



**PROBLEMS IN WRITING ENGLISH BUSINESS
EMAILS OF NON-NATIVE SPEAKING EMPLOYEES IN
AN INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE SERVICE
COMPANY IN THAILAND**

BY

MISS PATITTA MALATHONG

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH FOR CAREERS
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2015
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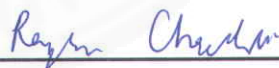
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ENTITLED

PROBLEMS IN WRITING ENGLISH BUSINESS EMAILS OF NON-NATIVE
SPEAKING EMPLOYEES IN AN INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE SERVICE
COMPANY IN THAILAND

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in English for Careers

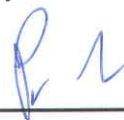
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Independent Study Paper Title	PROBLEMS IN WRITING ENGLISH BUSINESS ENGLISH EMAILS OF NON- NATIVE SPEAKING EMPLOYEES IN AN INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE SERVICE COMPANY IN THAILAND
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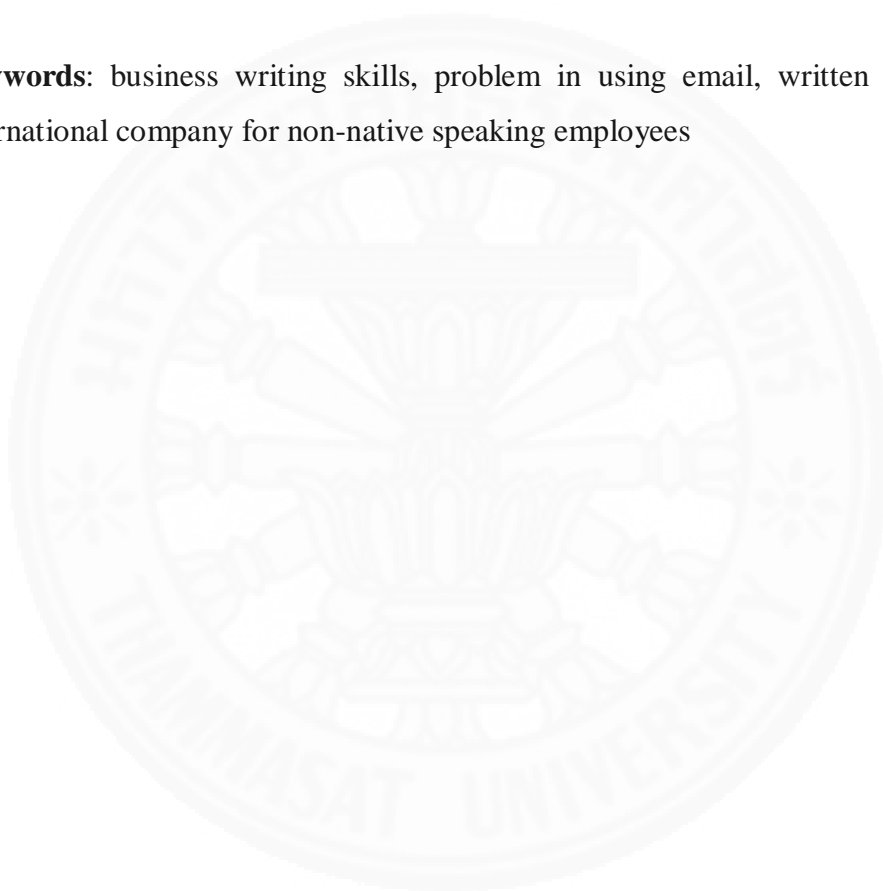
ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate problems in writing English business emails of non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand. The study was designed to survey the significant problems with their business writing skills, problems with email writing in an international real estate service company for non-native speaking employees, and suggestions to improve the effectiveness of business emails in English in the workplace. The participants in this study were 30 non-native English speaking employees who worked in the head office in Bangkok in every department, with a mix of males and females from the officer level to the director level. All of them used business email writing in English in the workplace on a daily basis. The data collection procedure was conducted at the head office of an international real estate service company in Bangkok, Thailand. The questionnaires were randomly distributed to employees from various departments.

