

The Use of English Language to Enrich International Business Communication: A Sociolinguistic Interpretation



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The Use of English Language to Enrich International Business Communication: A Sociolinguistic Interpretation

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. However, contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.



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Dedication

Firstly, dedicated to my parents, all my teachers from school life to university life. Because of them my empty vessel of knowledge has been full filled and my thirst for knowledge has increased.

I am really greateful to all of them. Thanks

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Table of Contents

pg. No.

Abstract	--
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1: Institution Profile.....	2-3
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	4-6
Research Question.....	7
Chapter 3: Methodology	8-9
Chapter 4: Data Analysis	10-21
Chapter 5: Conclusion	22
5.1: Limitation	22
5.2: Recommendations	23
Bibliography	24-25

Abstract

The aim of this internship report is to find the sociolinguistic variation considering various sociolinguistic platforms along with different modes of language usage to enrich international business communication. This study will show the potential use of the English language and how it helps to communicate in various cultures for improving business management. In order to study this, a number of literature has been taken under consideration such as technical English, conversation analysis via multilingual speakers, modes of business language, speech acts (linguistic politeness, direct speech) and linguistic cultural variation. As for methodology, both qualitative and quantitative method is conducted to investigate the overview of sociolinguistic interpretation and the dynamic of English language to run business communication. The result of this study will show the use of English language in engaging international business communication

Keywords: English, language, communication, business.

Chapter One

Introduction

Over 1.75 billion speakers all over the world, where English is an undisputed global language. Different verbal behavior is practiced in different countries to communicate with each other. This behavior including asking, greeting, inviting, ordering, promising etc varies from language to language or culture to culture. All sorts of acts are developed based on sociolinguistic parameters as well as verbal behaviors. People use their own verbal behavior that may not be understandable to the receiver, then the communication gap or breakdowns happens when the receiver of the information misunderstands the speaker's words. These differences and lack of awareness causes misunderstanding while communicating. Better communication is a key to running an international business where English language plays the key role. English is used all over the world, which helps to avoid misunderstanding while communicating in both casual and professional ways.

Business English has become so important in the world of work because the companies are becoming less local and more global. Companies are no longer just interacting and doing business within the country, they are crossing the borders. In this sense English has become the language of business (Giron, n.d.). Different languages have different dialects that carry different meanings, to avoid misunderstanding English language is the elect of the land.

The main purpose of this research is to report how English language helps to communicate and how clients conduct the speech acts of requests and complaints in business communication. In addition, this research depicts the use of technical English that improves the understanding while dealing with foreign

1.1 Institution Profile: Clipping Path Ltd. (CCPL)

The information is available at CCPL's website but this is restricted for Bangladeshi regular users as this company totally deals with overseas companies. So, to avoid competitor's unfairness, they keep these privacy settings.

Special Features of the company

CCPL is a ISO 9001:2015 certified leading offshore outsourcing company in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They have expert post-production artists who hold experience of working with North American and Scandinavian countries. Their working quality is being satisfied by more than 100+ renowned global brands and retail stores around the world. This company launched IT Enabled Services (ITES) in 2013. Their major businesses are :

- Graphic Designing
- Image post-production
- Video post-production
- 3D modeling/CGI Images
- Digital Marketing, Architect & visualizations

Vision

To be a pioneer in IT based companies in Bangladesh to explore global markets, contribute significantly to the growth of the national economy and build Bangladesh as brand of Technology partner.

Mission

- ✓ Maintaining a high standard of business ethics.
- ✓ Work as prominent ITES company
- ✓ Fast and Efficient customer service
- ✓ Combate unemployment rate in Bangladesh
- ✓ Establish IT hub over the country especially remote area
- ✓ Work on physically deprived people of the country like deaf, handicraft etc

Commitments

The company commitment is to provide consistent quality service to keep the leading position of ITES business in Bangladesh.

My Assigned duty and Responsibility

1. Communicate with the customers through Emails, and various Social media
2. Understanding the requirements of customers
3. Understanding overseas means of communication
4. Using small talk and politeness while communicating

As a trainee executive the only responsibility is to maintain confidential information under control and maintain the time table of work efficiently.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1: Technical English

The term ‘Technical English’ refers to a common language that is used in particular technical professions such as doctors, technicians, scientists etc. For instance, doctors have their own scientific names for various things which are not easily understandable to common people. It is basically a multi-level English that simplifies the complex rules of standard English and replaces the complex terminologies into simple words. “Technical English often refers to specialized language professionals use to communicate with each other, which people outside that profession don't necessarily use. With this definition, business, medical and legal English all contain 'technical English'” (Marcode,2021). On the other hand, it is very essential for international business or global communication in particular sectors. Therefore, it reduces the miscommunication among participants.

