Name Surname)

Move 7 Closing Salutation

Organization
Address

Sender Identification

Tel.:
Fax:
e-mail:

This message was written by a German secretary in a non-profit organization. The distant relationship between the correspondents was expressed through the opening and closing salutations. The purpose of this message was to make a request. This message is a follow-up message. The writer acknowledged the existence of the previous mail concerning hotel reservation. In this message, the writer provided the itinerary of her boss to the addressee and then requested the addressee to find someone to pick her boss up at the airport. The writer ended the message positively

with thanks. The contact address preset by the writer was inserted automatically at the bottom of the message.

A message written by a Thai staff in a non-profit organization (NPTH16)

<p>From: Thai Project Manager To: German Project Manager Cc: Visitor Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2006 6:49 PM Subject: Visit of (Mr. Name) to Southeast Asia</p>	}	Structural Component
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Dear (Dr. Surname),//

Move 1 Opening Salutation

With reference to the message below,// I am writing to ask if you wish to invite (Mr. Surname) to participate in any of your programmes in the Philippines./ According to his recent e-mail to (Name), he will be free from 4th to 17th of March. The Malaysia project has invited him to attend programmes from 11th to 12th March and the Thailand project will invite him for a two-day workshop on the Actual Liberal Issues in Politics from 14th to 15th March./

Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain
 Step 1 Referring to the previous mail
 Move 3 Introducing Purposes
 Step 4 Enquiring
 Step 1 Providing Information

If you wish to invite (Mr. Surname) to the Philippines, kindly let me have your preference dates and also the topic of the talk as early as possible.//

Move 3 Introducing Purposes
 Step 3 Requesting

Thank you in advance for your kindness and cooperation. I look forward to your positive and early response.//

Move 6 Ending Positively

Regards,/
 (Name)

Move 7 Closing Salutation

<p>Dr. Name Surname Position Organization Office address Tel., Mobile, Fax., E-mail:</p>	}	Sender Identification
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Forwarded message:

Dear (Mr. Surname),

we have long considered inviting (Mr. Surname) to our region and I have now secured a slot from him in March 2006. The Malaysia project would like to invite him to attend programmes over the weekend of the 11th and 12th of March in Kuala Lumpur. Before and after that he has about a week's time to visit other countries. Please respond to this mail and to (Dr. Name) in particular (since I will be on leave after 6th of December) about whether and when you would like to arrange programmes with him in your project countries.

(Mr. Surname) has made it very clear that

- a) he would have to leave the region on the 16th of March
- b) the respective project country has to cover the costs for airfare and local travel costs. The intercontinental flight would have to be shared by all inviting parties.

Best regards

Name Surname

Position
Organization

This message was written by a Thai project manager in a non-profit organization promoting liberal democracy. The purpose of this message was to make an enquiry and a request. The relationship between the correspondents is distant. The message is very formal. It includes almost every move, except Move 4 Attaching Documents and Move 5 Soliciting Response. The writer established the correspondence chain by referring to the previous mail before introducing purposes. Ending the message with thanks and expectation for the response from the addressee functioned as a post request. The sender identification was programmed to appear automatically at the end of the message.

The overall patterns of moves in the sample e-mail messages were compared in relation to 1) the nationalities of the e-mail composers, 2) the types of organization where the messages were obtained, and 3) the intersection of national and corporate cultures of the e-mail composers. The occurrence of the moves in the messages

written by Thais was compared with those written by Germans as shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 Comparison of the occurrence of the moves by nationalities

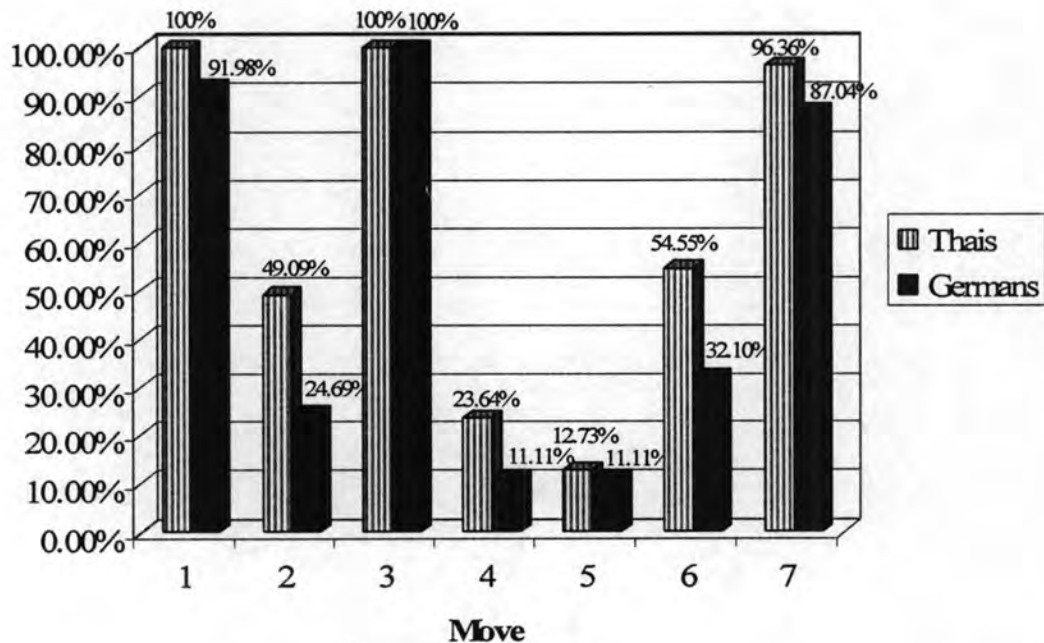


Figure 4.2 reflects that the moves in the messages written by Germans occurred less often than those written by Thais, especially Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain, Move 4 Attaching Documents and Move 6 Ending Positively. The absence of Move 2 indicated that Germans frequently directed to the point of discussion while the omission of Move 6 implied that they quickly left the discussion after the purposes of their messages were introduced. Some differences in Move 1 Opening Salutation and Move 7 Closing Salutation denoted that Thais never ignored the opening salutations. Although Germans did not always pay attention to the opening and closing salutations, they showed concern for the importance of the opening salutation more than the closing. Move 5 Soliciting Response was seldom found in the e-mail messages because the messages were exchanged within the organization and the sender and the receiver are colleagues. Their relationship is an action drive by itself as the staff realizes that their response can affect future collaboration.

To highlight the influence of the corporate cultures, Figure 4.3 displays the comparison of the occurrence of the moves in the messages from the two types of organization; profit and non-profit.

Figure 4.3 Comparison of the occurrence of the moves by organizations

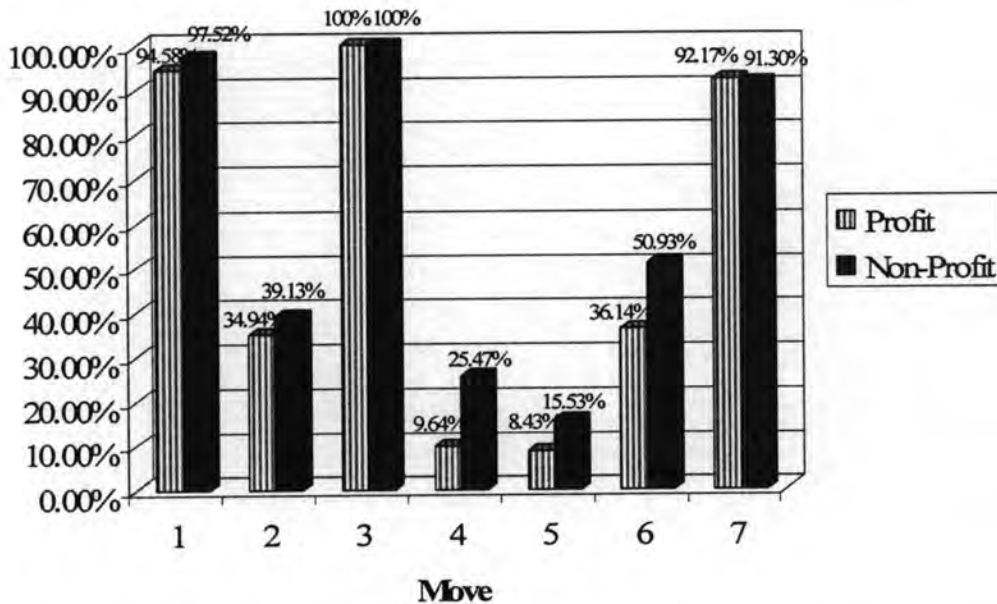


Figure 4.3 shows that the messages from non-profit organizations comprised almost every move at a higher degree of frequency, except Move 3 Introducing Purposes which is obligatory in every message and Move 7 Closing Salutation. There were some differences between the messages in profit and non-profit organizations in Move 1 Opening Salutation, Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain and Move 7 Closing Salutation. The major differences appeared in Move 4 Attaching Documents, Move 5 Soliciting Response, and Move 6 Ending Positively. The staff in non-profit organization frequently attached some documents to the messages because the nature of their business required detailed information. The more occurrence of Move 1, Move 2, and Move 5 in the messages from non-profit organizations may be influenced by the convention of letter writing which remained in this type of organization. The less occurrence of Move 7 was influenced mainly by the Germans in non-profit organizations who are superiors in the organizations and therefore they mostly ended the messages with the sender identification only without the closing salutation.