The results of this study indicated that there were three kinds of problems in writing English business emails of non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company: business writing skills, problems in using email, and written emails in international company for non-native speaking employees. In regard to business writing skills, the highest average problem was using correct grammar; in regard to problems in using email, the highest average problem for non-native speakers

in the studied was excessive email; in regard to written emails in an international company for non-native speaking employees, the highest average problem was language barriers. For the suggestions to improve the effectiveness of business emails in English in the workplace, the participants suggested that before submitting/sending emails they should double check, study a business English course, attend an email writing workshop, and the company should provide formats for frequently used topics in emails.

Keywords: business writing skills, problem in using email, written emails in an international company for non-native speaking employees



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the 21st century, email is a communication tool that is vital to the survival of workers (Sriripraparat 2011). Organizations prefer to use email to communicate, replacing face-to-face communication (Guffey 2006). In addition, email is a communication tool that can save more money and time than other communication channels.

An international real estate service company provides advisory, design, marketing or related services for the real estate industry, as opposed to companies that develop or hold properties. In global business, English is used to communicate both inside and outside companies. According to Yuttatri (2004), transmission norms and social behavior in any culture are expressed through language, which is considered to be a medium of transmitting ideas. Lohakart (2009) point out that English is a common tool for communication across cultural and national boundaries. It has been the language of development as well as scientific and technological advance. English has brought modern ideas, functioning as a gateway to better communication and education. In addition, effective communication can increase workplace productivity. Therefore, the problems for employees who are non-native English speakers relate to English language and communication in writing English business emails.

The purpose of this research was to explore the problems in the writing business English emails of employees who are non-native speakers in an international real estate service company in Thailand. The researcher aimed to find ways to help improve the staffs' English business emails.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aimed to answer the specific research questions as follows:

1. What are the problems in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand?
2. What are the suggestions for improvement regarding writing English business emails in the workplace?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were the following:

1. To investigate problems in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand.
2. To find out the suggestions to improve the effectiveness of business emails in English in the workplace.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Proficiency in writing English Business emails: The ability to write sentences in English business emails based on Gulffey and Du-Babcock (2010), who suggested six key techniques to write effective English business emails, which are concise wording, and avoiding wordy prepositional phrases, long lead-ins, outdated expressions, needless adverbs and fillers.
2. English business emails refer to electronic communication using English language to communicate for business purposes.
3. International company means Thai and foreigners working together and using English as a neutral language.
4. Real estate service company refers to companies providing advisory, design, marketing or related services for the real estate industry, as opposed to companies that develop or hold properties.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted with 30 non-native speaking staff members who worked in an international real estate service company in Thailand based in Bangkok. The aim of this quantitative study was to investigate the problems of writing English business emails in the workplace. The main research instrument was a questionnaire using five-point Likert scales to collect the data from the participants. It is expected that the findings will be beneficial to the staff in order to solve their problems of writing English business emails in the organization.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1. This study will reveal the problems of Thai workers in writing English business emails in an international real estate service company in Thailand.
2. The results of the study will provide a guideline to the company's management regarding training programs to improve the staffs' English business email writing skill.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The research study includes five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: The introduction includes the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, definition of terms, significance of the study, and organization of the study.

Chapter 2: This includes the literature review of business writing skills, problems in using email, and problems of writing English business emails, written emails in international companies for non-native speaking employees.

Chapter 3: This chapter consists of descriptions of the respondents of the study, instruments, procedure of the study, and data analysis.

Chapter 4: The results of the study are presented with a series of tables after being analyzed together with the discussion of the results.

Chapter 5: The last chapter contains a summary of findings, the conclusion, and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study investigates the written English business emails of non-native speaking employees in the workplace. Thus, this chapter reviews the literature and relevant research studies related to this topic. There are three main areas which are: business English writing skills, problems in emails, and written emails in international companies for non-native speaking employees.