2.2: Modes of business language

International businesses are run through business languages as well as business English. Firstly, ‘Business English’ is the use of English in business such as international trade, commerce, banking and many office settings. Specifically, the practice of business correspondence by emphasizing correctness, propriety and competence with composition through English. There are various modes of business language like, Business meetings, Negotiations, Business presentation, Executive summaries, Business reports. Besides there is 3 modes of business communication verbal, written and electronic it includes collaboration When using English for business contexts, it is vitally important to be as clear as possible and leave nothing to interpretation, this is different from

literature, for example, where a lot is left up to the interpretation of the reader (Spencer A. Katie, 2022).

2.3: Sociolinguistic Interpretation: conversation analysis via multilingual speakers

Nowadays business communication occurs globally by using the Internet, social media, emails and so on. So, English plays a vital role here because people from different culture, races communicate with different people. Everyone has their own style of verbal communication and dialects that may create misunderstandings to the participants. Whereas “English is an official language in 57 countries in the world” (Why has English become a universal language?, n.d.) and it has less dialect variation than other languages. On the other hand there are a lot of Apps (software applications) that helps to translate any language into English. The pragmatic errors are considered to be more serious than phonological or syntactic errors considered by native speakers (Kiok,1995). Different languages carry different meanings. One's perspective is different from others. For example, the sound /ki:/ carries different meaning in English it refers to “key” but in Bangla it refers to ‘what?’, even the expressions are different too. so it is problematic for multilingual speakers, so that English is indispensable to communicate.

2.4: Speech Acts:

A speech act is an utterance that serves a function in communication. We perform speech acts when we offer an apology, greeting, request, complaint, invitation, compliment, or refusal (The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): Pragmatics and Speech Acts, n.d.). For business communication speech act includes linguistic politeness and direct speech. Although it varies from different institutions..

- Linguistic politeness: linguistic politeness is used as ways in which language is employed in conversation, basically to avoid damaging social relations. It is important in

communication especially when there is cultural variation. Especially in business communication, the discussion of various controversial issues in the economics discourse community has led to increasing debate among concerned economists about the ways that they communicate with each other, as well as with non-economists. (linguistic politeness, 2021). In 1986, Donald McCloskey's *The Rhetoric of Economics* he explained, economic discourse as "a language comprised of tropes; a word or phrase used in a sense not proper to it, tales and other rhetorical devices that are literary and rhetorical or persuasive rather than scientific or natural". Brown and Levinson claimed, understanding cultural norms of politeness enables communicators to "make strong predictions" about communicating effectively within a culture, and also politeness strategies are developed in order to save the hearers' "face." Face refers to the respect that an individual has for him or herself, and maintaining that "self-esteem" in public or in private situations. The functions are to avoid embarrassing the other person, or making them feel uncomfortable.

- Direct speech: Direct Speech Act. An utterance is seen as a direct speech act when there is a direct relationship between the structure and the communicative function of the utterance.(Sebastian,2016). Direct speech is important in business communication while communicating with non-English speakers or speakers from different linguistic backgrounds. However, non-English speakers may face trouble understanding long conversations, in that case direct speech helps to understand the main theme. It includes 'telegraphic speech' that refers to using minimal words to communicate and provide the main idea of the topic. Basically small talks are considered as direct speech for business communication. Especially non-English speakers understand better through small talk as well as direct speech.

Research Question

The aim of this research was to study and explore how the English language is used as a business language to enrich global business communication. With the aim of explaining how clients linguistically request, complain and advise and how English language overlaps the sociology of language. The researcher come across and dealt with the following research questions:

RQ 1. How do English language provide opportunities to engage in international trade and conduct business activities overseas?

RQ 2. How do multilingual clients construct their order, request and complain linguistically?

RQ 3. Why are linguistic strategies important to communicate with multilingual speakers?

The findings from this report will be a valuable source of information for students, teachers, and researchers who are working in these areas of discourse analysis, English language teaching, and cultural communication.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This research is an analytical research which conducts both qualitative and quantitative methods as in mix method. It will include background study of multiculturalism, conversation analysis, survey on sociolinguistic behavior. To acknowledge this report enormously, the data was collected through conversations via emails and video calls. As this institution works both in the global and local market various languages like Italian, Polish, Swedish along with Bangla and English are used while communicating. Sometimes there are some clients who prefer their local language. In that case English translations help. This research is not only focusing on linguistic behavior or multiculturalism, it will reflect the importance of the English language as a tool of communication. The researcher, a Bengali, herself appointed as a trainee executive as she is doing her internship where she deals with various interactions from different countries. Some interactions are selected and analyzed by following basic features..