The comparison of the occurrence of moves regarding both national and corporate cultures of the e-mail composers is shown in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4 Comparison of the occurrence of the moves by nationalities and organizations

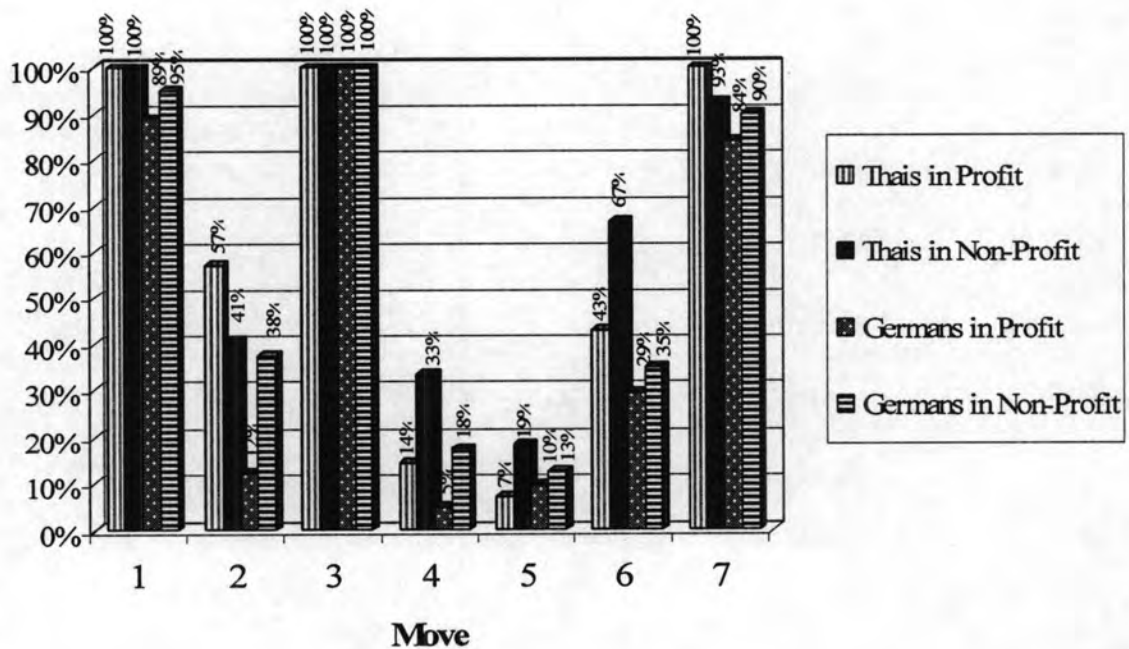


Figure 4.4 exhibits the similarities between the messages written by Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations in Move 1 Opening Salutation, Move 3 Introducing Purposes, Move 5 Soliciting Response, and Move 7 Closing Salutation. The differences, however, are appealing that Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain and Move 4 Attaching documents seldom existed in the e-mail messages written by Germans in profit organizations whereas there was a dominance of Move 4 and Move 6 Ending Positively in the message written by Thai in non-profit organizations. The occurrence of each move and its linguistic realization is discussed in details in the next section.

4.4 Occurrence of the Moves and their Linguistic Realization

This section describes the occurrence of the moves and their linguistic realization in details. In the first part, Move 1 Opening Salutation is discussed together with Move 7 Closing Salutation. The findings of the moves in the body of the messages and their linguistic realizations are discussed in the second part. The analysis of the e-mail messages is displayed move by move through two tables in the same manner. The first table presents the numbers and the percentages of the move occurrence by the organizations of the e-mail composers and by the nationalities of the e-mail composers in the second table. The columns "total" in the first table reveal the differences between the two types of organization and those in the second table display the differences between Thais and Germans. The other columns provide the details under each main category.

4.4.1 Opening and Closing Salutations

Salutations are important parts in opening and closing of an e-mail message. Opening and closing salutations in each e-mail message varied depending on the status and relationship of the correspondents and the culture of the organizations.

Table 4.2: Move 1 Opening Salutation and Move 7 Closing Salutation by Organizations

Move	Profit Organizations			Non-Profit Organizations		
	Thais (84)	Germans (82)	Total (166)	Thais (81)	Germans (80)	Total (161)
Move 1	(84) 100.00%	(73) 89.02%	(157) 94.58%	(81) 100.00%	(76) 95.00%	(157) 97.52%
No Move 1	() 0.00%	(9) 10.98%	(9) 5.42%	() 0.00%	(4) 5.00%	(4) 2.48%
Move 7	(84) 100.00%	(69) 84.15%	(153) 92.17%	(75) 92.59%	(72) 90.00%	(147) 91.30%
No Move 7	() 0.00%	(13) 15.85%	(13) 7.83%	(6) 7.41%	(8) 10.00%	(14) 8.70%

Interestingly, closing salutations were omitted more frequently than opening salutations. The analysis regarding the types of organization indicated that

the opening salutation was excluded by 5.42% in profit organizations and by 2.48% in non-profit ones. The staff in profit organizations dropped the closing salutation by 7.83% while 8.70 % of the staff in non-profit ones did so.

Table 4.3: Move 1 Opening Salutation and Move 7 Closing Salutation by Nationalities

Move	Thais			Germans		
	Profit (84)	Non-Profit (81)	Total (165)	Profit (82)	Non-Profit (80)	Total (162)
Move 1	(84) 100.00%	(81) 100.00%	(165) 100.00%	(73) 89.02%	(76) 95.00%	(149) 91.98%
No Move 1	() 0.00%	() 0.00%	() 0.00%	(9) 10.98%	(4) 5.00%	(13) 8.02%
Move 7	(84) 100.00%	(75) 92.59%	(159) 96.36%	(69) 84.15%	(72) 90.00%	(141) 87.04%
No Move 7	() 0.00%	(6) 7.41%	(6) 3.64%	(13) 15.85%	(8) 10.00%	(21) 12.96%

Table 4.3 shows that although Thais always began their messages with the opening salutations, they dropped the closing salutations by 3.64% whereas Germans neglected both opening and closing salutations by 8.02% and 12.96% respectively. In the cases that the opening salutation were omitted, it can be assumed that the writers considered the message a memo because in the past, hard-copy memos were sent only to company insiders, and salutations were neglected. A variety of salutations and terms of address found in the corpus is shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Opening salutations

Opening Salutations	Profit (166) 100%	Non-Profit (161) 100%	Thais (165) 100%	Germans (162) 100%	Total (327) 100%
Dear Professional Title Surname		(9) 5.59%	(9) 5.45%		(9) 2.75%
Dear Professional Title Name		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	(2) 0.61%
Dear Title Name+Surname	(6) 3.61%	(6) 3.73%	(6) 3.64%	(6) 3.70%	(12) 3.67%
Dear Title Surname	(37) 22.29%	(17) 10.56%	(50) 30.30%	(4) 2.47%	(54) 16.51%
Dear Title Name		(6) 3.73%		(6) 3.70%	(6) 1.83%
Dear Khun Name+Surname		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		(3) 0.92%
Dear Khun Surname		(11) 6.83%	(9) 5.45%	(2) 1.23%	(11) 3.36%
Dear Khun Name	(18) 10.84%	(26) 16.15%	(23) 13.94%	(21) 12.96%	(44) 13.46%
Dear Name+Surname,	(4) 2.41%	(4) 2.48%	(4) 2.42%	(4) 2.47%	(8) 2.45%
Dear Name,	(69) 41.57%	(38) 23.60%	(60) 36.36%	(47) 29.01%	(107) 32.72%
Dear Nickname,	(9) 5.42%	(34) 21.12%		(43) 26.54%	(43) 13.15%
Khun Name	(11) 6.63%	(1) 0.62%		(12) 7.41%	(12) 3.67%
G'morning, Title Surname	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		(1) 0.31%
Hello,	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	(1) 0.31%
Hi good afternoon,	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	(1) 0.31%
No opening salutation	(9) 5.42%	(4) 2.48%		(13) 8.02%	(13) 3.98%

The opening salutations in the business e-mail correspondence in non-profit organizations exhibit more formality than in profit organizations. The staff in non-profit organizations greeted their correspondents by Dear (Professional Title Surname, Professional Title Name, Title Name+Surname, Title Name, Khun Name+Surname, Khun Surname, Khun Name, Name+Surname, Name, Nickname) and by their name while the staff in profit organizations did so by Dear (Title Name+Surname, Title Surname, Khun Name, Name+Surname, Name, Nickname), Hello, Hi, and by their name.

In general, “Dear Name” (32.72%) and “Dear Title Surname” (16.51%) are the opening salutation mainly used between intimate and distant correspondents respectively. Although Thais do not address each other by surname, Thais do address foreign counterparts by their surname. This is because Thais are familiar with western culture and international business convention. The staff both in profit and non-profit organizations addressed its correspondents by “Khun” (a conventional Thai title or term of address used with both male and female equivalent to Mr., Mrs., or Ms. to convey a sense of respect and formality) followed by the addressee’s surname, name or both name and surname (21.41%). Interestingly, Germans who are familiar with Thai culture also addressed Thai correspondents by Khun. This trend is essentially cultural-specific and considered unique to Thai business contexts. In Chakorn’s (2002) corpus, the salutation Dear Khun Name was used extensively as well. Another remarkable point is that only Germans addressed their Thai correspondents by their nickname (13.15%) regardless of their relationship and degree of formality due to the fact that Thai full name is not easily recognized by foreigners.

As for the closing elements, they consist of the closing salutation form and the sender identification mostly automatically inserted including the sender’s name, position, department, and address of the organization. Table 4.5 presents their variety ranking from the most formal closing salutation to the least.

