

Business Discourse Pattern in an ELF Setting between Thai and Burmese Professionals

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Thai and Burmese people have their own national languages. Therefore, to be able to communicate with each other when doing business, they need a *lingua franca* which is English. When two different groups of people who are from different places and cultures are together, their discourse patterns are distinguishable. How they pattern their talks, what goals are hidden, how some attempts to achieve these goals are met with success and how others result in failure are the issues worth exploring. Thus, this study aims to investigate the patterns of cross-cultural spoken discourse observed in the business dealings of Thai and Burmese professionals in the construction field and to explore how Thai and Burmese professionals engage in conversation with each other. By means of audio recording, observation and field notes, the data in three different contexts including a meeting room, a restaurant and a company's van were collected. Based on Hymes' (1974) *Ethnography of Communication*, the findings demonstrate how the speakers patterned their speech and achieved their goals. This study reveals the overall pattern of talk between the Thai and Burmese professionals and helped build a better understanding of how they talk to avoid possible problems that might occur.

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