2.1 BUSINESS ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS

Writing effective business letters is an important skill (Newman 2009). In order to communication across cultural and national boundaries. Different media and communications tools require different approaches in terms of writing style, tone, and voice Scammell, (2006). Lohakart (2009) points out that English is a common tool for communication across cultural and national boundaries. It has been the language of development as well as scientific and technological advance. English has brought modern ideas, functioning as a gateway to better communication and education. In addition, effective communication can increase workplace productivity. Therefore, the problems for employees who are non-native English speakers relate to English language and communication in writing English business emails.

According to Guffey & Du-Babcock, (2010, p.107), good business communications should not lengthy, should be avoid unnecessary word, sentences, and paragraph. The content should be easy to read and understand. Moreover, the writer should consider cultural differences. Thus, the content has to be clear and should avoided clichés, jargon, and slang, which can cause confusion.

Boonsothornsatit, Jangkanipakul, and Steane, (2007) examined the needs and problems in the business English writing of 70 Thai staff members in an international organization based in Bangkok. The main instrument was a questionnaire to collect the data. Some interviews were conducted and writing samples of some of the participants were analyzed. The results revealed that Thai staff required a course on advanced grammar and usage, sentence writing and essay writing. In addition, they suggested that the company should offer specific courses to the staff. The responses to the open-ended

questions showed that grammar and vocabulary are the two major problem in business English writing in their organization.

Srisitanon, (2009) found that the major problem in using English was the inability to use correct grammar, as it was difficult to express ideas with correct grammar. Another problem was that the employees have difficulty using technical terms, slang, and idiomatic expressions. Moreover, selecting appropriate words to use for communication was very difficult for employees.

Tanvibulya, (2014) investigated employees' problems in using business English writing skill. The major problems were using correct grammar, sentence structure, presenting data and content, technical terms, choosing appropriate words and putting words in the correct order in sentences, and spelling.

2.2 PROBLEM IN EMAILS

Email has become an essential tool in business. However, the explosive growth of emails has created some problems because there have never been any strict standards or guidelines on how to write them, leading to miscommunication. Guffey & Du-Babcock (2010, p.100) mentioned that nowadays email is an alternative communication channel.

Locker & Kaczmarek, (2011) claimed that email has many advantages in business communication. Employees can use email to communicate, which are can save time and can send more information.

Polk (2009) mentioned that businesses and organizations depend on efficient and effective written communication. Email is an easy tool to communicate in the workplace. However, it is very difficult to write effective and clear emails with limited time. Many employees do not know how to write effectively for the workplace. Time is lost in writing and trying to read unclear communication.

Burgess, Jackson, and Edwards, (2005) found that email training significantly reduces problems. The research involved contacting all email users within the organization in both the UK and Ireland. The research aimed to examine how email is used in a large organization and focused on the defects associated with email. The results showed these defects affect some groups of employees more than others. The study also investigated the effectiveness of email training in terms of reducing the defects with email use. The

results showed that some of these defects are related and that training can improve the ability to write emails.

Pathomchaiwat (2014) studied the proficiency of Thai staff at Unicord Public Co., Ltd. with regard to writing English business emails. The participants in the study were 50 Thai staff of Unicord Public Co., Ltd. The results showed that most Thai staff in the study was proficient in writing English business emails. However, some still tend to use some inappropriate sentences in their emails. For this reason, the company should provide a training course focusing on how to write proper sentences when writing business emails to improve their employees' writing skills.

2.3 WRITTEN EMAILS IN INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES FOR NON-NATIVE SPEAKING EMPLOYEES

There has not been much research on written emails in international real estate companies. However, the following research studies were found to be related to international companies. According to Gabriela (2008), emails should not use the passive voice because the sentences will be vague and impersonal. On the other hand, the use of active voice is direct, concise and authoritative. It is also more natural sounding than passive voice.