Table 01: Participants' Background

No.	participants	Gender	Nationality	Age	Conversational tool
01	P1	Female	American	34	Email, social media
02	P2	Female	Australian	36	Email
03	P3	Male	Italian	39	Video call , email
04	04	Female	Swedish	36	Video call , email
05	P5	Male	British	40	Email

Table 02: Observation Chart: Sociolinguistic approach

No	Nationality	Communication mode	Supra segmental feature	Direct speech	Communication Approach	Hedges
p1	American	2 way	Pitch: Intonation	Request	Interactionist	No
p2	Australian	1 way	Pitch: Intonation	Complain	Variationist	No
p3	Italian	2 way	Pitch: Tone; Loudness, stress	Query	Variationist	No
p4	Swedish	2 way	Pitch: Tone ; Stress	Request	Interactionist	Yes
p5	British	1 way	Pitch: Intonation	Request	Variationist	Yes

Table 03: Observation Chart: Linguistic approach

No.	Nationality	Communication Mode	Dialect	Language Skill: English	Linguistic Tone	Cultural Relevance
p1	American	Written, spoken	Conforming	Fluent	Informal	Understanding, Responsiveness
p2	Australian	Written	Identical	Fluent	Informal	Understanding, Responsiveness
p3	Italian	Written, spoken	Diverse	Inarticulate	Informal	Responsiveness
p4	Swedish	Written, spoken	Diverse	Inarticulate	Formal	Responsiveness
p5	British	Written	Identical	Fluent	Formal	Understanding, Responsiveness

Chapter FOUR

Data Analysis

In the following section I am going to describe the conversational data which will be followed by critical analysis based on the theory of speech acts and technical English.

In scenario 1, a British client from London requested some tech related work. The client explained all the details and elaborated their expectation from the institution through email. Used English language fluently which is much formal and has politeness in linguistic tone.

In scenario 2, two clients are complaining via email about the service, that they did not get the work as instructed. One is an Australian client and the other is Swedish, both are complaining in different linguistic style. However the Australian client is more informal while complaining unlike the Swedish client but they complained with details.

In scenario 3, an Italian client in the video calls, querying about the institution through a video-calling application. His voice was loud and had a different dialect. Although he is not fluent in English but has good communication skills. Later on he emails about the details of how he wants the work to be done. In his email he used a mix of English and Italian language.

Scenario 4, is an example of linguistic strategy, how using linguistic politeness and direct speech helps to communicate and how cultural diversity provides opportunities to engage in international trade and conduct business activities overseas. As an American client requested if there is any limitation of work. She used various unfamiliar words for the employees.. Cultural gap in this conversation is noticeable.

Scenario 1,

British client, male, age 40 (conversation via email)

Retouching project

Hi there,

I've shared some new work with you for retouching please.

Folder: xxx

Please could you do the usual retouching and save out the PSD files with layers in case I need to make any amends. Please can you send an example test shot for approving before proceeding. 38 images in total please advise if these can be completed next week. I was amazed by the previous work. Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Have a nice day!

Regards, Tiffany

Reply,

Hi Tiffany,

Good Morning! Yes received. We will follow your notes and will attach the pdf file for example test as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Analysis of scenario 1,

A British client is requesting some tech related work. As this is a one way communication (written only) although the conversation is formal but there is no such greeting words are used like, 'good morning' in the beginning. The client began the conversation by asking about the requests directly. On the other hand, the writing style is Variationist. Variationist sociolinguistics is a methodological and analytical approach to understanding the relationship between language and its context of use (wiki, 27 October 2022). From the supra-segmental feature the pitch was used in 'intonation' that conveys differences of expressive meaning (e.g., surprise, anger, or delight), and it can also serve a grammatical function. Here in the email the client said, "I was amazed by the previous work. Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you". This is a delightful expression. From the sociolinguistic approach the writing speech act is polite as he used 'please' and hedges to request that is linguistic politeness. In addition he used greetings in the last section 'have a nice day!' which brings cultural relevance and it has Understanding, Responsiveness. As this conversation is formal and the employees are non-English speakers so they had to keep efficiency while writing an email in English. So they used direct speech like telegraphic speech, 'yes received' and small talk, "We will follow your notes and will attach the pdf file for example test as soon as possible" to avoid miscommunication. Both the participants maintained linguistic politeness and used greeting words that explained linguistic diversity that how cultural greetings are used.

Scenario 2,

Client 01, Australian client, female, age 36 (conversation via email)

Issues with fixings and agreements_ photo batch of 2022

Hello,

I write you here because I see a lot of problems with the batch that you sent yesterday: these files are super bad. Your work with clothing is not up to our standards at all. . . . you can check yourself the photos did not come out correct shapes for the most parts(I'm particularly referring to man and woman jumpers). These need to be redone.

As we said,

- The legs and the arms were not mirrored
- The wrinkles had not been cleaned
- Xxx
- Xxx

fix the problems or let's talk!!!

