PROBLEMS OF GSB EMPLOYEES IN WRITING ENGLISH EMAIL TO COMMUNICATE WITH INTERNATIONAL BANK-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

BY

MR. SIRAPHOP WANNADILOK

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
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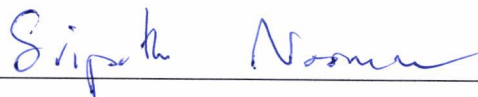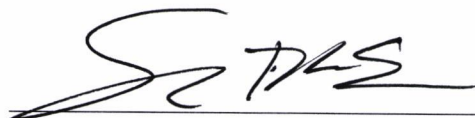
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(Alisa Ratanapruks, Ph.D.)

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Dean _____

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to find the problems in email writing of 75 employees of the Fraud Department and Call Center Department at the headquarters of GSB and to survey for suggestions to help improve their English business email writing skills. The participants in this study regularly used email to communicate with international organizations. The data was collected by a questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS to find frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

The study revealed that the highest ranked problem of email writing was the tone of formality, followed by problems of using appropriate words, using correct grammar, organizing a proper structure, awareness of culture difference and composing the message body. Their moderately ranked problems included writing an opening message, writing a subject line, writing a concise message and concern about writing a proper English business email.

In addition, most participants strongly agreed that they preferred the company to provide the training course that lasts three hours per day for two days, rather than a longer session that lasts 6-8 hours a day. Some agreed that they could improve by self-learning from the internet or textbooks. They felt neutral about improving English business email writing skill from document examples in their workplace.

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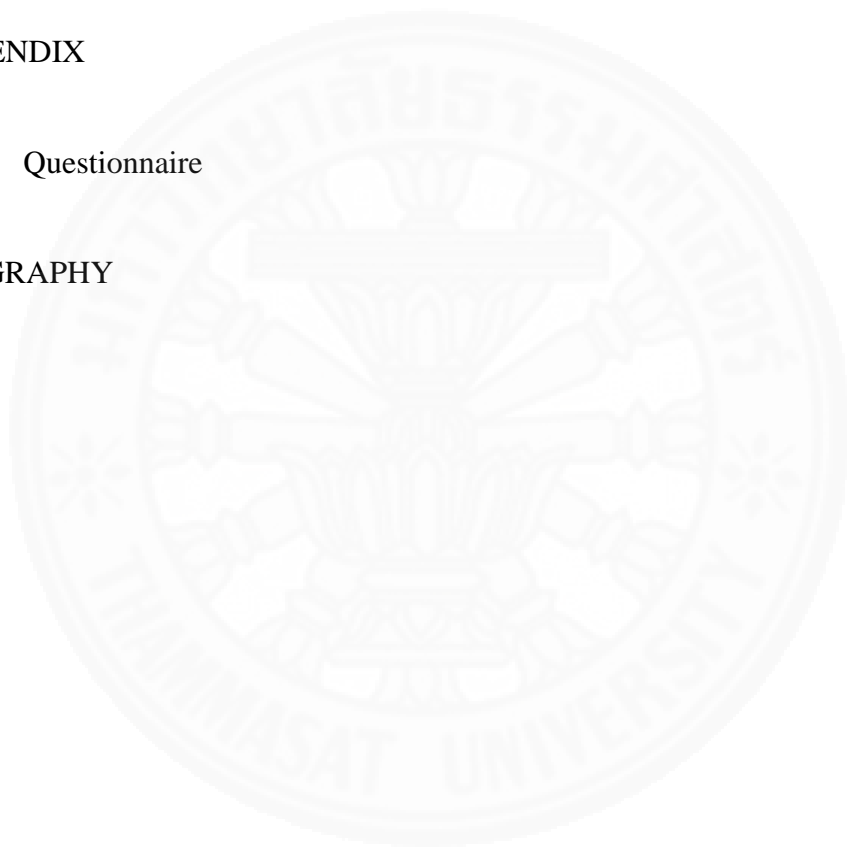
Mr. Siraphop Wannadilok

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Symbols/Abbreviations	Terms
GSB	Government Savings Bank
S.D.	Standard deviation
%	Percentage

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since 1960s, with the advent of the internet, email or electronic mail has become the standard form of exchanging digital messages between people using digital devices such as computers, mobile phones and other electronics for personal, business or any purpose (Guffey, 2008). With computer-mediated communication (CMC) has become mainstream in work life, business doesn't happen face to face as often as the same before (Thurlow & Tomic, 2004). People in the workplace need to communicate with other organizations via conference calls and emails. Derks and Bakker (2010) indicated that email is the most popular form of CMC within organizations because of its convenience, inexpensiveness and simplicity. For business communication, English is an international language widely used around the world. Therefore, writing emails in English language is essential for communicating with international companies, especially in banking businesses where contacting related organizations is very important.

In the Government Savings Bank (GSB) nowadays, especially in the Fraud Department and the Call Center Department, it is inevitable for employees to communicate with foreign customers or companies in English. The employees in these work areas normally use email messages as CMC to communicate with international bank-related organizations and customers. Still, there are some misunderstandings in English business email writing, e.g., incorrect grammar and vocabulary, which can lead to miscommunication and cause damage to the bank.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In working hours, the GSB employees usually take a longer time replying to English email messages than other tasks. Spending too much time on one task frequently leads to poor performance on other tasks. Moreover, the company staffs rarely use English in routine work; thus, when it comes to writing English email messages, they find themselves in a difficult situation, which usually leads to miscommunication between the employees and the foreign receiver. For example, one employee misunderstood a message from an international organization, and replied with unclear content. This had many long-term consequences because of one ineffective email message, which made the researcher hypothesize that the employees are not good at writing English email and want to find out what the problems are and how to solve them.