Table 4.5 Closing salutations

Closing Salutations	Profit (166) 100%	Non-Profit (161) 100%	Thais (165) 100%	Germans (162) 100%	Total (327) 100%
Very truly yours		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		(3) 0.92%
Very truly yours, Name+organization		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Sincerely yours	(1) 0.60%	(8) 4.97%	(6) 3.64%	(3) 1.85%	(9) 2.75%
Sincerely yours, Name+Surname+division+office address		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Sincerely yours, Name+Surname+division+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Sincerely yours, Name		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Sincerely yours, Name	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Sincerely		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		(3) 0.92%
Sincerely, Name+Surname		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Yours truly		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	(2) 0.61%
Yours truly, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With best regards		(18) 11.18%	(12) 7.27%	(6) 3.70%	(18) 5.50%
With best regards, Name+Surname+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With best regards, Name+Surname+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With best regards, Name+Surname		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
With best regards, Name		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With best regards, Nickname		(9) 5.59%	(9) 5.45%		
With kind regards	(2) 1.20%	(4) 2.48%		(6) 3.70%	(6) 1.83%
With kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(2) 1.20%			(2) 1.23%	
With kind regards, Name+Surname+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With kind regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards	(75) 45.18%	(59) 36.65%	(83) 50.30%	(51) 31.48%	(134) 40.98%
Best regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Best regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address	(3) 1.81%		(3) 1.82%		
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(7) 4.22%	(2) 1.24%	(7) 4.24%	(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address		(5) 3.11%	(3) 1.82%	(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address		(20) 12.42%		(20) 12.35%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname	(16) 9.64%	(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%	(16) 9.88%	
Best regards, Name+Surname	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Name	(6) 3.61%		(6) 3.64%		
Best regards, Name	(9) 5.42%	(6) 3.73%	(15) 9.09%		
Best regards, Name	(13) 7.83%	(9) 5.59%	(20) 12.12%	(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		
Best regards, Name	(2) 1.20%		(1) 0.61%	(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Name		(1) 0.62%		(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Name	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		
Best regards, Nickname+Name+Surname+position+office address	(6) 3.61%		(6) 3.64%		
Best regards, Nickname	(7) 4.22%		(7) 4.24%		
Best regards, Nickname	(1) 0.60%	(6) 3.73%	(7) 4.24%		
Warmest regards	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	(1) 0.31%
Warmest regards, Name+Surname+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	



Closing Salutations	Profit (166) 100%		Non-Profit (161) 100%		Thais (165) 100%		Germans (162) 100%		Total (327) 100%	
Kind regards	(3)	1.81%	(16)	9.94%	(1)	0.61%	(18)	11.11%	(19)	5.81%
Kind regards, Professional title Name+Surname+Location			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		
Kind regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address	(1)	0.60%			(1)	0.61%				
Kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		
Kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(2)	1.20%					(2)	1.23%		
Kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address			(8)	4.97%			(8)	4.94%		
Kind regards, Name+Surname			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		
Kind regards, Name+Surname			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		
Regards	(67)	40.36%	(20)	12.42%	(35)	21.21%	(52)	33.33%	(87)	26.61%
Regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address			(3)	1.86%	(3)	1.82%				
Regards, Name+Name+Surname+division+office address			(3)	1.86%	(3)	1.82%				
Regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(1)	0.60%					(1)	1.85%		
Regards, Name+position+office address			(6)	3.73%	(6)	3.64%				
Regards, Name+position+office address	(1)	0.60%	(2)	1.24%			(3)	1.85%		
Regards, Name+Surname			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		
Regards, Name+Surname	(3)	1.81%	(2)	1.24%			(5)	3.09%		
Regards, Name+Surname	(1)	0.60%					(1)	0.62%		
Regards, Name+Surname	(11)	6.63%					(11)	6.79%		
Regards, Name+Surname	(1)	0.60%	(2)	1.24%			(3)	1.85%		
Regards, Name	(3)	1.81%			(3)	1.82%				
Regards, Name	(37)	22.29%			(17)	10.30%	(20)	12.35%		
Regards, Name	(6)	3.61%					(6)	3.70%		
Regards, Nickname	(2)	1.20%			(2)	1.21%				
Regards, Nickname	(1)	0.60%			(1)	0.61%				
Best wishes	(4)	2.41%			(4)	2.42%			(4)	1.22%
Best wishes, Name	(4)	2.41%			(4)	2.42%				
All the best			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.24%	(2)	0.61%
All the best, Name			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		
Best			(12)	7.45%	(12)	7.27%			(12)	3.67%
Best, Nickname			(12)	7.45%	(12)	7.27%				
No closing salutation	(13)	7.83%	(14)	8.70%	(6)	3.64%	(21)	13.04%	(27)	8.26%
Name+Name+Surname+position+office address	(1)	0.60%					(1)	0.62%		
Name+Surname+office address	(2)	1.20%	(2)	1.24%			(4)	2.47%		
Name+Surname+position+office address	(1)	0.60%					(1)	0.62%		
Name+Surname	(1)	0.60%					(1)	0.62%		
Name+Surname	(2)	1.20%					(2)	1.23%		
Name+Surname	(2)	1.20%					(2)	1.23%		
Name			(4)	2.48%			(4)	2.47%		
Name	(2)	1.20%					(2)	1.23%		
Name	(1)	0.60%					(1)	0.62%		
Nickname	(1)	0.60%	(6)	3.73%	(6)	3.64%	(1)	0.62%		
Office address			(2)	1.24%			(2)	1.23%		

The closing salutations in the business e-mail correspondence in non-profit organizations display a more variety than in profit organizations. The staff in non-profit organizations ended the messages with “Very truly yours”, “Sincerely yours”, “Sincerely”, “Yours truly”, “With best regards”, “With kind regards”, “Best regards”, “Kind regards”, “Regards”, “All the best”, and “Best” whereas the staff in

profit organizations did so with “Sincerely yours”, “With kind regards”, “Best regards”, “Warmest regards”, “Kind regards”, “Regards”, and “Best wishes”. However, there were no noteworthy differences in the diversity of the opening and closing salutations used by Thais and Germans.

“Best regards” is the closing salutation most often used by Thais (50.30%) and Germans (31.48%) in profit (45.18%) and non-profit organizations (36.65%). The e-mail donors reported that this closing salutation was generally used in business contexts because it represented a moderate degree of formality and can be used to any person, in any situation. According to Chakorn (2002), the most popular type of closing salutation in letter writing is “Yours sincerely”. This is inconsistent with the most common closing salutation in e-mail messages which is less formal. However, it should be noted here that it is not worth focusing only on the frequency of each opening/closing salutation because the data were not collected based on the relationship of the correspondents. Therefore, when taking the relationship into account, there was a great difference in the number of formal and informal e-mail messages written by Thais and Germans in both types of organizations. This is due to the fact that the donors mostly provided the e-mail messages showing their relatively close relationships with the correspondents.

Even though it is conventionally understood that the closing should conform to the opening salutation, the closing salutations in this corpus were not necessary aligned with the opening salutations in terms of the degree of formality. Table 4.6 displays a variety of opening and closing salutations used in the corpus ranking from the formal to intimate ones.

Table 4.6: Variety of opening and closing salutations

Opening/Closing Salutations	Profit (166) 100%	Non-Profit (161) 100%	Thais (165) 100%	Germans (162) 100%	Total (327) 100%
Dear Professional Title Surname					(9) 2.75%
Sincerely yours, Name+Surname+division+office address		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
With best regards, Name+Surname		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Regards, Name+Name+Surname+division+office address		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Dear Professional Title Name					(2) 0.61%
Kind regards, Professional title Name+Surname+Location		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Dear Title Name+Surname					(12) 3.67%
Sincerely yours, Name+Surname+division+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With kind regards, Name+Surname+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name	(6) 3.61%		(6) 3.64%		
Kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Dear Title Surname					(54) 16.51%
Sincerely, Name+Surname		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
With kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(2) 1.20%			(2) 1.23%	
Kind regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		
Best regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(7) 4.22%	(2) 1.24%	(7) 4.24%	(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Nickname+Name+Surname+position+office address	(6) 3.61%		(6) 3.64%		
Best regards, Name	(9) 5.42%	(6) 3.73%	(15) 9.09%		
Best regards, Nickname	(7) 4.22%		(7) 4.24%		
Regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Regards, Name	(3) 1.81%		(3) 1.82%		
Regards, Nickname	(2) 1.20%		(2) 1.21%		
Dear Title Name					(6) 1.83%
Yours truly, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Dear Khun Name+Surname					(3) 0.92%
Very truly yours, Name+organization		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
Dear Khun Surname					(11) 3.36%
Sincerely yours, Name		(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%		
With best regards, Name		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Regards, Name+position+office address		(6) 3.73%	(6) 3.64%		
Dear Khun Name					(44) 13.46%
With best regards, Name+Surname+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
With kind regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address		(5) 3.11%	(3) 1.82%	(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name	(13) 7.83%	(9) 5.59%	(20) 12.12%	(2) 1.23%	
Kind regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Regards, Name+Surname	(3) 1.81%	(2) 1.24%		(5) 3.09%	
Name+Surname	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Name+Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Name		(4) 2.48%		(4) 2.47%	
Dear Name+Surname,					(8) 2.45%
Kind regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Name+Surname+position+office address	(3) 1.81%		(3) 1.82%		
Best regards, Name	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		

Opening/Closing Salutations	Profit (166) 100%	Non-Profit (161) 100%	Thais (165) 100%	Germans (162) 100%	Total (327) 100%
Dear Name,					(107) 32.72%
Sincerely yours, Name	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
With best regards, Nickname		(9) 5.59%	(9) 5.45%		
All the best, Name		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Name+Surname	(16) 9.64%	(3) 1.86%	(3) 1.82%	(16) 9.88%	
Best regards, Name	(2) 1.20%		(1) 0.61%	(1) 0.62%	
Best regards, Nickname	(1) 0.60%	(6) 3.73%	(7) 4.24%		
Best wishes, Name	(4) 2.41%		(4) 2.42%		
Regards, Name+Surname	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Regards, Name	(37) 22.29%		(17) 10.30%	(20) 12.35%	
Regards, Nickname	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		
Best, Nickname		(12) 7.45%	(12) 7.27%		
Name+Surname	(2) 1.20%			(2) 1.23%	
Name	(2) 1.20%			(2) 1.23%	
Nickname	(1) 0.60%	(6) 3.73%	(6) 3.64%	(1) 0.62%	
Dear Nickname,					(43) 13.15%
With best regards, Name+Surname+office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address		(20) 12.42%		(20) 12.35%	
Warmest regards, Name+Surname+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address		(8) 4.97%		(8) 4.94%	
Regards, Name	(6) 3.61%			(6) 3.70%	
Name+Surname+office address	(2) 1.20%	(2) 1.24%		(4) 2.47%	
Office address		(2) 1.24%		(2) 1.23%	
Khun Name					(12) 3.67%
Best regards, Name		(1) 0.62%		(1) 0.62%	
Regards, Name+Surname	(11) 6.63%			(11) 6.79%	
G'morning, Title Surname					(1) 0.31%
Best regards, Name	(1) 0.60%		(1) 0.61%		
Hello,					(1) 0.31%
Best regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Hi good afternoon,					(1) 0.31%
Name	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
No opening salutation					(13) 3.98%
Kind regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(2) 1.20%			(2) 1.23%	
Best regards, Name+Surname	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Regards, Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Regards, Name+position+office address	(1) 0.60%	(2) 1.24%		(3) 1.85%	
Regards, Name+Surname	(1) 0.60%	(2) 1.24%		(3) 1.85%	
Name+Surname+position+office address	(1) 0.60%			(1) 0.62%	
Name+Surname	(2) 1.20%			(2) 1.23%	

The findings show that “Sincerely yours”, “Best regards”, “Kind regards”, and “Regards”, for instance, could be used together with any opening salutation ranking from “Dear Title Surname” to “Dear Nickname”. Nevertheless, it could be noticed that the messages with formal opening salutations always had closing salutations. From the findings, the messages which did not have closing salutations were the messages which did not have opening salutations or had the

opening salutations but not very formal ones, i.e. “Dear (Khun Name, Name, Nickname)” and “Hi good afternoon”.