Siripraparat (2011) studied the use of business English emails among Thai workers in international organizations. The researcher aimed to explore Thai employees' opinions on writing English business emails and to discover how to improve the effectiveness of Thai employees' writing of business English emails. The results showed that the employees could not control the time that the recipients take to read email messages, a lack of verbal cues in email can cause misunderstandings, and Thai employees had difficulty to receive immediate feedback from recipients by email. The findings also indicated that training on email usage can improve the effectiveness of the employees' English business emails. The suggestion was to revise emails before sending them. To avoid errors of spelling and grammar, the employees can use spelling and grammar checker programs.

Santithawornying (2014) studied employees who worked at a Thai Japanese leasing company who had problems in communication with Japanese employees related to writing emails. The major problems were the inability to write emails with correct

grammar and the inefficiency in the use of a variety of words. They also had problems choosing appropriate words in writing in English.

Sangthong (2012) studied Thai workers' opinions on outdated and modern English business e-mail writing styles in an international organization. The researcher aimed to study the business e-mails that are commonly used. The results showed that most Thai workers know about outdated and modern English business e-mail writing styles. However, they still choose the outdated style instead of the modern style. For this reason, the researcher suggested that the company should arrange an English class focusing on improving their business e-mail writing.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents (1) respondents, (2) research tool, (3) procedure, and (4) data analysis.

3.1 RESPONDENTS

The population in the study was employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand based in Bangkok. The participants in this study were 30 non-native speaking employees who worked in the head office Bangkok in every department. The participants ranged from the officer level to the director level. All of them used business email writing in English in the workplace on a daily basis. Moreover, English is the language used to communicate both internally and externally, both Thai to Thai or Thai to foreigner.

3.2 RESEARCH TOOL

In this study, a questionnaire was used as the research instrument. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions and opened-ended questions. The questionnaire was adapted from the Independent Study of Siripraparat (2011). The questionnaire was in English, consisting of 28 questions. There were three parts as follows:

Part 1: Demographic information of the respondents concerning their age, gender, employment, frequency and time spent on writing emails in English. The questions in this part sought to draw demographic data of participants and to identify their characteristics, which may relate to the effectiveness of their business emails at work.

Part 2: The problems of using business emails in English at work of the participants including the errors in English language, misunderstandings, and the different situations that create difficulties when writing business email. Five-point Likert scales were used in part 3 of the questionnaire. The participants were asked to rank the degree of the problem for each item.

Range	
Score	Opinion
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Part 3: Suggestions to improve the effectiveness of business email writing in English in the workplace were sought.

3.3 PROCEDURES

The data collection procedure was conducted at the head office of an international real estate service company in Thailand. The sampling method was convenience sampling, with the questionnaire distributed to employees in various departments. One week later, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed and are shown in terms of frequencies, percentages, and mean scores using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Part 1: Background of the participants consisting of gender, age, education background, English language training, and working experience. The data were analyzed and show in terms of frequencies and percentages.

Part 2: This part aimed to investigate the problems in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand. The data was analyzed and shown in terms of frequencies and mean scores.

$$\text{Mean Range} = \frac{\text{Maximum}-\text{Minimum}}{\text{range}} = \frac{5-1}{5} = 0.8$$

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Mean Range</u>
5 = very great need	4.21 - 5.00
4 = great need	3.41 - 4.20
3 = moderate need	2.61 - 3.40
2 = little need	1.81 - 2.60
1 = very little need	1.00 - 1.80

Part 3: There was one additional open-ended question at the end asking for suggestions regarding the improvement of employees' email writing in the workplace.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter contains the findings of research about the problems in writing English business emails of non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand with regard to: (1) What are problems in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand? (2) What are the suggestions for improvement regarding writing English business emails in the workplace? This study was limited to 30 non-native speaking employees who worked in an international real estate service company in Thailand based in Bangkok. The aim of this quantitative study was to investigate the problems of writing English business emails in the workplace. The main research instrument was a questionnaire that used five-point Likert scales to collect the data from the participants. It was expected that the findings will be beneficial to the staff in order to solve their problems of writing English business emails in the organization. There are three parts in this chapter as following;

Part 1 General Background

Part 2 RQ1: What are problems in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand?