The purpose of this study was to explore English business email writing skills among employees of the Fraud Department and Call Center Department at GSB to determine whether the English email writing ability of the GSB employees at the current stage was sufficient or not. The researcher hoped to help the employees of these departments improve their English email writing skills in order to effectively provide services to their clients and contact international organizations. This study focused on the writing ability among GSB employees. The study was conducted using a questionnaire to examine if there were any problems with the current state of GSB employees' English email writing skills, and to obtain suggestions for improving employees' English email writing skills.

1. 3 Research Questions

1.3.1 What are the problems of GSB employees in email writing to communicate with international bank-related organizations?

1.3.2 What are ways to improve their English business email writing skills?

1. 4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 To find the problems of GSB employees in email writing to communicate with international bank-related organizations.

1.4.2 To obtain suggestions from employees on helping improve their English business email writing skills.

1. 5 Scope of Study

This study investigated the problems related to English business email writing skills of 75 GSB employees working in the Fraud Department and Call Center Department, and make suggestions to improve their English business email writing skills. The instrument of this research was a questionnaire, consisting of three parts. The time of collection was during 18 - 28 March 2018.

1.6 Significance of Study

The researcher hopes that the results from this study can be a reference for the company regarding email writing skills and guidance for GSB employees for improving their email writing skills to properly communicate with international organizations.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms have specific definitions in regard to this study:

1. GSB employees refer to all employees who work at the headquarters of Government Savings Bank in the Fraud Department and Call Center Department.

2. Email writing skills refer to skills of composing an English business email properly to communicate with international organizations.

3. Problems refer to difficulties or obstructions that occur when GSB employees write an English business email.

1.8 Organization of the Study

    This study is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1 provides the introduction of the study. The chapter covers the following topics: the background, the state of the problems, research questions, research objectives, scope of study, and significance of study and definition of terms.

Chapter 2 presents a variety of literature related to this study, including the importance of email in the workplace, problems in English business email writing, the understanding of effective email, ways to improve email writing skills and previous studies.

Chapter 3 emphasizes the research methodology, which is accompanied by the subjects of the study, the procedure, and the data analysis.

Chapter 4 reveals the findings of this study.

Chapter 5 reports the summary of this study, along with the discussion and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents an overview of the theories that were used in this study. The literature has been reviewed as follows: (2.1) the importance of email in the workplace (2.2) problems in English business email writing involving cultural differences and understanding of effective email (2.3) ways to improve email writing skills, and (2.4) related previous research.

2.1 The Importance of Email in the Workplace

Kokemuller (2007) said that email has had a significant impact on the workplace since 1990s and it has increasingly become a common method to communicate digital messages through the internet between digital devices.

Some of the effects were found to be positive, whereas some benefits of face-to-face communication have been lost.

2.1.1 Advantages of email communication

- Kokemuller (2007) claims that both one-way messages and two-way interaction can be effective delivered by email because there is no time urgency. The recipients can access or respond to emails whenever they are able to.

- With the widespread use of email, face-to-face communication is now unessential. Individuals can contact or collaborate through email without seeing each other. This creates the possibility to have a diverse work team and allows global companies to work together across country borders.

2.1.2 Disadvantages of email communication

- When a response needs to be fast, sending emails may not be a good answer. If time is of the essence, a better approach is likely to be talking with someone in person or making a phone call.

- Sending emails destroys the opportunity to gain immediate feedback, observe nonverbal responses and decreases personal interactions with work teams.

- Derks and Bakker (2010) said that email overload can be time consuming and can cause employees to neglect critical work responsibilities.

- Kokemuller (2007) said that insufficient email writing skill training can cause email defects, which can lead to miscommunication and damage the organization.

2.2 Problems in English Business Email Writing

When writing an English email, there are many difficulties that prevent a writer from composing a clear and understandable email. This section provides some of the problems, consisting of cultural differences and understanding of effective email.

2.2.1 Cultural differences

Giles and Willemyns (2007) mention that differences in culture can have effects on communication. Asians cultures are classified as collectivist and high-context. They are mainly motivated by norms and traditions. Self-assertion and individual decision making are discouraged. On the other hand, individualists, such as Americans, are motivated by self-preference, needs, giving priority to personal goals rather than to group norms. In terms of formality, tradition, ceremony and social rules are more important than individualists; North Americans tend to be more relaxed about social status and the appearance of power than their Asians counterparts.

In business dealings, Americans may come to the point immediately and indirectness wastes their valuable time. Hendry (2000) believes that North Americans value time as a precious commodity. They correlate time with productivity, efficiency and money, while collectivism'cultures tend to have more relaxed concept of time.

When GSB employees, who are collectivists, contact international organizations, who mostly are individualists, they may not be able to stay polite yet go directly to the point of the issue discussed. They may look at matters from different angles, and such differences in culture can lead to miscommunication and cause damage to the bank.

2.2.2 Understanding of effective emails

According to Guffey (2009), there are many components of an effective email. Some of these are message format, formality and conciseness.

2.2.2.1 Message format

Nowadays, emails are sent worldwide with more than 294 billion receivers each day. With the number increasing, it is crucial to possess effective email writing skill in order to communicate with others properly.

For the purpose of writing an effective email, an understanding of message format is necessary. Frank and Toland (2002) state that the format consists of two major parts, the message header and the message body.

(1) Message header

Email header is included with subject line, which summarizes the topic or main idea in a phrase form, and an opening, which is a main idea in a complete sentence.

- **Subject line:** The reason that the subject line is important because readers should be able to glance at a subject line and know when and whether the email should be read or not. To be assured that the message is read, the subject line should contain the main idea with quick identification for reading. Moreover, a one-word heading, such as, *Issue, Free, Important*, should be avoided. Instead of putting *Important* for the subject line, it can be stated more properly, for example, *please contact your assistant immediately*.