4.4.2 Body of the Message

Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain, Move 3 Introducing Purposes, Move 4 Attaching Documents, Move 5 Soliciting Response and Move 6 Ending Positively are the components of the e-mail body. The moves in the body of the message can recur more than once and do not always occur linearly in these positions. The writers may choose to omit a particular move or vary the order of the moves or the steps within the move to suit their particular rhetorical purpose. Each move can be realized through some common linguistic forms which shall be discussed with authentic samples from the corpus.

4.4.2.1 Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain

This move is considered as an introduction to the message. Its functions are to further business relations and to build goodwill. It may be realized by means of either Step 1 Referring to the event/previous contact or Step 2 Acknowledging the existence of previous mail.

Step 1 - Referring to the event / previous contact

Most of the business e-mail messages started with Step 1 Referring to the event or the subject of the messages in order to remind the reader of the past contact and perhaps catch the reader’s eyes, especially the e-mail users who get dozens of mails a day.

For example, “*Referring to our mail dated 16.09.03 requesting from your side to kindly issue the English Official letter informing about the delegation list and purpose of the visit in Laos and Thailand during 25.11.03-2.12.03 in order that our expert, Mr.XXX, can coordinate the program arrangement with their counterpart, ...*” (NPTH2).

“*Concerning your visit in Bangkok during 17-18.11.03, following is the tentative schedule for your information.*” (NPTH4)

Step 2 - Acknowledging the existence of the previous mail

In many cases, the writer acknowledged the existence of the previous message by expressing thanks for the message and/or apologizing in case of late reply.

For example, *“I acknowledge, with thanks, your order of e-mail Tue, 10 Jan 2006 to confirm the hall (MPH) Thursday 19th January from 19.00 - 23.00.”* (NPTH22)

“We received with much appreciation your email advising the representatives from your company.” (NPTH38)

“We are sorry to reply your e-mail late and thank you for your enquiry of June 10, 2005.” (NPTH21)

“Now it’s my turn to be sorry for replying late.” (NPGR30)

Table 4.7 and 4.8 display the frequency that Move 2 was introduced to the messages.

Table 4.7: Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain by Organizations

Move	Profit Organizations			Non-Profit Organizations		
	Thais (84)	Germans (82)	Total (166)	Thais (81)	Germans (80)	Total (161)
Move 2	(48) 57.14%	(10) 12.20%	(58) 34.94%	(33) 40.74%	(30) 37.50%	(63) 39.13%
Step 1	(27) 32.14%	(2) 2.44%	(29) 17.47%	(21) 25.93%	(4) 5.00%	(25) 15.53%
Step 2 or	(21) 25.00%	(8) 9.76%	(29) 17.47%	(12) 14.81%	(26) 32.50%	(38) 23.60%
No Move 2	(36) 42.86%	(72) 87.80%	(108) 65.06%	(48) 59.26%	(50) 62.50%	(98) 63.87%

Table 4.7 does not show much difference in the way people in profit and non-profit organizations established their correspondence chain.

Table 4.8: Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain by Nationalities

Move	Thais						Germans					
	Profit		Non-Profit		Total		Profit		Non-Profit		Total	
	(84)		(81)		(165)		(82)		(80)		(162)	
Move 2	(48)	57.14%	(33)	40.74%	(81)	49.09%	(10)	12.20%	(30)	37.50%	(40)	24.69%
Step 1	(27)	32.14%	(21)	25.93%	(48)	29.09%	(2)	2.44%	(4)	5.00%	(6)	3.70%
or Step 2	(21)	25.00%	(12)	14.81%	(33)	20.00%	(8)	9.76%	(26)	32.50%	(34)	20.99%
No Move 2	(36)	42.86%	(48)	59.26%	(84)	50.91%	(72)	87.80%	(50)	62.50%	(122)	75.31%

Table 4.8 indicates that Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain was found in the messages written by Thais twice as often as those written by Germans. Thais and Germans applied different strategies to achieve this move function. Step 1 referring to the past event or to the previous mail is usually found in the messages written by Thais while Germans, especially in non-profit organizations, further the contact by Step 2 acknowledging the receipt of previous e-mail with thanks.

4.4.2.2 Move 3 Introducing Purposes

This move is the heart of persuasive messages. It may comprise one or more of these four steps, namely Step 1 Providing Information, Step 2 Introducing the Offer, Step 3 Requesting and Step 4 Enquiring, to fulfill the function of Move 3. The sequence of these steps is flexible. However, the communicative purposes of the e-mail messages in this corpus are mainly to provide information and to make requests.

Table 4.9: Move 3 Introducing Purposes by Organizations

Move	Profit Organizations						Non-Profit Organizations					
	Thais (84)		Germans (82)		Total (166)		Thais (81)		Germans (80)		Total (161)	
Move 3	(84)	100.00%	(82)	100.00%	(166)	100.00%	(81)	100.00%	(80)	100.00%	(161)	100.00%
Step 1 and/or	(72)	85.71%	(80)	97.56%	(152)	91.57%	(75)	92.59%	(72)	90.00%	(147)	91.30%
Step 2 and/or	(0)	0.00%	(4)	4.88%	(4)	2.41%	(6)	7.41%	(4)	5.00%	(10)	6.21%
Step 3 and/or	(72)	85.71%	(58)	70.73%	(130)	78.31%	(21)	25.93%	(54)	67.50%	(75)	46.58%
Step 4	(12)	14.29%	(26)	31.71%	(38)	22.89%	(24)	29.63%	(8)	10.00%	(32)	19.88%
No Move 3	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%

Table 4.10: Move 3 Introducing Purposes by Nationalities

Move	Thais						Germans					
	Profit (84)		Non-Profit (81)		Total (165)		Profit (82)		Non-Profit (80)		Total (162)	
Move 3	(84)	100.00%	(81)	100.00%	(165)	100.00%	(82)	100.00%	(80)	100.00%	(162)	100.00%
Step 1 and/or	(72)	85.71%	(75)	92.59%	(147)	89.09%	(80)	97.56%	(72)	90.00%	(152)	93.83%
Step 2 and/or	(0)	0.00%	(6)	7.41%	(6)	3.64%	(4)	4.88%	(4)	5.00%	(8)	4.94%
Step 3 and/or	(72)	85.71%	(21)	25.93%	(93)	56.36%	(58)	70.73%	(54)	67.50%	(112)	69.14%
Step 4	(12)	14.29%	(24)	29.63%	(36)	21.82%	(26)	31.71%	(8)	10.00%	(34)	20.99%
No Move 3	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%	(0)	0.00%

As shown in Table 4.9 and 4.10, the percentage of the steps within Move 3 overlapped. The reason is that the messages exchanged within the organizations were multi-purposeful, but mainly to provide information and to make requests. Therefore, this move may include both Step 1 and then Step 3, Step 1 and then Step 4, or Step 1 and then Step 3, and 4, etc.

Step 1 - Providing the information /Responding to the previous mail

In persuasive messages, it is necessary to provide enough information in order to have the reader act and know exactly what to do. The business jargon “*please be informed that....*” is widely used. This step can be treated as a pre-request signaling the coming request as well as in “*As mentioned on the schedule, Mrs. XXX will visit Chiang Mai and it will be a good chance to show some activities of YYY and ZZZ. We, therefore, ask for your cooperation to prepare the visiting program during her visit in Chiang Mai.*” (NPTH3). The underlined sentence provided the information in the value-indicating pattern followed by a request for the cooperation from the reader to prepare the visiting program.

Step 2 - Introducing the offer

In the case that the writer does not want to impose on the reader, he/she may offer an alternative to the reader after providing the information that supports the offer. For instance, “*In addition to Mr. XXX’s proposal for the planned YYY visiting program in Chiangmai on Nov. 30 - Dec. 2, I would like to offer the following visiting components: Please feel free to include the components into the visiting program and inform me accordingly!*” (NPGR5), “*If you need money for other activities as well please also send a request.*” (NPGR14) and “*If you need a copy from the packing list, I can fax it.*” (PGR33)

Step 3- Requesting

Business is a goal-oriented activity. The staff may apply different persuasive strategies in order to have the reader act. All this is due to the status of the correspondents, situation, corporate culture, and writer’s judgment.

