

AN ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS DISCOURSE STRATEGIES USED IN EMAIL TRANSACTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF NISSAN MOTOR THAILAND

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Abstract

Nissan Motor Thailand (NMT) is one of the companies that are engaged in daily operation with diverse customers especially the *Parts Logistics Department*. This department corresponds with customers by using email transaction. In this context, understanding different communication strategies and interpersonal devices when dealing with overseas customers can be very important to understand different kinds of attitudes and communication strategies that are negotiated in the emails.

The result of the study shows that there are various communication strategies used by different customers. These are politeness, clarification, acknowledgement, relationship bonding, lead in and topic focus strategies. Various attitudes [affect, judgment and appreciation] are also identified through the use of various lexico-grammatical items and other linguistic instruments such as 'modality', 'adverbials', 'capitalization and abbreviation' and 'punctuations'. These items indicate positive and negative attitudes while modalities in most cases are used to soften or sharpen the transaction.

With the impact of AEC, this research supports the current policy of the company to promote NMT mindset about 'cross-cultural function' in both internal and external organizations.

Keywords: Email discourse, Interpersonal strategies, Cultural Diversity, Intercultural communication, Cross-cultural function

Introduction

NISSAN MOTOR (THAILAND) CO. LTD. (NMT) started the production and distribution of Nissan vehicles in Thailand over 50 years ago. With both Thai and foreign workers, NMT creates a diverse

environment in an automotive industry. In this aspect, cultural diversity is important especially when dealing with business transactions and overseas colleagues where consumers or businesses are made via the Internet. One of the most commonly used channels for communication among multicultural organization team members is E-mail. Therefore, understanding different discourse strategies employed by various interlocutors is crucial particularly when transactions are done through emails where face to face interaction is absent. For this reason, a failure to understand transactions might result in inadequate response to customers' needs that could lead to wasting time. In addition, a person who has insufficient language background and lacks cultural understanding might also cause problem. So, it is important for an organization to let employees understand and be aware of the business dealings of certain countries in terms of the different communication strategies.

E-mail or electronic mail is an important way to communicate because it avoids the delays cause by the vagaries of phoning. Many users read their electronic mail several times a day. This allows people to communicate around the world very quickly (Bovee, & Thill, 2005).

Review of Literature

The importance of understanding business transaction is fundamental for the success of every company especially when a person deals with multinational organization such as Nissan Motor Thailand. With this requirement, understanding various communication strategies employed in email transaction is crucial as business matters are normally done through email transaction.

Nickerson (2005) mentioned the important point of studying business discourse in international contexts where English is used as a lingua franca in written documents. Different communications use different strategies when dealing with different situations. Email communication, as one of these channels and plays an important role in business transaction. As business mostly evolves in day to day transaction, specifically among overseas customers, cultural understanding and communication strategy are important. Consequently,, discourse analysis is a useful tool to find the unpack the interpersonal aspect behind the interaction between organizations where communication and cultural impact influence the way people react to each other (Nickerson 2005).

In today's world the importance of English, particularly as a Lingua franca (ELF) plays a major role in business transaction especially when globalization accelerates the need for business English communication skill.

English has increasingly become the lingua franca of today's world business language with business practitioners coming from different cultural backgrounds and speaking different national languages. With the increasing importance of English in international business, this global trend has made English a worldwide business language.

Communication Strategy and communicative strategies across cultures

Communication is fundamental in business because it concerns collaborative activities. Goods and services are created and exchanged through the close coordination of various individuals, sometimes within a single community and other times across the globe. This means coordination requires intense communication. Communication styles across culture vary enormously around the world, and these contribute to a staggering variety of business communication style.

This issue is supported by the study from corporate communicative practice in Brazil (Barbara, Celani, Collins & Scott, 1996), with an important focus of practice-based research has described business discourse practices and skills need in relevant business communities. This identifies and describes salient patterns of communication in or across different corporate contexts. The study of communication patterns and skills needs in Brazilian firms by Barbara and colleagues (1996) identified users of business English and Portuguese in different types of business organizations. They determined the communication types (written and oral) that are most widely used for national and international business dealings by describing and analyzing business discourse in relevant contexts. The idea is to provide a research base to support training program in the specific skills identified.