- **Opening**: The opening can be divided into direct opening and indirect openings (Guffey, 2008). Direct openings show the main idea instantly by restating the subject line with the assumption that the reader is familiar with the background information. For example, the indirect openings *For the past six months the Human Resources Development Department has been considering changes in our employees' benefit plan*, can be improved with a direct opening by frontloading the main idea, like the following, *Please review the following proposal regarding employees' benefits, and let me know by May 20 if you approve these changes* (Guffey, 2008, p. 143).

(2) Message body

This part contains the crucial information of the email. The subject will be explained and discussed logically. Generally, an effective message has one main topic in this part and should be easy to read and comprehend.

2.2.2.2 Formality

Although email can be written in an informal manner, the message should be written in a formal tone because of its permanent record (Cole, 1999). The reason is that third parties may be able to read the message.

(1) Organization

In a more complex body, it is easier for readers to get confused.

- Using bullet point to split the complicated topic into separated points can create a readable email.
- Use vivid words to emphasize the topic.
- Use general words to de-emphasize the main idea when delivering bad news.

(2)Tone

Without visual and voice context, the choice of words, sentence length, punctuation, capitalization and writing style can lead the readers to misinterpret easily.

2.2.2.3 Conciseness

When a long message needs to be sent, the main idea should be organized tightly and unnecessary information should be omitted (Guffey, 2008).

- Cut out flabby expressions

    Revise flabby expressions into more concise ones:

Table 2.1

Examples of cutting out flabby expressions (Guffey, 2008)

Flabby	Concise
In the near future	Soon
With regard to	About
In the event that	If

- Delete long lead-ins

    Change an unnecessary introduction into a more concise sentence:

Table 2.2

Examples of deleting long lead-ins (Guffey, 2008)

Long Lead-Ins	Concise
I am writing this letter to inform you that ...	Please be informed that ...
Long Lead-Ins	Concise
We are sending this announcement to let everyone know that new parking permit will be available January 1.	New parking permit will be available January 1.

- Beware of redundancy

    Revise expressions that repeat the same meaning more than once:

Table 2.3

Examples on removing redundancy (Guffey, 2008)

Redundant	Concise
Exactly identical	Identical
Each and every	Each / Every
Repeat again	Repeat

- Remove trite business phrases

    Some expressions are outdated and need to be removed in order to make the message sound more vigorous and businesslike:

Table 2.4

Examples of eliminating trite business phrases (Guffey, 2008)

Trite	Improved
As per you request	As your request
Enclosed please find	Enclosed is/are
Please do not hesitate to ...	Please

When GSB employees contact international organizations without an understanding of effective email, it can lead to unclear and misunderstand message, which can cause miscommunication with foreign customers and organizations.

2.3 Ways to Improve Email Writing Skills

Bernoff (2017) claims that American businesses lose approximately $400 billion every year because of poor writing, mostly from email. He also surveyed around 500 businesspersons and found that the lack of ability to clarify in writing marketing messages can tell customers that they cannot trust this product or this company, which harms their company's reputation. In order to prevent a company from losing productivity and profit, employees need to improve their email writing skill. This study will include two major ways of improving email writing skill: self-learning and training.

2.3.1 Self-learning

Jackson (2006) claims that self-learning or self-teaching is education without the guidance of teachers or professors, or institutions, such as schools. In recent years, students have been encouraged to do more independent work as a complement to modern education, especially a person with working status. In order to help white-collar workers learn on their own time and at their own pace, the following materials were used in this study as ways to improve email writing skill by self-learning; textbooks, workplace examples, Internet sources and self-training in editing.

2.3.1.1 Textbooks

One of the most crucial and effective ways to learn anything is from reading textbooks. Hanski (2014) said that writing is a skill learned by reading. In order to write correctly, one has to learn a wide range of vocabulary, grammar rules, punctuation marks, and different writing techniques, which can be done by reading many textbooks.

2.3.1.2 Workplace examples

In a workplace, not only are the employees there to carry out their tasks, they can also learn new things from their colleague's examples. Spilka (1998) explored the relationship between social contexts and composing process in a workplace setting and found out that a person with the ability to properly write in the workplace tended to influence other workers to improve their ability in business writing.

2.3.1.3 Internet sources

With the drastically increasing use of the internet, practical ways to learn and improve writing skill have moved into the area of computer-based and internet-supported. Duin (2013) claims that the internet can be an essential source for self-education, and Tawil (2013) also said that learning based on computer or e-learning can be an effective tool in self-teaching.

Many websites have a large database of knowledge for improving writing skill, such as university or institute sites. Moreover, video-based websites, such as YouTube, have many learning materials in the area of improving writing skill. There are thousands of results when searching for video-based material on the YouTube platform; for example, the Business English Pod channel has a playlist of full course videos in business English writing lessons for free.

2.3.2 Training

Oxford dictionary defines training as the action of teaching a person or animal a particular skill or type of behavior. In addition, training is developing, in oneself or others, any skills and knowledge relating to specific abilities. Specific goals of improving capability, productivity or performance can be achieved through proper training. The following materials were used in this study as ways to improve email writing skill by expert lectures and workshop demonstrations.

2.3.2.1 Expert lectures

A lecture is an educational talk to an audience in order to learn new information or knowledge. A lecture delivered by an expert in a particular area of his specialty can provide deeper and wider information to an audience (Jackson, 2006). By having experts in the area of email writing lecture, the businesspersons who have attended the lecture session will improve and gain more understanding of writing skill.

2.3.2.2 Workshop demonstrations

A workshop is a meeting or seminar where a group of people have an intensive discussion and activity on a particular subject. With a demonstration, a person is shown practical examples on a particular subject; therefore, the person will have a clearer and understand more on that subject. By having a writing workshop demonstration, workers who attend the meetings will gain more understanding of writing proper business email.

Norman (2009) suggested ways to improve the participants in his study via workshop demonstrations where the attendees had to participate in composing an English email. This workshop demonstration consisted of ways to generate ideas to write and to write with proper structure. The demonstration gave ideas and increased the understanding of writing properly.