Figure 4.5 Mood types of the requests

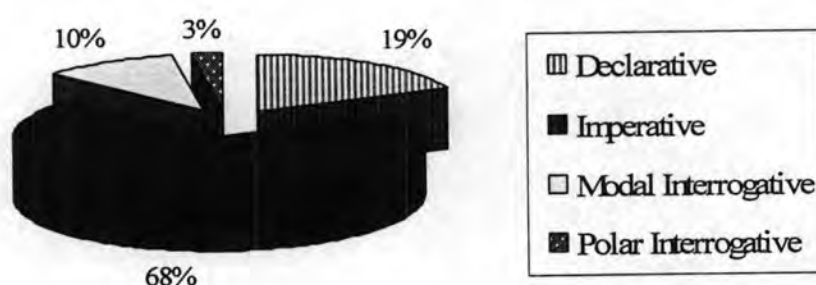


Table 4.11: Mood types of the requests by organizations

Mood Types	Profit Organizations						Non-Profit Organizations					
	Thais		Germans		Total		Thais		Germans		Total	
Declarative	(11)	11%	(12)	13%	(23)	12%	(14)	30%	(21)	32%	(35)	32%
Imperative	(81)	78%	(66)	73%	(147)	76%	(24)	52%	(36)	55%	(60)	54%
Modal Interrogative	(10)	10%	(9)	10%	(19)	10%	(6)	13%	(7)	11%	(13)	12%
Polar Interrogative	(2)	2%	(3)	3%	(5)	3%	(2)	4%	(1)	2%	(3)	3%
Total	(104)	100%	(90)	100%	(194)	100%	(46)	100%	(65)	100%	(111)	100%

Table 4.12: Mood types of the requests by nationalities

Mood Types	Thais						Germans					
	Profit		Non-Profit		Total		Profit		Non-Profit		Total	
Declarative	(11)	11%	(14)	30%	(25)	17%	(12)	13%	(21)	32%	(33)	21%
Imperative	(81)	78%	(24)	52%	(105)	70%	(66)	73%	(36)	55%	(102)	66%
Modal Interrogative	(10)	10%	(6)	13%	(16)	11%	(9)	10%	(7)	11%	(16)	10%
Polar Interrogative	(2)	2%	(2)	4%	(4)	3%	(3)	3%	(1)	2%	(4)	3%
Total	(104)	100%	(46)	100%	(150)	100%	(90)	100%	(65)	100%	(155)	100%

Of all 305 request statements, 68% were imperative, followed by declarative by 19%, modal initial interrogative by 10% and polar interrogative by 3%. In making a request, the politeness markers like “please” (85.23%) and “kindly” (14.77%) were employed to minimize the imposition. The imperative mood with the politeness marker “please” was mostly used by Thais (54%) and Germans (46%) both in profit (56.67%) and non-profit organization (43.33%). Thais (80.77%) employed the politeness marker “kindly” more often than Germans (19.33%) and the staff in non-profit organizations (59.62%) used this politeness marker more frequently than those in profit ones (40.38%). The findings that most of the requests in this corpus were imperative are in contrast to the findings of Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris (1996) and Chakorn (2002) which reveal that the majority of the request in their data was declarative.

Although most of the request statements made by the staff both in profit and non-profit organizations were imperative, there were some differences in the frequency of each mood types of the requests across organizations. In comparison with the requests made in profit organizations, the staff in non-profit organizations less frequently made the imperative request statements, but more often made the declarative requests. Likewise, the requests made by Thais and Germans were mostly in imperative form. However, Germans performed the declarative request statements more frequently and made the imperative requests less often when comparing to Thais. Examples of the request statements are given below.

Declarative

Declarative request statements can be performed variously. Statements with the word “need” are perhaps the most direct way of request as in “*Meanwhile, I **need** urgently the consignee details for the samples.*” (PTH10) and “*We urgently **need** the assortment of each style each order to be shipped out by sea-air flat packed within today 22/9/2005 so that factory can order all the packing accessories in time for shipment next week ETD 30/9/2005.*” (PTH17)

The request statements that are expressed explicitly are, for example, “*I **ask you to redo** this work and make the pathway half as wide as it is at the moment.*” (NPTH40) and “*What I **kindly ask** you is to inform the hotel that...*” (PGR4).

Some statements may be expressed through the words like want or would like.

For instance, “*We urgently **want to** know your final decision of shipment mode for your order # 1161 (3,279 pcs.) in order to confirm back to the factory as they need time at least 7 days for preparing the documents and necessary arrangement for each shipment*”. (PTH18)

“*I just **want to** remind you to send me the original contract with the next TNT Package (but I suppose you would not have forgotten it anyway).*” (NPGR19)

"I would like you to coordinate this matter for our department."
(PTH69)

"I would like to advise to issue an official letter (in English) to our Thai partners announcing the visit and ask for cooperation." (NPGR5).

Another way to perform the declarative request statements found in this corpus is the self-obligation statements which can be realized by the lexical items such as "appreciate" and "grateful" (in the if-clause).

For example, *"It would be very appreciated if you could confirm your availability to us."*
(NPTH1)

"I would appreciate if you can coordinate a visit for him." (PGR6)

"Thank you for your cooperation which we are very grateful for." (NPGR4)

Imperative

The linguistic realization of imperative request is through the use of the base form of verb with/without the politeness markers "please", "kindly" or both (sometimes in the if-clause).

For instance, *"Please participate in the meeting at the above mentioned time."* (PTH2)

"Kindly send me a list of all public holidays in Thailand either by email or fax." (PGR20)

"If you wish to invite Mr. XXX to the Philippines, kindly let me have your preference dates and also the topic of the talk as earlier as possible." (NPTH16)

"If you still need this color for making sample, please kindly advise styles no. for making sample by return." (PTH26)

Polar interrogative

The interrogative mood is less direct than declarative and imperative. The interrogative request statement does not impose on the addressee as in *"Is it possible that you send the donation through Mr. XXX since he goes back to Germany quite often and he is willing to serve YYY?"* (NPTH22) and *"Is there any*

other flight you can get that arrives in the afternoon so the products are not sitting around for too long?” (PGR18).

Modal-initial interrogative

Although modal-initial interrogative is a form of interrogative mood, it is different from polar interrogatives because it is softened by a modal (hedged performative) (Fraser, 1975).

For instance, *“Could you please make arrangements with him for Monday or Tuesday afternoon, when I have no appointments so far?” (NPGR2)*

“Would it be possible for you to ask the governor if he/she is available in the mentioned time-period and invite him/her?” (NPGR34)

“Will you be able to provide samples of Thai mix with sauce for a test shipment in week 10?” (PGR12)

“May I ask you to join that meeting at Amata Nakorn (close to BKK) in order to keep us updated?” (PGR69)

Step 4 - Enquiring

While Step 3 requests for the action, this step asks for the information in the form of indirect question, open-ended questions or discussion. For example, *“Please give me some ideas how many trays we need to buy approximately.” (PTH8)*

“I am writing to ask if you wish to invite Mr. XXX to participate in any of your programmes in the Philippines.” (NPTH16)

“Do you have a suggestion how to identify 2 persons, perhaps the chief of the village and another person (if possible 1 man and 1 woman)?” (NPGR34)

4.4.2.3 Move 4 Attaching Documents

It seems to be e-mail etiquette of fitting the message on the computer screen for the convenience of the reader not to scroll down to the end of the message. Thus, the detailed or additional information should be kept separate from the body of the message as an attachment to be downloaded. Usually, the staff will state

in the message that there is an attachment. From the samples it was found that the staff commonly said *“Attached please find ...”* which is considered as business jargon. Besides, some formulaic expressions influenced from the postal mail were also used in the realization of “enclosing documents”.

For instance, *“I enclosed the list of the delegates for your information.”* (NPGR4)

“Attached please find the tentative schedule of Mrs. YYY for your information and further arrangement.” (NPTH3)

“Please find enclosed the updated cost estimate taken from the monitoring.” (NPGR23)

“Attached here is the expense of air-conditions fixed at the small room in the library and the film room that ZZZ had advanced the payment already.” (NPTH25)

“Enclosed please find the attachment of public holidays in Thailand for 2004.” (PTH14)

“Pls. see attached.” (PTH22)

Table 4.13 and Table 4.14 exhibit the use of attachment function by Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations.

Table 4.13: Move 4 Attaching Documents by Organizations

Move	Profit Organizations			Non-Profit Organizations		
	Thais (84)	Germans (82)	Total (166)	Thais (81)	Germans (80)	Total (161)
Move 4	(12) 14.29%	(4) 4.88%	(16) 9.64%	(27) 33.33%	(14) 17.50%	(41) 25.47%
No Move 4	(72) 85.71%	(78) 95.12%	(150) 90.36%	(54) 66.67%	(66) 82.50%	(120) 74.53%

Table 4.14: Move 4 Attaching Documents by Nationalities

Move	Thais			Germans		
	Profit (84)	Non-Profit (81)	Total (165)	Profit (82)	Non-Profit (80)	Total (162)
Move 4	(12) 14.29%	(27) 33.33%	(39) 23.64%	(4) 4.88%	(14) 17.50%	(18) 11.11%
No Move 4	(72) 85.71%	(54) 66.67%	(126) 76.36%	(78) 95.12%	(66) 82.50%	(144) 88.89%

The use of the attachment function may be different for each business. The e-mail messages obtained from non-profit organizations mostly talked about meetings and event arrangements, therefore their agendas and schedules were often attached to the e-mail messages sent from secretaries to participants. In multinational organizations, Germans often hold superior positions. Thus, it is the duty of the person in the lower positions to provide detailed information upon request. As a result, the staff in non-profit organizations, Thais in particular, uses this e-mail function more frequently.

4.4.2.4 Move 5 Soliciting Response

This move is optional and seldom found in the sample e-mail messages because the messages were exchanged within the organization and the sender and receiver are colleagues. Their relationship is an action drive by itself as the staff realizes that their response can affect future collaboration. The most important linguistic realization of this move is through the word “question”, the use of “if-clause”, and the imperative mood with the politeness marker “please”.

For example, *“Please contact me if you have further questions.”* (NPGR9)

“If you have any further queries please let me know.” (NPGR17)

“Please let me know if you have questions and thank you very much for your further advice if any.” (NPTH15)

“If you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact me.”
(NPTH17)

“Any questions, please feel free to contact me.” (PTH3)

"If you need any additional info please let me know." (PGR6)

"For any questions, you can always contact me via mail or via my assistant Mrs YYY." (PGR41)

Table 4.15: Move 5 Soliciting Response by Organizations

Move	Profit Organizations			Non-Profit Organizations		
	Thais (84)	Germans (82)	Total (166)	Thais (81)	Germans (80)	Total (161)
Move 5	(6) 7.14%	(8) 9.76%	(14) 8.43%	(15) 18.52%	(10) 12.50%	(25) 15.53%
No Move 5	(78) 92.86%	(74) 90.24%	(152) 91.57%	(66) 81.48%	(70) 87.50%	(136) 84.47%

Table 4.16: Move 5 Soliciting Response by Nationalities

Move	Thais			Germans		
	Profit (84)	Non-Profit (81)	Total (165)	Profit (82)	Non-Profit (80)	Total (162)
Move 5	(6) 7.14%	(15) 18.52%	(21) 12.73%	(8) 9.76%	(10) 12.50%	(18) 11.11%
No Move 5	(78) 92.86%	(66) 81.48%	(144) 87.27%	(74) 90.24%	(70) 87.50%	(144) 88.89%

The findings in Table 4.15 indicate that the staff in non-profit organizations prompted to further contacts more frequently than that in profit organizations. The behavior of the people in non-profit organizations corresponds to the nature of their organizations which provides the assistance and collaboration. Thais were a bit more helpful and eager to receive more responses.