Discourse Strategies: the interpersonal aspect of language

In studying discourse, the concept of culture in anthropological and ethnographic approaches is brought together, this concern with social organization, culture and language use in context. All three components can be analyzed as integrated aspects of a single system of action (Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 1997). The construction of narrative discourse is seen in interaction with the roles and relations of sender and receiver and other situational parameters. The way in which discourse is formed and argued by the cultural knowledge is an integral part of the communicative competence of members of specific communities. Based on Georgakopoulou (1997), most studies of discourse have started with the assumption that the meaning, structure and the use of texts being analyzed are socially and culturally variable. The significant differences in discourse

styles have been thus found in different contexts of occurrence.

Based on Berendt (2009:33) the two aspects of communicative function such as, “clarification/explanation” and “relationship bonding” are commonly used to identify the different discourses. However, this was done as a linguistic manifestation in dyadic discourse. Clarification is frequently occurred in conjunction with denials, anxiety statements, threats, and challenges. Berendt (2009) also mentioned the function by focusing on the maintenance of the relationship whether critical, aggressive or more friendly and personal. The findings illustrate that greetings are used to maintain relationship. In addition, the maintenance of relationship needs to be examined in terms of the social style/register and characteristics employed in a communication where face to face interaction is not presented such as in email discourse.

Language in social context

Pragmatics helps an interpretation of utterances in situational context. It is concerned not so much with the sense of what is said but what is communicated through the manner and style of an utterance (Levinson, 1983). It is also concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). Pragmatics has something to do with what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances mean by itself. Grice’s views have had considerable influence on the most recent approaches to pragmatics. Following Grice, conversation is now generally conceived of as a cooperative venture, governed by maxims of truthfulness, relevance, informativeness and manner, which may be exploited for particular conversational effects. Such approaches are very important in this particular study, as the researcher tries to understand customers’ communicative strategies.

Appraisal Framework

Based on Martin and Rose (2007), *Appraisal* is a system of interpersonal meaning. The resources of appraisal are used for negotiating social relationship by telling the listeners or readers how we feel about things and people (what our attitudes are). Appraisal is concerned with the evaluation of attitudes that are negotiated in a text. This can be the strength of feelings involved and the ways values are sourced and readers aligned. Appraisal is the interpersonal kinds of meanings, which realize variations in the stakeholders of social interactions enacted in a text. This foregrounds the interactive nature of discourse which includes written discourse. This has to do with evaluating things, people’s character and their feeling. These

evaluations can be more or less intense or can be more or less amplified. The attitude can be writers' own or attributed to other sources. (Martin & Rose, 2007)

There are three aspects of appraisal (Martin & Rose, 2007: 26); APPRECIATION has something to do with the value of things, JUDGMENT with people's character and AFFECT people's feelings. Since attitudes are amplified and gradable, their volume can be turned up and down depending on how intense a writer's feeling. The writer may use resources such as intensifier to show how strong his/her reactions are as amplification.

Methodology

Research question

There are three questions being asked in this research that might help to answer the problem being found in this study.

1. What are the different communicative strategies/functions used by various overseas customers when dealing with business transaction with NMT?
2. To what extent the interpersonal strategies influence the linguistic choices of the overseas customers when dealing with business transaction to NMT through email?
3. What is / are the dominant attitudes employ by different participant when dealing with business transaction to NMT through email?

Participants

The main participants of this study were the five major customers of NMT from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, United of Arab Emirate and South Africa. Major customers are defined by the management through customers' purchasing power. The instruments were the daily email transactions sent through email. These emails are the basis of the analysis in this study.

Procedure of data collection

Purposive sampling was used to collect the data used. The email transactions were selected from the yearly record, during the month of January to March 2013 with the total of 50 email transactions from the five participants. One set of email represented a single topic within one

transaction. A single topic contained the sent and received emails started from the beginning of a certain transaction until it was solved and closed. Ten sets of email contained 10 different topics from selected 5 customers. The length of each transaction depended on the topic, the content of the inquiry and the ability of the participants to close the deal of a transaction. There were 50 sets of emails under 5 customers.

Findings from the analysis

The email transactions were analyzed to answer research questions.

I. These are the different communicative strategies/functions used by various overseas customers when dealing with business transactions.

Politeness strategy

Based on Brown and Levinson (1987), the term positive and negative refer not to good or bad, rather to rituals of approach (positive) and avoidance (negative) respectively. In contrast to non-infringement and avoidance, positive tactics work through insinuation or establishment of a sense of commonality and familiarity. To make this claim is to suggest the writer and reader share something in common, and that on this basis they share an affiliative bond.