2.4 Related Previous Research

Heintie (2010) conducted research on the critical factors affecting email as a marketing communication channel, with a focus on providing recommendations regarding the attractiveness of email marketing software industry using an email survey. Using Porter's Five Forces analysis, the research showed that email marketing is a cost-effective marketing communication channel and can create growth opportunities, with investment in improving email writing skill of employees being a critical factor. Therefore, more value can be added to the company if it can increase an investment in its employees' email marketing communication skill.

Norman (2009) looked at prescriptive manuals for email. This study used a corpus-based approach to analyze six textbooks on how to write effective emails, which were *Electronic Language* by Milena Collot, *Letter by Phone or Speech by Other Means: The Linguistics of Email*, *Alphabet to Email: How Written English Evolved* by Naomi S. Barron, *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E.B. White, *Language and the Internet, Always On: Language in an Online and Mobile World* by David Crystal. The results showed that the six textbooks provided some common significant factors, which are contextual issues and issues of content, such as structure and tone, format, such as length of paragraphs, and grammar and correctness. These factors were problematic for the writer but can have some unique characteristics in areas where email creates opportunities when practiced properly.

Swangboonsatic (2006) conducted a case study of email business communication among professionals in the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on structure of the email communication. This study combined analysis of communicators' email texts with conceptual analysis of their introspections and their retrospective reflections on their interactions. A series of simulated tasks and scenarios were used in this study to reflect actual international trade email communication in the Asia Pacific region. The researchers found that the contexts of culture, situation and text determine the potential meanings needed to create the overall environment of effective communication.

Decharotchanawirun (2015) designed a research to survey on the significant problems in email writing skill of the employees at The Classic Chairs Company by collecting data with a set of questionnaires. The study showed that the most common problem in the business writing email at The Classic Chairs Company was incorrect use of grammar. In terms of suggestions, the respondents highlighted self-study, in-house training and taking course at a language institute.

The results from Norman (2009) and Swangboonsatic (2006) showed that contextual issues and issues of content, such as structure and tone, format, and the contexts of culture, play a major part in creating the environment of effective communication. These results were applied to the study instrument to find which problem the participants were facing.

On the other hand, if these issues are lacking, it can become a problem in writing email. Moreover, the results from Heintie (2010) showed a critical factor to improve email writing skill to increase company's value was investment in that particular skill. The results from these studies were applied to the study instrument to find which solution would be appropriate for the participants.

The framework of this study will follow Decharotchanawirun research data collection procedure by using a set of questionnaires to survey the problems of GSB employees in email writing and ways to improve their English business email writing skills following Norman (2009) and Swangboonsatic (2006). Along with the results of Heintie (2010), the results of this study will be a reference for a company to make more investment in improving employees' writing skill.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopted a quantitative approach. A cross-sectional questionnaire was used in order to explore the problems of English business email writing skill that GSB employees have to cope with.

This study was conducted with the employees at the headquarters of Government Savings Bank who need to use English business email writing skill. This chapter presents the research methodology, consisting of three parts as follows: (1) population, (2) material, (3) data collection procedure, (4) data analysis

3.1 Participants

The population of this study was a total of 80 employees from the headquarters of GSB departments where English writing skill was used in order to communicate with international organizations in the form of email. The subjects were employees who use English in business email writing to contact foreign companies. They were in the Fraud Department and use English business email to contact VISA and the Call Center Department, and use English business email to communicate with foreign customers and companies. Among the 80 participants, 37 employees were from the Fraud Department and 43 from the Call Center Department.

A pilot study was done with five employees from the 80 participants to evaluate the understanding of the participants regarding the questionnaire. After the pilot study, all five employees were excluded from the data collection; therefore, the total number of participants was 75.

3.2 Material

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to explore the problems which GSB employees have to cope with in communication with international bank-related organizations and to find out if there are any suggestions that can help improve employees' English business email writing skill.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts as follows:

Part I: Demographic information

The first part was the general background of the participants including gender, age, levels of study and work experience.

Part II: The problems in writing English business email to communicate with International bank-related organizations

The second part focused on an investigation of the problems that the employees have to cope with when writing an English business email to contact foreign companies. In this part, the participants were asked to indicate the problems that generally occurred when communicating with international organization via English business email.

The example questionnaire items included difficulty in using correct grammar, choosing appropriate words and writing a subject line when writing an English business email.

Part III: The suggestions for the employees to improve their English business email writing skill

        The final part of the questionnaire surveys the suggestions about the ways to improve email writing skills. In this part, the participants were asked whether any of the suggestions on effective English business email writing skill they would like to participate in.

        An open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire asked about improving English business email writing skill with self-learning, or with training via expert lectures.

        The following scales were used to rate whether the participants agreed with the problems or suggestions in part II and part III:

Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
Neutral	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

        The study using the survey method was conducted at the headquarters of the Government Savings Bank. The questionnaires were distributed to all participants. The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire at their own department inside the GSB headquarters. The questionnaires were collected after the participants completed them within the time period of distribution.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data was collected from the questionnaires and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). The data from part I, participants' general background, is described by the percentage and frequency and the data from part II, the problems employees faced when communicating via English email, and part III, the suggestions for the employees, were analyzed by SPSS to find the average means and standard deviation.

The data derived from the Likert scale were interpreted with the following ranges.

Ranges of means interpretation

Means	Definition
4.50 - 5.00	Very high
3.50 - 4.49	High
2.50 - 3.49	Moderate
1.50 - 2.49	Low
1.00 - 1.49	Very low

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

This chapter shows the results, which were obtained from the questionnaire completed by employees working at GSB headquarters to address the research questions of this study. A total number of 75 questionnaires were obtained by the researcher.