Part 3 RQ2: What are the suggestions for improvement regarding writing English business emails in the workplace?

4.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

Part 1 General Background

Table 4.1 Gender of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	9	30.0	30.0	30.0
Female	21	70.0	70.0	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1 shows the information about the gender of respondents. The majority of the participants were female and the minority of the respondents were male as follows: 30.00% male and 70.00% female.

Table 4.2 Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 20-30	19	63.3	63.3	63.3
31-40	10	33.3	33.3	96.7
41-50	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2 shows the information about the age of the respondents. The majority were 20-30 years old at 63.3% and the minority of the respondents were 31-40 years old at 33.3% followed by 41-50 years old at 3.3%.

Table 4.3 Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Bachelor's degree	20	66.7	66.7	66.7
Master's degree	10	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.3 shows the information about the education of respondents. The majority of the group held bachelor's degrees at 66.7% and the minority of the respondents had master's degrees at 33.3%.

Table 4.4 Position

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Officer	19	63.3	63.3	63.3
	Senior	5	16.7	16.7	80.0
	Manager	5	16.7	16.7	96.7
	Director	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 shows the information about the position of respondents. The majority was officers 63.3% and the minority of the respondents were managers at 16.7%, senior at 16.7% and directors at 3.3%.

Table 4.5 Years of Employment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3	16	53.3	53.3	53.3
	4-6	6	20.0	20.0	73.3
	3-9	3	10.0	10.0	83.3
	More than 9 years	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5 shows the information about the years of employment of the respondents. The majority had worked for 1-3 years at 53.3% and the minority of the respondents had worked for 4-6 years at 20.0%, 3-9 years at 10.0%, and more than nine years at 16.7%.

Table 4.6 Frequency of using English emails

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1-5	14	46.7	46.7	46.7
6-10	7	23.3	23.3	70.0
11-20	4	13.3	13.3	83.3
More than 20 times per day	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6 shows the information about the frequency of using English emails of the respondents. The majority wrote 1-5 times per day (46.7%) followed by 6-10 times per day (23.3%), 11.20 times per day (13.3%), and more than 20 times per day (16.7%), respectively.

Table 4.7 Time spent on writing and replying to business emails per day

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than 30 mins	13	43.3	43.3	43.3
30 mins - 1 hr	8	26.7	26.7	70.0
1-2 hrs	4	13.3	13.3	83.3
more than 2 hrs	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.7 shows the information about the time spent on writing and replying to business emails per day of the respondents. The majority spent less than 30 mins (43.3%) followed by 30 mins - 1 hour (26.7%), 1-2 hours (13.3%), and more than 2 hours (16.7%), respectively.

Reasons for using business email

Table 4.8 Send/receive/read/forward messages

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	25	83.3	83.3	83.3
	no	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.8 shows the information about the reasons for using business emails of respondents. A total of 83.3% of respondents sent/received/read/forwarded email messages.

Table 4.9 Receive instructions/assign tasks, and maintain office schedule

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	15	50.0	50.0	50.0
	no	15	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.9 shows the information about the reasons for using business email of respondents. A total of 50% of respondents used email for the following reasons: instructions/assign tasks, and maintain office schedule.

Table 4.10 Send reports/memos/documents, and coordinate activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	20	66.7	66.7	66.7
	no	10	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.10 shows the information about the reasons for using business email of respondents. A total of 66.7% of respondents used business emails for the following reasons: send reports/memos/documents, and coordinate activities

Table 4.11 Reply and request enquiries/information

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	20	66.7	66.7	66.7
no	10	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.11 shows the information about the reasons for using business email of respondents. A total of 66.7% of respondents used business email for the following reasons: reply and request enquiries/information.