These are some of the examples of *Politeness strategy* found in the analysis:

Message
>> Hello XXX san, (greetings: politeness strategy) >> Could you please confirm (request: politeness strategy) the stock availability for part >> Awaiting your reply >> Thank you (appreciative: politeness strategy)
>> Dear XXX san, (greeting: politeness strategy) >> Our stock is available >> Order is welcome (appreciative: politeness strategy)

“Hello” and “Dear” are used as greetings from the participants. Although these are conventional greetings, these can be employed as a part of politeness strategy to maintain business relations, as well as, before signing

off, using ‘thank you or you are welcome’ which can be an indication of a polite attitude.

Message
>> Dear XXX san, (greeting: politeness strategy)
>> Sorry to bother you again (apology, politeness strategy) regarding to our air shipment

The use of an apology (affect) is used when restating the main topic can be an indication that politeness strategy is being utilized as the email illustrated. The use of ‘greetings’, ‘apology’, ‘please’ and ‘thanks’ indicates this customer know how to deal a business counterpart positively. This transaction has a friendly tone by judging how he constructs his email. Thus this creates a positive business relation and maintains a good relationship with NMT operator. Such way illustrates a form of politeness strategy in a given context.

Politeness devices are used in both positive and negative way. This strategy is frequently found in email transaction especially on the customers/participants from Indonesia and Singapore. This perhaps corresponds to some culture and may be reflected on others overseas participants’ personality.

Based on Hofstede (1970), Singapore has a strong Chinese influence and Confucianism teaching which employees illustrated best performance in groups. This is the reason why politeness is very important when expressing opinion and feedback with colleagues the communication flow when dealing a business. Indonesian participant’s transaction contains a lot of politeness strategies either.

Clarification strategy:

In order to create mutual agreement under business communication strategy, clarification is important in deploying the information from different overseas participants to NMT operator.

Clarification frequently occurred in conjunction with denials, anxiety statements, threats, and challenges. Berendt (2009) also mentioned the function of a relationship by focusing on the maintenance of the relationship whether aggressive or friendly and personal. Sometimes greeting is used to maintain the relationship. In addition, to maintain business relationship the

social style/register should be observed characteristics employed in a communication where face to face interaction is not presented such as in email discourse is important.

These are some of the examples of *clarification strategy* found in the analysis:

Message
>> Dear XXX/ XXX, >> Maybe my request was not clear (clarification strategy) >> we require the interface. >> The correct ref should be XXX my mistake. (clarification strategy) >> Sorry for the inconvenience.
>> Dear XXX san, >> Ok, understood your request. (clarification strategy) >> <u>Pls</u> , find in attached mail.

Clarification strategy is used when the provided information needs clarification to avoid miscommunication and help to attain common purposes. Although this strategy can be turned to negative viewpoint and aggressiveness sometimes, its aim is the same, to gain an understanding of a particular topic and provide a complete clarification and understanding about the transaction on process or request.

Message
>> Pailin san, >> when will we receive your price for below part >> as the customer killing us (clarification strategy)] >> due to we have not order his part yet >> this is now very urgent please (clarification strategy)

Clarification statement expresses a feeling of disappointment and displeased. Consequently, the participant implicitly expresses his authoritative voice by using a command statement, '**this is now very urgent please**'. A clarification strategy was utilized as an acknowledgement that the transaction was on the process and was not overlooked. In business, this is very important to avoid business inquiries delayed and complaint. Prompt

response connotes, that requests from the customers are always dealt with and not overlooked by the operator. Clarification is very important aspect of business transaction to attain not only business goal but also communicative purposes.

Relationship bonding strategy:

There are various phrases found in the analysis that aim to maintain relationship bonding. For example in request statements, the participants maintain the pleasant environment by using modality to soften the request and keep the positive meaning as much as possible. This strategy also is being used to show a close connection of the supplier and customers to maintain a good business relationship.

These are some of the examples of *relationship bonding strategy* found in the analysis:

Message
>> Dear XXX san, (greeting: relationship bonding strategy) >> Hello again, (greeting: relationship bonding strategy) >> With regard to the certificate for engine
>> Dear XXX san, (greeting: relationship bonding strategy) >> Could you pls confirm below request? >> Thank you (thankful: relationship bonding strategy)

The language being used implies that there is a satisfactory relationship when dealing with business transaction. Conventional greetings, ‘Dear’ or ‘Hello again’, imply an information delivered regularly could maintain the supplier and customer’s good connection.