The results are divided into three parts:

Part I: Demographic information

Part II: The problems in writing English business email to communicate with international bank-related organizations

Part III: The suggestions from the employees on improving their English business email writing skill

4.1 Demographic Information

This part covered demographic information of the participants: gender, age, level of study, work experience and time spent on writing or replying English business email per day.

The results are as follows:

Table 4.1

Participants' Gender

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	27	36
Female	48	64

Table 4.1 shows that 27 employees (36%) were male and 48 employees (64%) were female.

Table 4.2

Participants' Age

Age	Frequency	%
20-25	17	22.7
26-30	30	40.0
31-35	17	22.7
36-40	6	8.0
41-45	4	5.3
46-50	1	1.3

Table 4.2 shows that the majority were young participants (85%), aged between 20-35, and only 15% were aged between 36-50

Table 4.3

Participants' Level of Study

Level of study	Frequency	%
Vocational / High Vocational Certificate	0	0
High School Certificate	1	1.3
Bachelor's Degree	60	80.0
Master's Degree	14	18.7
Other	0	0

From Table 4.3, most of the participants held a bachelor's degree with 80%, followed by 18.7% with a master's degree and 1.3% with a high school certificate.

Table 4.4

Participants' Work Experience

Work experience	Frequency	%
Less than a year	13	17.3
1-2 years	21	28.0
3-4 years	20	26.7
More than 5 years	21	28.0

Table 4.4 shows that 28% of the employees had been working for more than five years, equal to those who had worked for 1-2 years, and the rest had working experience between one year and four years.

Table 4.5

Time Participants Spent on Writing to English Business Email per Day

Time spent on writing to English business email per day	Frequency	%
Less than an hour	53	70.7
1-2 hours	18	24.0
3-4 hours	3	4.0
More than 5 hours	1	1.3

As can be seen in Table 4.5, 70.7% of the participants spent time on writing or replying to English business email per day of less than an hour, while 24% spent 1-2 hours, and the rest spent between 3-4 hours to more than 5 hours.

4.2 Problems in Writing English Business Email

This part examined the problems in writing English business email to communicate with international bank-related organizations at the headquarters of the Government Savings Bank. A five-point Likert scale was used to interpret the degree of agreement. The findings are illustrated in the form of frequency, mean and standard deviation (S.D.).

Table 4.6

Problems in writing English business email

Description	Mean	S.D.	Level of agreement
I am not sure about the tone of formality.	3.77	0.92	High
I have difficulty choosing appropriate words.	3.60	0.98	High
I have difficulty using correct grammar.	3.59	0.98	High
I have difficulty organizing my ideas into a proper structure of content.	3.57	0.96	High
I do not have enough knowledge of cultural differences when contacting foreign clients/organizations.	3.52	0.96	High
I have difficulty generating ideas to compose a message body.	3.52	0.86	High
I have difficulty generating ideas to write an opening.	3.47	0.81	Moderate
I have difficulty writing a subject line.	3.43	0.79	Moderate
I don't know how to write concise messages.	3.36	0.98	Moderate
I cannot write a proper English business email.	3.03	1.11	Moderate
Total	3.48	0.93	Moderate

As Table 4.6 shows, most participants agreed that the tone of formality was the most critical problem they encountered (Mean = 3.77), while the second ranked problem was choosing appropriate words (Mean = 3.60) and some of them also could not use correct grammar (Mean = 3.59).

The participants felt neutral about the problem of writing an opening (Mean = 3.47) or writing a subject line (Mean = 3.43) and the problem with how to write a concise message (Mean = 3.36). The participants also felt neutral about whether they can or cannot write a proper English business email (Mean = 3.03).

4.3 Suggestions for improving English business email writing skill

This part surveyed the suggestions from the employees on improving their English business email writing skill at the headquarters of Government Savings Bank. A five-point Likert scale was used to interpret the degree of agreement. The findings are illustrated in the form of frequency, mean and standard deviation (S.D.). The data in this part are presented in the form of means, which were interpreted into ranges using the criteria described in 4.2.

Table 4.7

Suggestions for improving their English business email writing skill

	Description	Mean	S.D.	Level of agreement
Training	The company should provide a training course via workshop demonstrations that lasts two days (3 hr. /day).	4.51	0.62	Very high
	The company should provide a training course via expert lectures that last two days (3 hr. /day).	4.37	0.76	High
	I can improve my English business email writing skill with training via a workshop demonstration.	4.37	0.67	High
	I can improve my English business email writing skill with training via expert lectures.	4.36	0.71	High
	The company should provide a training course via a workshop demonstration that lasts a full day (6-8 hr.).	4.17	0.89	High
	The company should provide a training course via expert lectures that lasts a full day (6-8 hr.).	4.08	0.91	High
Self-learning	I can improve my English business email writing skill with self-learning from internet sources.	4.20	0.78	High
	I can improve my English business email writing skill by reading textbooks. (self-learning).	3.85	0.98	High
	I can improve my English business email writing skill from examples in my workplace. (self-learning).	3.48	0.92	Moderate
	Total	4.15	0.80	High

As can be seen in Table 4.7, most participants strongly agreed and would rather have a workshop demonstration or lecture that lasts three hours/day for two days than a longer session of 6-8 hours for one day.

However, there are some participants who agreed that they could improve their email writing skill by themselves through the internet or reading textbooks (mean = 4.20 and 3.85). They agreed at a moderate level that they could learn from example documents in the workplace (mean = 3.48).