As the results show above, the findings revealed that the majority were female (70.00%) and rest were male (30.00%). In regard to age, the majority were 20-30 years old at 63.3% and the minority of the respondents were 31-40 years old at 33.3% followed by 41-50 years old at 3.3%. The majority held bachelor's degrees at 66.7% and the minority of the respondents had master's degrees at 33.3%. With regard to, position, the majority were officers (63.3%) and the minority of the respondents were managers at 16.7% and directors at 3.3%. Regarding years of employment, the majority had worked for 1-3 years at 53.3% and the minority of the respondents had worked for 4-6 years at 20.0%, 3-9 years at 10.0%, and more than nine years at 16.7%. The frequency of using English emails of respondents were 1-5 times per day (46.7%), 6-10 times per day (23.3%), 11.20 times per day (13.3%), and more than 20 times per day (16.7%). The majority spent less than 30 mins (43.3%) followed by 30 mins - 1 hour (26.7%), 1-2 hours (13.3%), and more than 2 hours (16.7%), respectively. Most respondents used business email for sending/receiving/reading/forwarding messages (83.3%), followed by instructions/assigning tasks, and maintaining office schedules (66.7%), the same as using business emails for reply and request enquiries/information (66.7).

4.2 RQ1: Problems in writing English business emails of non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand

Table 4.12 English business writing skills

No.	Description	Rate scale ranges					Mean	S.D	Degree of agreement
		5	4	3	2	1			
1	I have difficulty using correct grammar for business emails.	4	10	9	6	1	3.33	1.06	Neutral
2	I have difficulty spelling words correctly.	1	4	9	13	3	2.56	0.97	Disagree
3	I have difficulty using correct vocabulary.	1	7	15	5	2	3.00	0.90	Neutral
4	I have difficulty using correct punctuation.	3	8	9	8	2	3.06	1.11	Neutral
5	I have difficulty using sentence structure.	2	7	11	7	3	2.93	1.08	Neutral

As can be seen in Table 4.12, the majority of the respondents were neutral regarding the difficulty in using correct grammar for business email (mean = 3.33), followed by difficulty in using correct punctuation (mean = 3.06), difficulty in using correct vocabulary (mean = 3.00), difficulty in using sentence structure (mean = 2.93); the respondents disagreed that they had difficulty in spelling words correctly (mean = 2.56). The findings relate to the findings of the study of Boonsothornsatit, Steane, and Jangkanipakul (2007), which concluded that grammar and vocabulary are the two major problems in business English writing.

Table 4.13 Problems in using emails

No	Description	Rate scale ranges					Mean	S.D	Degree of agreement
		5	4	3	2	1			
6	I have problems with email writing because it takes lot of time to produce them.	3	7	11	8	1	3.10	1.02	Neutral
7	I cannot control the time when replying to emails.	2	8	8	9	3	2.90	1.12	Neutral
8	The limited time to write or read emails can lead to miscommunication.	5	8	12	4	1	3.40	1.03	Neutral
9	It is difficult to deal with many emails.	4	7	13	5	1	3.26	1.01	Neutral
10	I have problems with proper email etiquette for business communication.	3	7	12	5	3	3.06	1.11	Neutral

As can be seen in Table 4.13, the majority of the respondents were neutral regarding limited time to write or read emails and the consequent miscommunication (mean = 3.40), followed by difficulty dealing with many emails (mean = 3.26), problems with email writing because it takes a lot of time to produce them (mean = 3.10), problems with proper email etiquette for business communication (mean = 3.06), and an inability to control the time for replying to emails (mean = 2.90).

The results relate to Polk (2009), who found that participants had difficulty writing effective and clear emails in a limited amount of time, and many employees do not

know how to write emails effectively in the workplace. However, the level of agreement to the problems was not as high as expected.