Message
>> Dear XXX san and XXX san, (greeting: relationship bonding strategy) >> Good day to you and Happy New Year!!!! (greeting: relationship bonding strategy) >> Here with for our Purchase orders from them >> Awaiting your ETD confirmation >> Regards (politeness: relationship bonding strategy)
>> Dear XXX san, (greeting: relationship bonding strategy)

- >> **sorry to jump in (apology: relationship bonding strategy)**
- >> is there any news for the ETA this item?
- >> **Kindly confirm (politeness: relationship bonding strategy)**
- >> **Many thanks (appreciativeness: relationship bonding strategy)**

Greetings are employed to maintain good relationship between parties, these are both formal and informal style as shown at the beginning of the transaction. In this example, several phrases are found such as, '**Hello again**' and **Good day to you and Happy New Year!!!!** These greetings can be an indication of a positive business environment. This form of communication creates a friendlier atmosphere.

All these devices are introduced in most transactions of participants to make the flow of communication softer and gentler while maintaining closed business relationship between the NMT and the overseas participants. As Berendt (2009) mentioned the function a relationship bonding is to maintain good business relation. This relationship is formed whenever a reciprocal message processing occurs. The relationship is classified in terms of number of factors, including the number of persons involved, the purpose of relationship and its duration (Barker & Barker, 1993 & Berendt, 2009). These are developed for the purpose of coordinated action- completion of a task or project that one individual could not manage alone. Some individuals may be willing to devote more or less time, energy, and commitment to a relationship, depending upon whether they see it as an essential task or socially oriented.

Acknowledgement strategy:

In many business functions, simple and clear response is demanding especially in daily communication, immediate acknowledgement is highly appreciated by partner. In this case, acknowledgement and assurance strategy are used corporately to confirm the information was received and acknowledged by each parties. But majority of the world cultures, varieties of indirectness and directness are the norm in communication. In some culture, for example, saying "no" is considered too face threatening so negative responses are phased as positive ones: one never says "no", but listeners understand from the form of the "yes" whether it is truly a "yes" or a polite "no" (Tannen, 1981, 1984, 1994)

Based on the finding, different styles of acknowledging requires different way of responding which might depends on its purpose, time and

value of that transaction. Yes', 'Note', 'ok', 'Sure' which mean to agree with someone or to confirm of doing something while some participants alternatively confirm with a full statement rather than using short and simple notice in an explicit way of acknowledging as per example highlighted below:

Message
>> Dear XXX san, >> OK (acknowledgement strategy) >> Please arrange additional order with order no. as detail below: >> awaiting your good news (acknowledgement strategy) >> Regards
>> Dear XXX san, >> Received your order manually (acknowledgement strategy) >> we are issuing PO to supplier
>> Dear XXX san, >> Thank you for your reply (acknowledgement strategy) >> And don't forget

Acknowledgement strategies are utilized in a short and simple statement such as; '**ok**' or '**receive your order**', to convey understanding and information acknowledgement. This kind of communication is a form confirmation to both parties. As some request of the overseas participants might not be able to fulfill, thus, short and simple acknowledge from another party is sufficient in some circumstances. With nearly all business communication are taking place instantly or very quickly via email, there is a tendency queries might not be responded immediately. Therefore, decision might take longer, in this manner, patience is the most valuable virtue for the operator who receive message to demonstrate throughout the business especially those who are working in an international organization. This acknowledgement might be able to fasten decision making and smoothen the communication flow.

Lead in/ Focus Strategy

There is information at the beginning of every transaction which represents focus strategy. It provides information to reduce doubtful situation by another party. Based on Foley (2011), the most straightforward way to give information is to use declarative clauses to make statement. This is to ensure that the message sent to the participants contains sufficient and correct information while supporting them to fasten decision making and

take necessary action.