The open-ended question at the end of part III of the questionnaire asked the participants whether they have suggestions on how to improve English business email writing skill. The other suggestions from the participants can be briefly summarized into one main point that they wanted the company to make more of an investment in improving their English skills, not only in writing skill but in all areas.
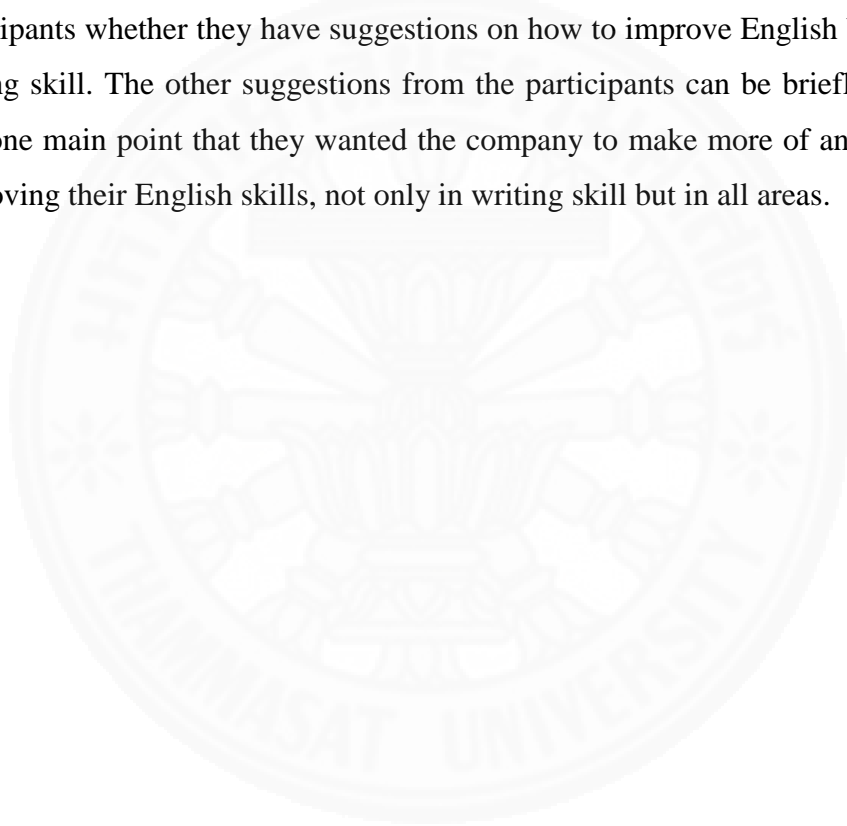
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (5.1) a summary of the study, (5.2) a summary of the findings, (5.3) discussion, (5.4) conclusion and (5.3) recommendation for future research.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This section summarizes the objectives, subject, materials, and data collection procedure of the study as follows:

5.1.1 Objectives of the study

This study aimed to explore problems in English business email writing skills among employees of the Fraud Department and Call Center Department at GSB and explore their suggestions on how to improve their skills.

5.1.2 Subjects, materials, and data collection procedures

The participants were a total number of 75 employees from the Fraud Department and Call Center Department who use English in business email writing to contact foreign companies.

The study was conducted using a set of questionnaires and the data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

5.2 Summary of the Findings

In this part, the findings of data analysis of two research questions will be summarized.

5.2.1 Problems in writing English business email

The study revealed that the highest ranked problem of email writing was the tone of formality, followed by problems of using appropriate words, using correct grammar, organizing proper structure, awareness of cultural differences and composing the message body. Their moderately ranked problems include writing an opening message, writing a subject line, writing a concise message and their concern about writing a proper English business email.

5.2.2 Suggestions for improving English business email writing skill

Most participants strongly agreed that they favored a training course via a workshop demonstration or lecture that lasts three hours per day for two days more than a longer session that lasts one day. Some agreed that they could improve by self-learning from the internet or textbooks. They agreed with improving their English business email writing skill from examples in their workplace at a moderate level.

5.3 Discussion

It is apparent from the result of Table 4.6 that the participants mostly agreed that the problem with the tone of formality was the problem they most encountered with, followed by using appropriate words and correct grammar, respectively.

According to the results from Table 4.7, the significant suggestion for the employees to improve their English business email writing skill was to be provided a training course via a workshop demonstration by the company that lasts three hours per day for two days. This result was in line with the findings of Norman (2009) that one of the most effective ways to improve writing skill is through training where trainees can see some examples and be trained by writing real emails, which are the way a workshop demonstration works.

According to Henry (2000), the reason that the tone of formality was a problem the participants most encountered was due to cultural differences. Hence, the participants from GSB headquarters are living in Thailand and the company's policy was formerly working with only local clients. These factors could cause the employees difficulty when the company started the new policy of working with customers from different regions and cultures.

This result supports the study of Norman (2009), which found that the problem in tone and formality when writing is important, as was choosing appropriate words and using grammar. In addition, this result also supports Decharotchanawirun (2015), whose study showed that the major problem in writing English business email was the difficulty in using correct grammar.

According to Norman (2009), the ways the participants can improve their English business email writing skill was by training. In the findings of this study, the subjects mostly agreed that the company should provide a training course via a workshop demonstration that lasts three hours per day for two days. According to cognitivism learning theory from Heintie (2010), the may be because they can see improvement and results as soon as they try and write in the workshop on their own. Furthermore, the results can be used as a guideline for the company to provide a training course that suits their employees' needs. Graham (2000) said that people tended to have more efficiency when learning in consistent small periods of time, than one long learning class, which the results of this study support.

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5.4 Conclusion

The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above.
The major problems of the GSB employees when writing English business email were the tone of formality, difficulty in choosing appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar. However, the participants significantly agreed that they can improve if the company provides them the training course via a workshop demonstration that lasts three hours per day for two days.

5.5 Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, the following recommendations are made for further research. It should be noted that the findings of this study are restricted to only one bank, the headquarters of Government Savings Bank, which may cause the results of this study to be narrow. The other limitation of this study was the data instrument. This study only contained one procedure to collect the data, which was a set of questionnaires. The study may gain broader results and perspective if more instruments such as email analysis and a test about email writing skill are used. Therefore, further research should increase the number of participants and data collection procedures in order obtain more generalizable results.