4.4.2.5 Move 6 Ending Positively

It was found from the samples that Move 6 was crucial and functioned as a post-request. Ending positively is commonly realized by an expression of gratitude and goodwill. For instance, *"Thank you for your cooperation and have a*

nice trip in Singapore.” (NPTH1) *“Thank you in advance for yr kind adv.”* (PTH28) and *“Have a nice Friday and great holidays to come.”* (NPTH9).

Table 4.17: Move 6 Ending Positively by Organizations

Move	Profit Organizations			Non-Profit Organizations		
	Thais (84)	Germans (82)	Total (166)	Thais (81)	Germans (80)	Total (161)
Move 6	(36) 42.86%	(24) 29.27%	(60) 36.14%	(54) 66.67%	(28) 35.00%	(82) 50.93%
No Move 6	(48) 57.14%	(58) 70.73%	(106) 63.86%	(27) 33.33%	(52) 65.00%	(79) 49.07%

Table 4.18: Move 6 Ending Positively by Nationalities

Move	Thais			Germans		
	Profit (84)	Non-Profit (81)	Total (165)	Profit (82)	Non-Profit (80)	Total (162)
Move 6	(36) 42.86%	(54) 66.67%	(90) 54.55%	(24) 29.27%	(28) 35.00%	(52) 32.10%
No Move 6	(48) 57.14%	(27) 33.33%	(75) 45.45%	(58) 70.73%	(52) 65.00%	(110) 67.90%

Although this move functions as a post-request, when comparing the presence of this move with Move 3 Step 3 Requesting, it is interesting to see that Germans made the requests more frequently than Thais, but Thais expressed gratitude and goodwill towards their reader more often than Germans. This may be because Germans usually expressed thanks after their request were acknowledged at the beginning of the follow-up message, but Thais always expressed gratitude in advance right after the request was made and once again when their requests have been responded. Similarly, the requests were made more often in profit organizations, but the staff in non-profit organizations ended the messages with gratitude and goodwill more frequently. The intimate relationship and constant correspondence between the staff in profit organizations may result in the negligence of the polite ending.

The occurrence of all the moves found in English business e-mail correspondence written by Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations is summarized in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Occurrence of the seven moves

Rhetorical Structure	Profit Organizations	Non-Profit Organizations	Thais	Germans	Total
	(166)	(161)	(165)	(162)	(327)
Move 1 Opening Salutation	(157) 94.58%	(157) 97.52%	(165) 100.00%	(149) 91.98%	(314) 96.02%
Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain	(58) 34.94%	(63) 39.13%	(81) 49.09%	(40) 24.69%	(121) 37.00%
Step 1 - Referring to the event/ previous contact	(29) 17.47%	(25) 15.53%	(48) 29.09%	(6) 3.70%	(54) 16.51%
Step 2 - Acknowledging the existence of the previous mail	(29) 17.47%	(38) 23.60%	(33) 20.00%	(34) 20.99%	(67) 20.49%
Move 3 Introducing Purposes	(166) 100.00%	(161) 100.00%	(165) 100.00%	(162) 100.00%	(327) 100.00%
Step 1 - Providing Information/ Responding to the previous mail	(152) 91.57%	(147) 91.30%	(147) 89.09%	(152) 93.83%	(299) 91.44%
Step 2 - Introducing the offer	(4) 2.41%	(10) 6.21%	(6) 3.64%	(8) 4.94%	(14) 4.28%
Step 3 - Requesting	(130) 78.31%	(75) 46.58%	(93) 56.36%	(112) 69.14%	(205) 62.69%
Step 4 - Enquiring	(38) 22.89%	(32) 19.88%	(36) 21.82%	(34) 20.99%	(70) 21.41%
Move 4 Attaching Documents	(16) 9.64%	(41) 25.47%	(39) 23.64%	(18) 11.11%	(57) 17.43%
Move 5 Soliciting Response	(14) 8.43%	(25) 15.53%	(21) 12.73%	(18) 11.11%	(39) 11.93%
Move 6 Ending Positively	(60) 36.14%	(82) 50.93%	(90) 54.55%	(52) 32.10%	(142) 43.43%
Move 7 Closing Salutation	(153) 92.17%	(147) 91.30%	(159) 96.36%	(141) 87.04%	(300) 91.74%

In summary, it could be seen from Table 4.19 that the sensitivity to rhetorical requirements in e-mail messages is low. E-mail messages tend not to contain introductory paragraphs preceding the purposes of the messages to the same extent as traditional business letters. Thais and Germans both in profit and non-profit organizations seemed to follow the same sequence of moves, but at different frequency of occurrence. However, most of the seven moves could be found in the e-mail messages written by Thais and in the messages in non-profit organizations whereas only some moves existed in the messages written by Germans and in the messages in profit organizations.

4.5 Relationship between the Moves and Corporate/ National Cultures

The relationship between the moves and cultures was tested with Fisher's exact test.

Table 4.20: Relationship between the moves and the organizations of the e-mail composers

*p** < .05

Move	Organizations		Profit Organizations		Non-Profit Organizations	
	Profit	Non-Profit	Thais	Germans	Thais	Germans
Move 1 Opening Salutation	0.258		0.001*		0.059	
Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain	0.492		0.000*		0.747	
Move 3 Introducing Purposes	1.000		1.000		1.000	
Move 4 Attaching Documents	0.000*		0.063		0.029*	
Move 5 Soliciting Response	0.060		0.588		0.385	
Move 6 Ending Positively	0.008*		0.077		0.000*	
Move 7 Closing Salutation	0.842		0.000*		0.589	

Overall, the frequency of moves appearing in the e-mail messages from profit and non-profit organizations is relatively similar. At the .05 significance level, Fisher's exact test displays the significant differences in the messages from the two types of organization only in Move 4 (*p*-value = 0.000) and Move 6 (*p*-value = 0.008), i.e. the staff in non-profit organizations used the attachment function and positively ended the messages more often than the staff in profit organizations.

However, there were also some dissimilarities between the messages written by the staff in the same organization owing to the influence of national culture. The differences between the messages written by Thais and Germans in profit organizations were present in Move 1 Opening Salutation (*p*-value = 0.001) Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain (*p*-value = 0.000) and Move 7 Closing Salutation (*p*-value = 0.000) while in non-profit organizations appeared in Move 4 Attaching Documents (*p*-value = 0.029) and Move 6 Ending Positively (*p*-value = 0.000). These

differences in non-profit organizations mainly resulted from the predominant frequency of moves in the message written by Thais in non-profit organizations, particularly in Move 4 and Move 6.

As for the nationalities of the e-mail composers, the test presents many significant differences on this account as shown in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21: Relationship between the moves and the nationalities of the e-mail composers

Move	Nationalities		Thais		Germans	
	Thai	German	Profit	Non-Profit	Profit	Non-Profit
Move 1 Opening Salutation	0.000*		1.000		0.247	
Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain	0.000*		0.043*		0.000*	
Move 3 Introducing Purposes	1.000		1.000		1.000	
Move 4 Attaching Documents	0.003*		0.006*		0.012*	
Move 5 Soliciting Response	0.734		0.036*		0.624	
Move 6 Ending Positively	0.000*		0.003*		0.502	
Move 7 Closing Salutation	0.002*		0.013*		0.351	

The differences between the e-mail messages written by Thais and Germans existed in Move 1 (p -value = 0.000), Move 2 (p -value = 0.000), Move 4 (p -value = 0.003), Move 6 (p -value = 0.000), and Move 7 (p -value = 0.002).

Nevertheless, Thai staff in profit and non-profit organizations organized the messages differently in the frequency of Move 2 (p -value = 0.043), Move 4 (p -value = 0.006), Move 5 (p -value = 0.036), Move 6 (p -value = 0.003), and Move 7 (p -value = 0.013) whereas the differences between the messages written by German staff in profit and non-profit organizations occurred only in Move 2 (p -value = 0.000) and Move 4 (p -value = 0.012). These differences indicate that Thais are affected by the corporate cultures more than Germans. National cultures influence on the differences of move structures more than corporate cultures do.

4.6 Politeness Strategies

Politeness is a pragmatic aspect of language. As mentioned earlier, people want either “positive” or “negative” face. Using positive politeness strategies, the writer seeks to reinforce the addressee’s positive face by showing the addressee that the two of them are co-operators with common goals and expectation. Negative face reflects the desire for independence, to be able to act freely and unimpeded by others. Respect is indicated with negative politeness strategies by showing that the writer does not intend to limit the addressee’s freedom of action. In written communication, politeness strategies can be examined at the macro level through the structure of the message and at the micro level through the lexical choices.

At the macro level, politeness strategies can be analyzed in accordance with move structures (Pilegaard, 1997). The move structure can convey the degree of directness and formality of the messages. The messages written by Thais and the messages exchanged within non-profit organizations had more moves than the messages written by Germans and the messages in profit organizations. Thus, the messages written by Germans and the messages exchanged within profit organizations were more concise.

Each move in the sample e-mail messages threatens the reader’s face differently depending on its function. This study is interested in the face-threatening acts which appear within Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain, Move 3 Introducing Purposes, Move 5 Soliciting Response and Move 6 Ending Positively. Table 4.22 presents the frequency distribution of their occurrence examined in relation to the face-threatening acts.