Here are some examples of the transaction that facilitates the use of lead in strategy to be able to attain the communication goal:

Message
>> Dear XXX san, >> we were informed by agent XXX that there is no service north port to Malaysia on ETD 22 Feb. (lead in / focus strategy) >> Could you pls advice
>> Dear XXX san, >> if change to XXX liner >> kindly check and confirm on the free period days of storage & demurrage (request, lead in / focus strategy) >> will it be same as XXX?
>> Dear XXX san, >> Pls, kindly confirm if XXX has DD I4/I0 days? (request, lead in / focus strategy)

A well-defined strategy is one that engages employees and aligns with the organization's business goals. The effective communications help to assure employees to receive useful, timely, and consistent communications throughout the organization.

The interpersonal strategies that influence the linguistic choices of the overseas customers when dealing with business transaction.

Modality:

Based on Martin and Rose (2007), they classified modality as another way of introducing additional voices into a text. They described it as a resource which set up a semantic space between yes and no, a cline running between positive and negative poles. In the study, there are some differences between South African and Singaporean way of using modalities. South African used modality to connote possibility while Singaporean used modality such as 'please', 'kindly', 'thanks' and 'sorry' as magic words to maintain good business relations and sometimes an indication of politeness strategy.

Examples of modalities are shown below:

- *Kindly* change the shipment schedule'
- *Please* confirm by return'
- 'Could you please provide stock availability?'
- 'Can you arrange shipment with detail below?'
- 'Would you like to process order now?'
- 'Kindly ship'

Capitalization & Abbreviation:

There are few abbreviations used in the business context. Although, it may not be used officially in various culture in business world these are common as it helps to convey the meaning completely. Saying all that, once capitalizations are used such as *FYI*, *ASAP*, *TOP URGENT* to certain abbreviations these connotes certain meaning

David (2006: 89) stated, "Acronyms are so common that they regularly receive a critical comment, when it comes to technology, the greater the number of acronyms, the higher the factor". These are some examples of frequent acronyms used in email writing; 'asap- as soon as possible', *b4* (before), *btw* (by the way), *fyi* (for your information) and *tx* (thanks).

However, when capitalization is utilized in certain transaction, these are emphasize, a strongly marked form of email communication. Messages in capitals are considered to be 'shouting', and usually avoided since words in capitals add extra emphasis. In this study, CAPITALIZATION is used to emphasize the urgency of the order and imply immediate attention. This is an indication of certain attitude of the participants, impatient or can be frustration. Thus, when it comes to attitude, capitalization can be used to emphasize unhappiness or can be an aggressive feeling of some participants. For example, when one of the parties does not provide appropriate response to emails sent for many days.

These are some of examples found in email transactions.

- 'P# xxx will arrive to our *WH* next week'
- '*FYI*, we shall be sending our special order thru system shortly'
- 'Your return advice *ASAP* is highly appreciated'
- '*TOP URGENT*'
- '*VERY URGENT*'

- 'Please confirm urgent shipping details for below *AIRFREIGHT* back order'

Adverbs

Based on the transaction from all participants, adverbs are used to emphasize the progress of action being taken. There are various types of adverbs used in the transaction to add extra meaning to the particular action.

Few examples are listed below:

- 'Part is needed *urgently*'
- '*Currently*, just waiting to sign only'
- '*Hopefully* this should sufficient to fill container'
- 'Received your order *manually*'
- 'We will arrange the flight *immediately* within this week'

Punctuation

Based on David (2006), punctuation tends to be minimalist in most situations, and completely absent in some e-mail exchanges. However, it is an important area to bring writing into direct contact with speech as well as conveying a great deal of information about grammatical construction. Unusual combinations of punctuation marks can occur, such as ellipsis dots (...) to express pause, repeated hyphens (---), or the repeated use of commas and exclamation (,,,), (!!!) in order to emphasize which can result in exaggerated or random use of punctuation. All of these may of course also be found in traditional informal writing. (Crystal, 2006: 95)