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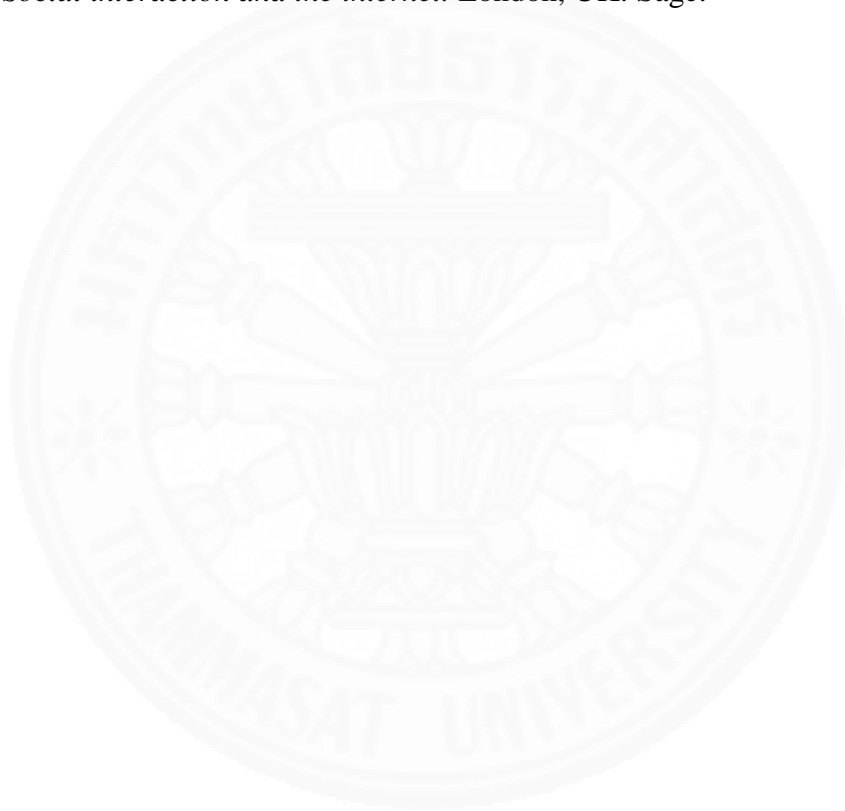
APPENDIX

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRRE

Problems of GSB Employees in Writing English Email to Communicate with International Bank-Related Organizations

The questionnaire consists of three parts:
Part I: Demographic information
Part II: The problems in writing English business email to communicate with International bank-related organizations
Part III: The suggestions for the employees to improve their English business email writing skill
(แบบสอบถามนี้แบ่งเป็น 3 ตอน)
(ตอนที่ 1 ข้อมูลทั่วไป)
(ตอนที่ 2 ปัญหาที่พบในเวลาที่เขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อสนทนากับองค์กรหรือบุคลากรต่างชาติ)
(ตอนที่ 3 ข้อเสนอแนะเพื่อนำไปใช้พัฒนาทักษะด้านการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษ)

Part I: Demographic information (ตอน 1: ข้อมูลทั่วไป)

Instruction: Please fill in the blanks and mark (X) in the box below according to your own information.
(ข้อปฏิบัติ: เติมเครื่องหมาย X ลงในช่องว่างตามข้อมูลของท่าน)

1. Gender(เพศ): □ Male(ชาย) □ Female(หญิง)

2. Age(อายุ): □ 20-25 □ 26-30 □ 31-35 □ 36-40 □ 41-45 □ 46-50

3. Level of study(ระดับการศึกษา):
    □ Vocational / High Vocational Certificate(ปวช./ปวส.)
    □ High School Certificate(ชั้นม.ปลาย)
    □ Bachelor's Degree(ปริญญาตรี)
    □ Master's Degree(ปริญญาโท)
    □ Other (Please Specify)(อื่นๆ โปรดระบุ) …………………

4. Work Experience(ประสบการณ์การทำงาน)
    □ Less than a year(น้อยกว่า 1 ปี)
    □ 1-2 years(1-2 ปี)
    □ 3-4 years(3-4 ปี)
    □ More than 5 years(5 ปีขึ้นไป)

5. Time spent on writing or replying English business email per day
(ระยะเวลาที่ใช้ในการตอบอีเมลที่เป็นภาษาอังกฤษภายในหนึ่งวัน)

□ Less than an hour(น้อยกว่า 1 ชม.)

□ 1-2 hours(1-2 ชม.)

□ 3-4 hours(3-4 ชม.)

□ More than 5 hours(5 ชม.ขึ้นไป)

Part II: The problems in writing English business email to communicate with International bank-related organizations

(ตอน 2: ปัญหาที่พบในเวลาที่เขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อสนทนากับองค์กรหรือบุคลากรต่างชาติ)

Instruction: Please fill in the blanks with (X) mark for each item below that are problems for you when using English business email to communicate with the scale ranges from "Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree".

(ข้อปฏิบัติ: เติมเครื่องหมาย X ลงในช่องว่างเพื่อแสดงถึงความเห็นด้วยในเรื่องของปัญหาที่พบในเวลาที่เขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็น ภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อสนทนากับองค์กรหรือบุคลากรต่างชาติ โดยช่วงระยะการให้ความเห็นเริ่มจาก เห็นด้วยมากที่สุด, เห็นด้วย, ปกติ, ไม่เห็นด้วย และไม่เห็นด้วยมากที่สุด)

Strongly agree เห็นด้วยมากที่สุด	5
Agree เห็นด้วย	4
Neutral ปกติ	3
Disagree ไม่เห็นด้วย	2
Strongly disagree ไม่เห็นด้วยมากที่สุด	1

The problems in writing English business email to communicate with
International bank-related organizations

(ปัญหาที่พบในเวลาที่เขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อสนทนากับองค์กรหรือบุคลากรต่างชาติ)