Table 4.22 Face-threatening moves

Rhetorical Structure	Profit Organizations (166)	Non-Profit Organizations (161)	Thais (165)	Germans (162)	Total (327)
Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain	(58) 34.94%	(63) 39.13%	(81) 49.09%	(40) 24.69%	(121) 37.00%
Move 3 Step 2 - Introducing the offer	(4) 2.41%	(10) 6.21%	(6) 3.64%	(8) 4.94%	(14) 4.28%
Step 3 – Requesting	(130) 78.31%	(75) 46.58%	(93) 56.36%	(112) 69.14%	(205) 62.69%
Move 5 Soliciting Response	(14) 8.43%	(25) 15.53%	(21) 12.73%	(18) 11.11%	(39) 11.93%
Move 6 Ending Positively	(60) 36.14%	(82) 50.93%	(90) 54.55%	(52) 32.10%	(142) 43.43%

The moves which are considered as “negative politeness” strategies are Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain and Move 3 – Step 3 Requesting.

Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain is considered as a negative politeness strategy because it functions as hedging strategy of delayed introduction of purposes and conveys the formality of the message. From Table 4.22, it was found that Move 2 Establishing Correspondence Chain was employed more often in the messages from non-profit organizations, especially by Thais.

Move 3 – Step 3 Requesting threatens the reader’s negative face. The language used in conveying the face-threatening act of a request reflects the addresser’s perception of his/her own status and that of the addressee which determines the weightiness of face-threatening act.

Table 4.23 Mood types of the requests

Mood Types	Profit		Non-Profit		Thais		Germans		Total	
	Declarative	(23)	12%	(35)	32%	(25)	17%	(33)	21%	(58)
Imperative	(147)	76%	(60)	54%	(105)	70%	(102)	66%	(207)	68%
Modal Interrogative	(19)	10%	(13)	12%	(16)	11%	(16)	10%	(32)	10%
Polar Interrogative	(5)	3%	(3)	3%	(4)	3%	(4)	3%	(8)	3%
Total	(194)	100%	(111)	100%	(150)	100%	(155)	100%	(305)	100%

Each mood type of the requests indicates the different degree of imposition. The staff in non-profit organizations minimized the degree of imposition of the requests by avoiding the imperative mood and employing interrogative mood more often than the staff in profit organizations. In doing so, the requester did not intend to force the addressee to act in a particular manner, and thus the addressee had the freedom of action.

The moves which are treated as “positive politeness” strategies are Move 3 – Step 2 Introducing the offer, Move 5 Soliciting Response, and Move 6 Ending Positively. Move 3 - Step 2 Introducing the offer is a way to save the reader’s negative face in the case that the writer does not want to impose on the reader by requesting as in Move 3 - Step 3. From the corpus, it was found that the staff in profit organizations rarely introduced the offer to assist each other and Germans provided the offer to their readers more often than Thais.

Move 5 Soliciting Response is considered as “positive politeness” because it expresses the writer’s willingness to assist the reader as in “*Please feel free to ask if you have questions on above.*” (PGR31) and “*If you need any further information please let me know.*” (NPTH27). Thais and the staff in non-profit organizations were eager to receive a response from the reader more than Germans and the staff in profit organizations.

Move 6 Ending Positively can be treated as positive politeness strategies since ending the message by expressing gratitude and goodwill favors the reader’s positive face in the way that the writer focuses on cooperation and shows his/her interest and optimism to the reader. Thais and the staff in non-profit organizations appeared to be more cooperative and optimistic.

Politeness is an important linguistic strategy affecting language choice. At the micro level, the politeness strategies are combined within sentences. Positive politeness strategies are most evident in the statements which express interest, gratitude, and optimism.

1) Express interest – expressing interest is a strategy used to fulfill the addressee’s wants and to show the addressee that the two of them are co-operators who want the same things and share common ground. For example, “*Therefore it will be of great interest to learn about the projects and maybe cooperation could also be done.*” (NPGR4) and “*We are interested to take both current stocks and join the next production.*” (PTH62)

2) Express gratitude – expressing gratitude could be seen either at the beginning or the end of the message depending on whether the message is an initiate message or a response one. The lexical items “thank you” and “thanks” were extensively used by Thais (61.59%) more than by Germans (38.41%) and the staff in non-profit organizations (59.15%) expressed thankfulness towards the reader more frequently than those in profit organizations (40.85%).

For instance, “*Thank you very much for all the efforts you have made!*” (NPGR4, at the beginning of the message)

"Thank you very much for the valuable information about the results of the last meeting". (NPGR39, at the beginning of the message)

"Many thanks for your nice mail!" (PGR40, at the beginning of the message)

"Thank you very much for your kind attention and cooperation." (NPTH38, at the end of the message)

"Thank you in advance for your kind assistance." (NPTH39, at the end of the message)

"Thank you very much for your understanding and support!" (NPGR64, at the end of the message)

3) Be optimistic – expressing optimism is mostly illustrated at the end of the messages as in *"We look forward to working together in order to develop the FF Group strategy within the Asia Pacific."* (PTH 72), *"I look forward to your positive and early response."* (NPTH16) and *"I'm looking forward to our rehearsals very much, especially with your good grand piano!"* (NPGR28).

Negative politeness strategies could be realized through the following ways:

1) Apologize – from the corpus, the speech act of apology was executed in several ways including announcing apology, expressing regret, admitting imposition.

The statements that announced apology are, for instance, *"Sorry for the delay in answering to your query."* (NPGR 25) and *"Now it's my turn to be sorry for replying late."* (NPGR 30).

Regrets may be expressed through the statements like *"I am so sorry to say that the participants who lost their ticket remainders and airport tax are too busy with their work and they refuse to sign the letter of declaration as well as to get the reimbursement."* (NPTH 10) and *"We are sorry to inform you that the transfer of the amount into your account still does not work."* (NPGR 35).

The statements that admitted imposition are, for example, *"Sorry for bothering you again with this matter, I just want to remind you to send me the original contract with the next TNT Package (but I suppose you would not have forgotten it anyway)."* (NPGR 19), *"Once again sorry ... now for having to remind*

you of my email of 07th October." (NPGR 29) and *"I am sorry, but we want the coffee/tea and snack served before the event (from 19.00-19.30). Is that possible?"* (NPGR 31).

2) Go on record as incurring a debt - by admitting indebtedness to the addressee, the writer can show deference to the addressee and mitigate the imposition inherent in the request through the use of the lexical item "appreciate" in the if-clause. For example, *"It would be very appreciated if you could confirm your availability to us"*. (NPTH1) and *"I would appreciate if you can coordinate a visit for him."* (PGR6). Thais (80%) employed the lexical item "appreciate" as self-obligation more often than Germans (20%) and the staff in non-profit organizations (88%) used this lexical item more frequently than those in profit ones (12%).

3) Be pessimistic – the assumption that the addressee will not be willing or able to fulfill the request can also mitigate the face threat. By being pessimistic, the addressee is shown that the requester does not intend to force the addressee to act in a particular manner, and thus the addressee has the freedom of action. According to Upton and Connor (2001) and Arvani (2006), pessimistic statements can be recognized through modals that serve to qualify statements, i.e. "would", "can", "could", "may", "might", "shall", and "should". The forms "could", "might" and "should" are conventionally perceived as more polite than the forms "can", "may" and "shall" respectively. These modals have the effect of softening the idea being communicated. They are intended to downplay the writer's expectation while emphasizing the addressee's privilege to control the situation, that is, the addressee's freedom of action (Upton and Connor 2001). The study of Upton and Connor (2001) partially on the politeness strategies in letters of application written by Belgians, Finns and Americans revealed that Belgian writers used qualifying modals more than twice as often as the Finns but about 20% less frequently than the Americans. In the study of Arvani (2006) on the politeness strategies in business letters written by native English speakers and Iranians, native English speaking communicators applied more than three times the amount of qualifying modals in their letters in comparison to their non-native Iranian counterparts. The reason for this may be the lack of such forms as modals in the Persian language and the unfamiliarity of Iranian writers in applying

them in the English language. As for the present study, the modals were used in profit organizations by 44.58% and in non-profit organizations by 55.42%. Thais employed qualifying modals in their e-mail messages by 44.81% and Germans by 55.19%. This result may imply that Germans gave the priority to their counterparts' freedom of action and did not want to impose on them. Table 4.23 exhibits a variety of modals used by Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations.

Table 4.23 Use of modals

Modals	Profit Organizations		Nonprofit Organizations		Thais		Germans		Total	
can	(71)	16.75%	(60)	14.15%	(66)	15.57%	(65)	15.33%	(131)	30.90%
could	(28)	6.60%	(18)	4.25%	(25)	5.90%	(21)	4.95%	(46)	10.85%
may	(11)	2.59%	(20)	4.72%	(12)	2.83%	(19)	4.48%	(31)	7.31%
might	(5)	1.18%	(1)	0.24%	(2)	0.47%	(4)	0.94%	(6)	1.42%
shall	(1)	0.24%	(6)	1.42%	(4)	0.94%	(3)	0.71%	(7)	1.65%
should	(26)	6.13%	(41)	9.67%	(30)	7.08%	(37)	8.73%	(67)	15.80%
would	(47)	11.08%	(89)	20.99%	(51)	12.03%	(85)	20.05%	(136)	32.08%
Total	(189)	44.58%	(235)	55.42%	(190)	44.81%	(234)	55.19%	(424)	100.00%

The study on politeness strategies in the persuasive e-mail messages exhibits some differences in internal communication of staff in profit and non-profit organizations. What emerged from the study regarding politeness is that stylistic preferences are consistent among all messages. Given that the business of non-profit organizations deals with multilateral collaboration, the messages exchanged within non-profit organizations appeared not to be direct to the point of discussion as evidenced by the findings that these messages contained almost every move at a higher degree of frequency in comparison with the messages from profit organizations. Besides, the staff in this type of organization is academic or highly educated people. Thus, they used a more formal style of writing than those in profit ones. Negative politeness strategies are characterized by self-effacement, formality and restraint that the writer expressed to the addressee. Through the lexical choice, negative politeness strategies, e.g. "please", "appreciate" and the use of modals, were frequently used in non-profit organizations due to the distance among the staff. The staff in profit organizations, on the other hand, used positive politeness strategies to establish solidarity among themselves and sometimes additional offers to preserve the

addressee's positive face although there is a hierarchy in this type of organization. Besides, the nature of this type of organization is competitive, as the name suggests, to make profit. Therefore, it may be preferable to be direct in communication, convey cooperation, and avoid disagreement. The messages from profit organizations (~71 words/message) were slightly shorter than those from non-profit organizations (~86 words/message).