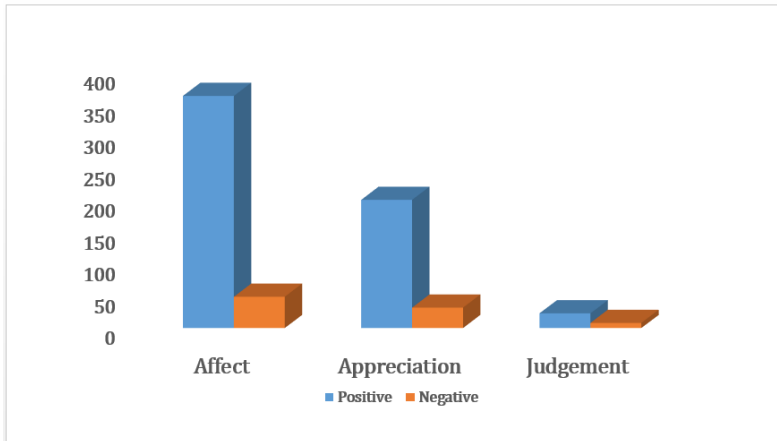
In the transaction received from South Africa, question marks are used to imply dissatisfaction. Indonesian participant include many exclamations in the transaction to imply the positive tone of expression. This help to create a friendlier atmosphere that lead to a more pleasant business environment transaction as per statement highlight below:

- 'Where did you get this from???'
- 'Did you send us pre alert for invoice xxx???'
- 'Good day to you and Happy New Year!!!'

Some of emails found using excessive punctuation in their interrogative statements to express a feeling of uncertainty and doubt which implies 'negative affect'. For example the use of excessive questions marks might indicate more information is needed for clarification. This can be one of communication strategies used in email transaction.

The dominant attitudes employ by different participant when dealing with business transaction to NMT through emails

The figure below illustrates the different kinds ATTITUDES found in NMT email transactions.



There are the three aspects of appraisal; (i) the value of things, (ii) people's character and (iii) people's feelings. Since attitudes are amplified and gradable- their volume can be turned up and down depending on how intense the writers feel. The writer can use the resources such as intensifier to show how strong the writer's reactions are as amplification. Therefore, resource for expressing feeling as **affect**, resource for judging character as **judgment** and resources for valuing the worth of things as **appreciation**.

Based on the finding of all transaction, **affect** is the dominant attitude employ by different participants when dealing with business transaction to NMT. The finding is related to pragmatics which concerned with characterizing the behavior of language users and what is communicated by the manner and style of an utterance (Levinson, 1983). In addition to pragmatics, it concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). Therefore, pragmatics is the approach to sort out the attitudes while the appraisal is one of the main focuses that the research is looking for from the language used by each participants.

The example of affect found from the transaction as per statement highlighted below:

Message
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [greeting]) >> <u>Please provide</u> (aff., [request]) the stock availability for the below part no. >> <u>Thank you</u> (aff., [thankful])
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [greeting]) >> <u>Below is the update</u> (aff., [certainty]) >> <u>thanks</u> (aff., [thankful])
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [greeting]) >> Attached <u>please find</u> (aff., [request]) our order >> <u>Pls. assist to courier as soon as possible</u> (aff., [urgency]) & <u>advise</u> (aff., [request]) the ETD as usual >> This order has been uploaded into system
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [warm greeting]) >> <u>Received your order</u> (aff., [reassured]) as in attached file

Positive and negative ‘affects’ are found in this example above. Affects that are utilized positively are illustrated by polite requests, greetings, and a polite ‘thanks’ or ‘thank you’ before signing off. However, some of the transactions illustrate negative ‘affect’ imbedded in the communication for example an urgency of a request in E3.

Message
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [greeting]) >> For P/N XXX <u>please find</u> (aff., [request]) our manual order XXX and advise delivery. >> <u>Kindly arrange</u> (aff., [request]) to ship on 22 Feb for below indent part no. XXX
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [greeting]) >> Received your order as in attached file
>> <u>Dear</u> XXX san, (aff., [greeting]) >> Refer to your email below, you confirm there are stock availability

<p>>> but <u>until today still not yet ship</u> (aff., disappointed, upset,) the part >> <u>kindly ship</u> (aff., [request]) on I Mar >> <u>pls, do not delay anymore</u> (aff., [request]) >> Your <u>immediate action will be highly appreciated</u> (aff., [upset]) >> <u>Thanks & best regards</u> (aff., [appreciative])</p>
<p>>> <u>Dear XXX san,</u> (aff., [greeting]) >> Yes, our stock is available >> but we unable to ship on 22 Feb >> because we need sometimes to process order >> therefore we arrange to ship you on I Mar as our schedule</p>

Although the participants used various ‘positive affect’ to create a positive atmosphere, reading between the lines it is shown that the participant was rather upset and disappointed on the order’s delay. Modality and adverbials are used as emphasis on the disappointment such as kindly ship, pls, do not delay anymore, and immediate action will be highly appreciated. As illustrated these are negative ‘affect’. Using such reminder can be meant serious on the participants.