Table 4.14 *Written emails in an international company for non-native speaking employees*

No	Description	Rate scale ranges					Mean	S.D	Degree of agreement
		5	4	3	2	1			
11	I have problems communicating with emails because of language barriers.	2	5	11	8	4	2.76	1.10	Neutral
12	I have problems communicating with email because of a lack of feedback.	0	4	10	11	5	2.43	0.93	Disagree
13	I have problems communicating with email because of excessive information.	1	2	14	8	5	2.53	0.97	Disagree
14	I have problems communicating with email because of limited time.	0	9	8	10	3	2.76	1.00	Neutral
15	I did not receive a comprehensive introduction to the proper ways to communicate throughout the organization.	0	6	12	6	5	2.65	1.00	Neutral

As can be seen in Table 4.14, most of respondents were neutral with regard to problems communicating with email because of language barriers (mean = 2.77), problems communicating with email because of limited time (mean = 2.77), and “I did not receive a comprehensive introduction to the proper ways to communicate throughout the organization” (mean = 2.65). The respondents disagreed regarding problems communicating with email because of excessive information (mean = 2.53), and problems communicating with email because of a lack of feedback (mean = 2.43).

The findings contrasted the study of Siripraparat (2011), which looked at the business English emails of Thai workers in an international organization. The findings of that study revealed that the employees could not control the time it took to read email messages, and the lack of verbal cues caused misunderstandings and hindered effective communication; the Thai workers had difficulty in getting immediate feedback from recipients by email as well. However, the findings of this study showed that the major problem in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand was language barriers.

4.3 RQ2: What are the suggestions for improvement regarding writing English business emails in the workplace?

Table 4.15 Suggestions for improvement regarding writing English business emails in the workplace.

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
No Suggestions	6	20%
Double checking before submitting/sending emails	5	16.67%
Open auto correct over email program	3	10%
Read and write more emails for practice	1	3.33%
Try to learn email writing and read English newspapers	1	3.33%
Study a business writing English course	8	26.67%
The company should provide email writing workshops	3	10%
The company should provide formats for frequently used topics in emails	3	10%
Total	30	100%

As can be seen in table 4.15 above, 26.67% of the respondents gave the suggestion to study an English business writing course, 10% of the respondents suggested opening auto correct over the email program, 10% suggested that the company provide email writing workshops, and 10% suggested that the company provide formats for frequently used topics in emails. A total of 3.33% of the respondents suggested that they have to read and write more emails for practice, and 3% suggested that they have to try to learn email writing and read English newspapers.

Some participants suggested that to improve the writing English business email in workplace, they have to keep double checking before submitting/sending emails, and try to write an English email in different styles and see how they can adapt for each inquiry. One said that improving English business emails will require studying a business English course. One recommended revising the written content before sending

it to the recipient. The majority recommended reading and writing more email to practice formal vocabulary, getting to the point, clear explanations, bullet writing, and reading English newspapers to become familiar with English sentences and wordings. However, some said that since they normally work and communicate internally, improving emails in terms of grammar and vocabulary is not as important as being concise and direct.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the findings, (2) the conclusion, and (3) limitations and recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of the study of the data analysis regarding the two research questions are as follows:

1. What are problems in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand?

The problems in writing English business emails of the respondents were divided into three parts.

Business writing skills: the highest average problem was using correct grammar.

Problem in using email: the highest average problem in using email for non-native speakers in an international real estate service company in Thailand was excessive emails.

Written emails in an international company for non-native speaking employees: the highest average problem was language barriers.

2. What are the suggestions for improvement in regard to writing English business emails in the workplace?

English courses could help the participants improve their performance in writing English business emails in the workplace. The results can be a guideline for the company's management to provide training as an effective tool to improve their employees' performance.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This research intended to find out the problem regarding the use of business email in English in the workplace and then gather suggestions with regard to the improvement of writing English business emails in the workplace. In this study there were four main conclusions as follows:

1. The major problem in the business writing skills of the employees was difficulty in using correct grammar.
2. The major problem in the use of emails was limited time to write or read emails, which can lead to miscommunication.
3. The major problem in writing English business emails for non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand was language barriers.
4. The respondents gave suggestions in regard to studying a business English writing course.