Regarding intercultural communication between Thais and Germans, it was found that negative politeness strategies were employed at the macro-textual level of choice and distribution of moves resulting in the indirectness and diffusion of the messages written by Thais. Thailand is often described as a country where indirect, and implicit communication patterns prevail, and where, for reasons of face saving, criticism and refusals cannot be stated openly in the public. However, at the micro level, Thais used more positive politeness strategies and softening mechanisms such as "please kindly" to minimize the degree of imposition in the case that they made a request. Positive politeness strategies were expressed via optimism and harmony showing that both the writer and the addressee are cooperators with common goals and expectations. Thais used some German words to impress their counterparts in different occasions. It can be assumed that Thais applied positive politeness strategies to accommodate Germans.

Negative politeness strategies were used more often by Germans. Despite the fact that Germans seemed to be direct in communication, they did pay respect to their counterparts. Respect was indicated with negative politeness strategies by showing that the writer did not intend to limit the addressee's freedom of action. The messages written by Germans (~81 words/message) were a bit longer than those written by Thais (~77 words/message). The tone of their messages expressed pessimism through the extensive use of modals. Therefore, it can be assumed that both Thai and German business people tended to apply their counterparts' politeness strategies to accommodate each other.

4.7 Informants' Attitude

Upon the completion of the textual analysis, a group interview with eight e-mail composers (six Thais and two Germans) from the participating organizations was conducted to validate the findings and to obtain their attitudes towards intercultural business communication. The questions focused on the way the informants organized the messages, the factors influencing on their writings including the corporate cultures, and intercultural communication barriers.

The interview supports the findings that e-mail correspondence is different from letters. In the writers' view, e-mail messages are concise, precise, uncomplicated and informal. The informants confirmed the decisive role of corporate culture in their daily discourse activities. Corporate culture, particularly in the large and long-established companies, is a factor that differentiates each message. The convention of the letter writing still remains in the e-mail correspondence in non-profit organizations. The status/position of the reader is what concerns the e-mailers when they start writing an e-mail message. However, the informants pointed out that in internal communication, there is no need to please the other party, to be 'overly polite' which is an aspect they would have to consider in external communication. The informants agreed with the determination of the move boundaries and move structures of the business e-mail messages in internal communication. They accepted that they followed the sequence of moves identified in this research. In addition, linguistic choices, rather than move structures, reflect the formality of the message and the relationship between readers and writers. Meanwhile, the status of the sender also influences the recipient e-mail interpretation. In spite of some difficulties in intercultural communication, miscommunication rarely occurred resulting usually from shared knowledge and expertise, but also from the shared norms and values of corporate culture as explained by the informants. For example, the accepted practice throughout a profit organization is to use the acronym made up of the first letters of the name and surname to address executives while the norm of a non-profit organization is to address each other by "Khun" (Thai honorific title) preceding the addressee's name regardless of the professional status of the person. Overall, it seems

that in daily routine it is the corporate culture that rules, to a large extent overriding national cultures. Below is an interview with a Thai staff in a profit organization.

Q.: When start writing an e-mail message; do you think that you are writing to a German?

A.: No. I don't think about the nationality of my addressee, but his/her position.

Q.: Do you mean the relationship with him/her?

A.: Yes, and the status. Even if I have a close relationship with my boss, I have to write to him formally due to his status.

Q.: Can you think of any other factors that make your messages different?

A.: Culture of the organization maybe, especially in big and long-established companies.

Q.: How's corporate culture reflected in your writing?

A.: The opening salutation in the e-mail message, for example. In my organization, people always use "Khun" preceding addressee's name. Germans address me "Khun" followed by my name and I also address them the same way because other people in my organization do so, but I didn't address any German "Khun" when I worked in my previous company.

Q.: Other than the language use, when writing an e-mail message, do you consider the organization of the message?

A.: No, e-mail is different from the letter. We don't care much about the organization of the message. We try to be precise and concise.

Q.: Do you have any problem communicating with Germans?

A.: Not really, because the staff are well aware of the subject being discussed in internal communication. But if I don't understand something, I have to ask, Germans won't offer it to you, or otherwise you have to find it out yourself.

The interview with Germans provides similar attitudes towards writing business e-mail messages. In intercultural communication, Germans reveal that the differences in national cultures are encountered in face-to-face communication, i.e. meeting and conference, more often than in everyday message exchange. For example, when Germans invited Thai co-workers to express their opinion in the meeting, Thais always kept silent but they did opine right after the meeting. To Germans, silence means unhappiness about something or uncooperative and it makes them uncomfortable. To Thais, silence is seen as politeness and does not have to be replaced with communication. Thais assumed that the listener knew everything. This interview corresponds to Hoecklin (1995: 98) that "Thais will think Germans think they are stupid because they start explaining everything, and vice versa." In other words, Thais assumed that Germans would think that they are silly if they explain everything that the listener already knew.

In case of the meeting where Thais and Germans would have to work and discuss, Thais would not interact and express their disagreement or reservations. For Thai issues, circumstances and relationships are as important as work so they would comment only in a more private or appropriate occasion. In Thailand, communication tends to be very efficient because of their information-flow at work and in privacy. Everything is discussed in advance and meetings are considered as an official “ceremony” where the already commonly agreed decision will be announced. This is important in the way of “giving and keeping face”. Germans, in contrast, inform the attendants in a meeting about the hard and necessary facts. The decision-making process takes place within the meeting. They argue about each other’s opinion within the decision-making process and take discussions in their own hands to come to an agreement. Within this process, Germans tend to be precise and provide just the required information.

In German culture, the meaning is expressed mainly through words. Germans speak a great deal to express what they feel and think. In Thai culture, a lot of what is happening is understood from the context, and too many words are sometimes unnecessary. Communication takes place in an unspoken way. The difference between Thai and German ways is probably the biggest cross-cultural challenge. Despite some difficulties in intercultural communication, Thai and German business people indicated that the messages were interpreted within their context and the readers reacted satisfactorily from that frame of reference.

4.8 Summary

The present analysis of business e-mail correspondence draws on Bhatia (1993)’s framework of genre analysis in business setting. The research was conducted based on the sample of 327 English business e-mail messages written by Thais and Germans within the profit and non-profit organizations. The findings were presented within five main aspects: the features of business e-mail message, the move structures in relation to the cultures, the politeness strategies, and the attitudes of the informants towards intercultural communication. The findings can prove the hypotheses of this study as follows:

H 1 - The e-mail correspondence presents the predominance of corporate cultures over national cultures. This hypothesis can be accepted. Both corporate cultures and national cultures play a significant role in the way each e-mail message is structured and the language is used. Corporate cultures bring about the similarities while national cultures entail the differences. However, when weighing these two cases, it is found that corporate cultures prevail over national cultures, especially Thai.

H 2 - Thais and Germans share common move structures and linguistic realizations in English business e-mail messages resulting from corporate cultures. This hypothesis is proved to be true due to the fact that the Thais and Germans working in the same company seemed to follow the same sequence of moves at the similar move frequency. However, Thais were affected by corporate cultures more than Germans.

H 3 - Thais use more negative politeness strategies but Germans use more positive politeness strategies to achieve the communicative goals in English business e-mail messages. This hypothesis is partly true. Negative politeness strategies were integrated at the macro-textual level causing the indirectness in the messages written by Thais.

However, at the micro level, Thais used more softening mechanisms, such as “please kindly”, and positive politeness strategies in conveying their interest, optimism and harmony, to accommodate Germans. Although Germans seemed to be direct in communication, negative politeness strategies at the micro level were used more often by Germans. Respect was indicated with negative politeness strategies by showing that the writer did not intend to limit the addressee’s freedom of action. The tone of their messages expressed pessimism through the extensive use of modals. Therefore, it can be assumed that both Thai and German business people tended to apply their counterparts’ politeness strategies to accommodate each other.

H 4 - Positive politeness strategies are more often used by the staff in profit organizations than those in non-profit organizations. This hypothesis is accepted. Positive and negative politeness strategies were used by the staff both in profit and non-profit organizations. However, the staff in profit organizations used more positive



politeness strategies due to the fact that the nature of this type of organization is competitive, as the name suggests, to make profit. Time is money. Therefore, it may be preferable to be direct in communication, convey cooperation, and establish solidarity. On the contrary, the staff in non-profit organizations used negative politeness strategies more frequently on account of the distance among the staff. The messages written and exchanged within this type of organizations show more respect and tend not to impose on the addressee.

H 5 - The business e-mail messages contain a recognizable electronic discourse and exhibit a new genre of written communication. The e-mail has affected the discursive practices in the context of interpersonal communication, making the messages less formal (absence of opening and closing salutations) and more personalized (use of emoticons). The tone of e-mail messages is expected to be conversational because the communicators are usually familiar with one another. This means using ordinary words and first personal pronouns, eliminating wordiness, long lead-ins such as “I am writing this e-mail to inform you that...”, and verbose phrases like “in spite of the fact that...”. The postal closing salutation such as “sincerely” is too formal, “best regards” is more appropriate for e-mail messages. Therefore, H5 is accepted.

From the analysis of the sample English business e-mail correspondence, some evidence emerged that genre analysis such as this can provide us with valuable data from language in use which can be carried over into the teaching of ESP. The use of the ethnographic dimension to support the structural analysis can provide teachers, and consequently students, with more comprehensive data about context effects on language communicative processes within and between genres. The detailed genre analysis provides explanation of which linguistic choices characterize relationships, how corporate culture influences and restricts written communication, and how English is used among non-native speakers. This can help language professionals not only to describe the context of use, but also explain linguistic choice for both research and pedagogic purposes.