Malaysian participant’s message was responded immediately but no apology was made on the operator side. Reading between the lines, it was implied that the order was quite urgent. Based on the urgency illustrated, this could imply that the stock availability could be delayed further. Such delayed could create further disappointment. Stating that the shipment needs ‘sometimes to process’ without further elaboration what ‘sometimes’ would be, might create more feeling on the Malaysian side.

The example of appreciation found from the transaction as per statement highlighted below:

Message
<p>>> Dear XXX san, >> as now we receive order >> but <u>the volume unable to reach 20’ container</u> (app.) >> and we were informed by vessel agent that >> <u>the space of 20’ container delivery on 16 Feb is shortage</u> (app.) >> The <u>available space will be on 23 Feb</u> (app.)</p>

<p>>> which is <u><i>I week beyond our actual plan</i></u> (app.) >> there is the <u><i>available space of 20' container on 23 Feb.</i></u> (app.) >> Could you pls inform customer >> if they have an additional item to add in order to increase volume to 40' container and get vessel on 16 Feb?</p>
<p>>> Dear XXX san, >> Further to your mail below, customer has <i>placed the order</i> on 3rd Feb order no. XXX >> You can add this items from <u><i>this order to increase the volume of the container</i></u> (app.) >> And request you to get the delivery on 16 Feb.</p>
<p>>> Dear XXX san, >> I already <u><i>included order no. XXX in the shipment</i></u> (app.) >> Total container is still 20' container >> pls, advise whether to upload additional order</p>

In this transaction, there was a lot of information to another party about the topic. The topic was about order, volume, and space, to fulfill the volume as per subject email at the beginning, illustrates 'appreciation'. There are few negative appreciation in this transaction for example, *the volume unable to reach, the space of 20' container on 16 Feb is shortage,* and *I week beyond our actual plan.* This means that there were some issues concerning the shipment that both parties need to settle.

<p>Message</p>
<p>>> Dear all, >> Pls, find <u><i>pre alert</i></u> of XXX as in attached file (app.) >> Dear XXX san, >> Pls, find <u><i>scan invoice with signature and picture as in attached file</i></u> (app.)</p>
<p>>> Dear Pak XXX, >> Well noted with thanks >> first of all we will apply for <u><i>inspection request</i></u> (app.)</p>

There are few cognitive information that each party focusing as per the highlight of the 'appreciation' such as '*pre alert*', '*inspection request*',

'inspection report and photo' and *'information'* that illustrate the main focus in the transaction. To make the statement soften, the modality and positive affect sometimes are used in this transaction. There were shifts in language where local language was used 'Pak' (Miss) this can be a representation of cross cultural business transaction. At the end of transaction, intensifier was used to emphasize the positive dealings and maintain the relationship bonding with the operator.

The example of *judgement* found from the transaction as per statement highlighted below:

Message
>> Dear XXX san, >> <i>XXX san is on leave (vacation)</i> , (judg.) >> <i>he needs rest</i> (judg.) >> <i>so we sent him away</i> (judg.) >> I have <i>placed</i> sea order via Dragon >> Also, separated order for filters >> Is this correct process for above filter order? >> kind regards
>> Dear XXX san, >> Good day to you! >> Thank you for order uploading >> <i>yes you are correct</i> (judg.) >> For normal order you are able to upload via system >> <i>our team will check with the receipt and confirm back shortly</i> (judg)

One of the outstanding attitudes that is illustrated there is 'judgment'. In some clauses, some statement has nothing to do with the main topic but it is imply the characteristic of the writer and the person whom we mentioned to such as *'XXX san is on leave vacation'*, *'he needs rest'*, *'we sent him away'*. Also, 'judgment' sometimes imply the justification of the character as *'yes you are correct'* to implicitly show short confirmation from another party. The statement used 'perhaps' to provide information related to previous transaction dealt by other colleague. Such communication also imply relax and informal atmosphere between the operator and South African participant.

Message
>> Dear XXX san, >> Pls assist to ship our air orders ASAP >> Your return advice of delivery status is highly appreciate >> as <i>customer needs pts urgently</i> (judg.)
>> Dear XXX san, >> We are <i>processing your air shipment</i> (judg.) >> Delivery will be around 24 Feb.