5.3 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, there were some limitations. The sample in this study was intended to represent non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company. The sample did not cover international real estate service employees all over the country but only the area of Bangkok. The people in other companies may have different opinions due to the various ways of writing business emails.

Knowing the problems related to writing business emails in English can help the employees, especially in this real estate company, to avoid problems. Regarding recommendations, future research could be undertaken with a broader sample. The sample should include people from other real estate companies to increase the validity of the findings.

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APPENDIX



APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Problems in writing English business emails of non-native speaking employees in an international real estate service company in Thailand

The survey is part of the requirements for a Master's degree of Arts in English for Careers of Language Institute, Thammasat University. The main objective of this study is to investigate the problem in writing English business emails in the workplace for non-native speaking employees.

The questionnaire is divided into three parts as follows:

Part 1: Demographic information and experience in using business email in English at work

Please mark "X" in the number in front of the item that is true of you or fill in the information in the space provided.

1. Gender

1. Male	2. Female
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2. Age

1. 20-30	2. 31-40
3. 41-50	4. 51-60

3. Education background

1. Bachelor's Degree	2. Master's Degree
3. Doctoral Degree	4. Others (please specify).....

4. Current position

1. Officer	2. Senior
3. Manager	4. Director

5. Year of employment
 1. 1-3 years
 2. 4-6 years
 3. 7-9 years
 4. More than 9 years

6. Frequency of using English e-mail for communication at work.
 1. 1-5times/day
 2. 6-10 times/day
 3. 11-20 times/day
 4. More than 20 times/day

7. Number of business email you receive per day
 1. 1-5
 2. 6-10
 3. 11-20
 4. More than 20

8. Number of business email you send per day
 1. 1-5
 2. 6-10
 3. 11-20
 4. More than 20

9. Time spent on writing and replying to business email per day
 1. Less than 30 minutes
 2. 31 minutes – 1 hour
 3. More than 1-2 hours
 4. More than 2 hours

10. Reasons for using business email (you can give more than one answer)
 1. Send/receive/read/forward message
 2. Receive instructions/assign task, and maintain office schedule
 3. Send report/memo/documents, and coordinate activities
 4. Reply and request enquiries/information

Part 2: The problems of the use business email in English in the workplace

Please mark “X” in the box to indicate the best response to your degree of agreement.

Only one answer can be chosen from each item.

(5) Strongly agree (4) Somewhat agree (3) Neutral (2) Somewhat disagree (1) Strongly disagree

No.	Description	Degree of Agreement				
		5	4	3	2	1
2.1 English business writing skills						
1	I have difficulty in using correct grammar for business email.					
2	I have difficulty in spelling words correctly.					
3	I have difficulty in using correct vocabulary.					
4	I have difficulty in using correct punctuation.					
5	I have difficulty in using sentence structure.					
2.2 Problem in used emails						
6	I have problems with email writing because I have to spend a lot of time to produce email.					
7	I cannot control the time of replying email from the recipient.					
8	The limit of time to write or read email can lead miscommunications.					
9	It is difficult to dealing with overload email.					
10	I have problems with proper email etiquette for business communication.					

2.3 Written emails in international company for non-native speaking employees						
11	I have problems to communicate with email because of language barrier.					
12	I have problems to communicate with email because of lack of feedback.					
13	I have problems to communicate with email because of overload information.					
14	I have problems to communicate with email because the time limit.					
15	I do not receive a comprehensive introduction into the proper ways to communicate throughout the organization.					

Part 3: The suggestions for improvements

1. Please provide the suggestions for improvement regarding to writing English business email in your workplace.

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