Item no.	Problems in writing English business email:	Rate scale ranges				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	I have not enough knowledge of culture differences when contact with foreign clients/ organizations (ฉันไม่มีความรู้เรื่องความต่างทางวัฒนธรรมของ ตัวฉันและผู้รับชาวต่างชาติ)					
2	I have difficulty in using correct grammar. (ฉันมีปัญหาในการใช้แกรมม่าที่ถูกต้องในการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็น ภาษาอังกฤษ)					
3	I have difficulty in choosing appropriate words (ฉันมีปัญหาในการเลือกใช้คำในการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็น ภาษาอังกฤษ)					
4	I have difficulty in writing a subject line (ฉันมี ปัญหาในการตั้งหัวเรื่องขณะเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ)					
5	I have difficulty in generating idea to write an opening. (ฉันมีปัญหาในการเขียนคำกล่าวเปิดเวลาเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็น ภาษาอังกฤษ)					
6	I have difficulty in generating idea to compose a message body. (ฉันมีปัญหาในการเขียนเนื้อหาของข้อความเวลาเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็น ภาษาอังกฤษ)					
7	I have difficulty in organizing my idea into a proper structure of content. (ฉันมีปัญหาในการวางโครงสร้างของอีเมลให้เหมาะสมเวลาเขียนอีเมล เชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ)					
8	I am not sure about the tone of formality (ฉัน ไม่ได้คำนึงถึงความสุภาพทางภาษาและใจความในเนื้อข้อความเวลาที่ เขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ)					
9	I don't know how to write concise messages. (ฉันมีปัญหาในการเขียนข้อความให้กระชับ ไม่ยืดเยื้อเวลาที่เขียนอีเมล เชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ)					
10	I cannot write a proper English business email. (ฉันไม่สามารถเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจเป็นภาษาอังกฤษได้)					

Part III: The suggestions for the employees to improve their English business email writing skill

(ตอนที่ 3: ข้อเสนอแนะเพื่อนำไปใช้พัฒนาทักษะด้านการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษ)

Instruction: Please fill in the blanks with (X) mark for each item below that should help you improving your English business email writing skill with scale ranges from "Very High, High, Moderate, Low and Very Low" and answer the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire.

(ข้อปฏิบัติ: เติมเครื่องหมาย X ลงในช่องว่างเพื่อแสดงถึงความเห็นด้วยในเรื่องข้อแนะนำเพื่อนำไปใช้พัฒนาทักษะด้านการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษและตอบคำถามปลายเปิดที่ท้ายแบบสอบถาม โดยช่วงระยะการให้ความเห็นเริ่มจากมากที่สุด, มาก, ปานกลาง, น้อย และน้อยที่สุด)

Strongly agree เห็นด้วยมากที่สุด	5
Agree เห็นด้วย	4
Neutral ปกติ	3
Disagree ไม่เห็นด้วย	2
Strongly disagree ไม่เห็นด้วยมากที่สุด	1

The suggestions for the employees to improve their English business email writing skill

(ข้อเสนอแนะเพื่อนำไปใช้พัฒนาทักษะด้านการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษ)

Item no.	How to improve English business email writing skill	Rate scale ranges				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	I can improve my English business email writing skill by reading textbooks. (self-learning) (ฉันสามารถพัฒนาทักษะการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษด้วยตนเองผ่านทางหนังสือวิชาการ)					
2	I can improve my English business email writing skill from examples in my workplace. (self-learning) (ฉันสามารถพัฒนาทักษะการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษด้วยตนเองผ่านทางตัวอย่างที่พบเห็นได้ในที่ทำงาน)					

3	I can improve my English business email writing skill with self-learning from internet source. (ฉันสามารถพัฒนาทักษะการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษด้วยตนเองผ่านทางแหล่งข้อมูลจากอินเทอร์เน็ต)					
4	I can improve my English business email writing skill with training via expert lectures. (ฉันสามารถพัฒนาทักษะการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษด้วยการฝึกฝนผ่านทางการบรรยายจากผู้เชี่ยวชาญ)					
5	I can improve my English business email writing skill with training via workshop demonstration. (ฉันสามารถพัฒนาทักษะการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษด้วยการฝึกฝนผ่านทางการจัดอบรมวิธีเขียนอีเมลภาคปฏิบัติ)					
6	The company should provide the training course via expert lectures that last a full day (6-8 hr.) (ทางธนาคารควรจัดให้มีการอบรมโดยบรรยายเต็มวันจากผู้เชี่ยวชาญ จำนวน 1 วัน)					
7	The company should provide the training course via expert lectures that last 2 days (3 hr./day) (ทางธนาคารควรจัดให้มีการอบรมโดยบรรยายครึ่งวันจากผู้เชี่ยวชาญ ทั้งหมดจำนวน 2 วัน ระยะเวลา 3 ชม.ต่อวัน)					
8	The company should provide the training course via workshop demonstration that last a full day (ทางธนาคารควรจัดให้มีการอบรมสาธิตฝึกเขียนเต็มวันจากผู้เชี่ยวชาญ จำนวน 1 วัน)					
9	The company should provide the training course via workshop demonstration that last 2 days (3 hr./day) (ทางธนาคารควรจัดให้มีการอบรมสาธิตฝึกเขียนครึ่งวันจากผู้เชี่ยวชาญ ทั้งหมดจำนวน 2 วัน ระยะเวลา 3 ชม.ต่อวัน)					

<u>Your suggestions on how to improve English business email writing skill</u>
(ข้อเสนอแนะอื่นๆเพื่อใช้พัฒนาทักษะด้านการเขียนอีเมลเชิงธุรกิจในภาษาอังกฤษ)

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BIOGRAPHY

Name	Mr. Siraphop Wannadilok
Date of Birth	September3, 1992
Educational Attainment	2015: Bachelor of Law, Thammasat University, Thailand.
Work Position	Fraud prevention officer Government Savings Bank