The communication in this email is focusing on the request. Affect, appreciation and judgment are utilized in this transaction but in a neutral tone. The urgency of the transaction can be seen though the message. The use of adverb to emphasize the action shows the urgency by the participants as ‘*customer needs pts urgently*’.

Although, the **affect** and **appreciation** are the two systems that dominate the transaction with regards to attitude, judgment can be inferred on how emails are being conveyed. Reading between the lines of those emails positive and negative **judgment** can be observed. In the analysis, ‘affect’ contains various attitudes behind a particular statement such as urgency, hopeful, request or thankful. It can be positive or negative depends on how the language shape the context and implicitly represented the attitude of each parties which effect to how people think and feel. The attitude illustrated in each transaction helps to support decision making and facilitate the communication business flow. Knowing the main topic might help participants to avoid miscommunication and a waste time in exchanging emails. Based on the analysis, however, ‘judgment’ is rarely found, saying all that, judgment can be inferred when reading the whole email transactions between the lines. For example, in the form of *adverbs* as emphasis can imply the characteristics of the writer in message conveyed. Thus, though judgment is not stated, in the language used by the participant, implicitly is represented by it.

Conclusion

Based on all the analysis, one way of interacting in the world is through language by looking at the interpersonal function and how it enables social interaction (Foley, 2011 and Martin and Rose, 2007). Foley (2011, p. 76) mentions, “We can make statement, ask questions and issue commands in different way and we do so depending on our relationship with the person or whom we are interacting. The relationships in which we stand with others

are varied. The language system has evolved to provide us with the resource to express who we are in relation to our addressee and our attitude towards the world as we experience it.”

The various communication strategies found in the transaction, Politeness strategies are used to create a relax atmosphere and maintain the positive relationship. Topic focus strategies are used to provide and highlight the main idea of the transaction. The readers should take into account the context of the situation why these devices are used. For example, the use of modalities facilitates the statement that can be implied politeness or undertone the seriousness of the topic.

Appraisal framework helps to identify these attitudes. Since attitudes are amplified and gradable, their volumes can be turned up and down depending on how intense the writer feels which illustrated in the language they used (Martin and Rose, 2007). As illustrated in the analysis, judgment implies the progress of action using present continuous. The main focus of things and actions is emphasized by the participants/customers in each transaction. All language devices illustrated in the analysis are supported the transaction which facilitates the operation of NMT and overseas customers which is to attain communication goal effectively.

Discourse analysis allows the learner to interpret the meaning both implicitly and explicitly. Certain language devices should be understood and used appropriately depending on the intention of learners. Therefore, analyzing the context might help the students when to apply certain words in different business setting.

Language is the important device in communication. Understanding the communicative and interpersonal strategies used by different cultures could avoid misunderstanding and increase the effectiveness of communication which is crucial in business operation. This can support the purpose of NMT logistic part department and business objectives of certain organization especially if a person is dealing with international company like NMT. Understanding overseas customers and colleagues is important aspect of the communication that can contribute to the firm success. This means, not only knowing the language employees use as a Lingua Franca of business but also taking into account their culture, in order to understand their communication style. This research serves to highlight the fact that employees in multinational companies need to know how to communicate efficiently when dealing with diverse colleagues especially in email communication which is the channel of most communication. Additionally, this study highlights that international company needs to look how

employees utilized language in the context of diverse customers. Which means, language should not be looked at in isolation instead, language should be taught together with culture, norms, and belief as these shape the language itself. As variety of tasks need to be achieved, different communicative purposes needs to be conveyed to various people from different parts of the world as effective communication is vital for the company (NMT).

In addition, this study promotes not only in terms of learners awareness by looking beyond the content of words but focusing on modalities and adjuncts which are intertwined with the other aspect of language to understand the context of certain situation that promotes communication effectively. With the emerging Asian Economic Community (AEC), education system is one of the essential part that driven and create the effective resources in each country. This means inculcating teachers' and language learners' different cultures and language used. As a learner, it is important to understand different communication strategy employs by different people around them to avoid miscommunication while giving importance to context, function, and social norms that support the successful communication. Therefore, Understanding and knowing the culture of a particular writer/speaker help the reader/listener to understand the discourse or communication efficiently. Differentiating communication signals and its cultural impact allow learners not only to learn but understand how to be adaptable and accommodate with each other.

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