Maddalena Ferraro,

Reply,

Hi Maddalena,

We are extremely sorry for all the inconvenience, we will correct all the mistakes and submit you tomorrow.

Regards.

Client 02, Swedish client, female, age 36 (conversation via email)

Bad files for retouch

Hi X,

I hope you had a great weekend and I hope you're fine with good health.

I have attached a file with bad images that needs to be redone. I have deadlines to submit these images to my client. . . . please could you follow the instructions and be careful and very thorough when doing this. Every visible fishline should be removed. . . .

Please get back to me and let me know you're thoughts on this. When can you have the images ready?

Please let me know, I hope you will fix the correction asap.

Regards, Andreas Scheller

Reply,

Dear Andreas,

Thank you for elaborating the mistakes we will update our deadlines keeping in mind your deadline and we will give you the images following all your instructions. After fixing the images we will send you a example test shot for your approval.

Have a nice day!

Thanks.

Analysis of scenario 2,

Here the diversity of sociolinguistic behavior is noticeable. Both the clients are complaining about the recent work that was not done as instructed. The Australian client complained in such a straightforward way from the cultural relevance it is informal from Bangladeshi context. No greeting words are used and the mail directly started with complain. It depicts variationist communication approach and the writing pattern was fluent. From the supra-segmental feature the pitch was used in 'intonation' as the mail shows anger, "fix the problems or let's talk!!!" here, the use of repetition in exclamatory sign represents the anxiousness. From the speech act linguistic politeness and direct speech is not used. No requesting words like please, petition, solicit etc is used however, the mail was quite detailed elaboration fluency does not consider direct speech. However there is cultural relevance in conversation which is understandable and has responsiveness. They used the word 'jumper' that means sweater or jackets which is not really familiar word for Bangladeshi people. On the other hand, the Swedish client complained in a polite way. Used hedges like 'could you', 'please'. Besides the conversation started with greetings 'I hope you had a great weekend and I hope you're fine with good health' unlike the Australian client. This behavior perhaps depicts the cultural variation linguistically. The communication approach is interactionist as she said, 'Please let me know, I hope you will fix the correction asap'. Here the word 'asap' means as soon as possible although it is not formal to use short forms of word in official conversation in Bangladeshi context. Therefore, the reply pattern differed upon the context. To the Australian client the reply was simple: apologize in a direct speech with no extra explanation. Whereas the reply to the Swedish client it was elaborated and appreciative. However both the replies maintain linguistic politeness

Scenario 3,

Italian client, male, age 39 (conversation via video call)

Querying about the work.

Client: Auh.. Allo(hello), me(I) Gabriele, me(I) audible? (loud)

X: Hello sir! yes of course you are. Thank you for joining us. How can we help you?

Client: auh.. me(I) wanted to see da(the) presentation of your retouch projects. Could you show some esempio(example)? Me(I) would like to give you some wedding fotografie(photos) to correct background and colore(color).

X: Definitely sir we are sharing our presentation please have a look.

Client(after watching presentation): good job! Me(I) interested to work with you. Me(I) be sending voi(you) an email with attached files. Please follow da instruction correctly. Thank you, Grazie ! (loud)

X: Thank you sir. It will be very helpful if we could connect through emails.

Client: Thank you too. Um, Me(I) would like to know the payment procedure. Voi(you) up for paypal payment(payment)?

X: Yes sir, we accept any digital payment method. Just give us dates for sending invoices. We will send you as per your schedule.

Client: Great! It was a nice meeting. Me emailing. Thank you.

X: Thank you so much sir. Pleasure is ours.

(conversation via email)

Retouch issues

Hej,

Dear X,

Look's like my clumsy fingers been at it again. Meant to send this email to another language hence the language barrier.

I don't know exactly how to go further with these three jobs. Grand design, Svanefors and Belid needs to be corrected or needs total redo. File 89905_005 needs dodge and burn only.

Looking forward to get this done.

Thank you, have a nice day!

Gabriele Gambetta

Reply,

Dear Gabriele,

Thank you for trusting us. We have well trained employees. This is our promise to provide the best work we can do. I hope we will not disappoint you.

Please give us a deadline schedule if needed. Otherwise we take 5 days to complete one session. Thank you. Have a nice day!

Regards, X

Analysis of scenario 03

This conversation has two parts, one via video calling(spoken conversation) other is via email (written conversation. Both conversations have different parts such as diverse dialects, different speech acts like linguistic politeness, four skill structures, hedges and technical words as well as modes of business language used throughout. analyzing the spoken conversation the diverse dialect such as the mix of English and Italian language is noticeable, as the client used some word like ‘voi’ means ‘you’; ‘Fotografie’ means ‘photos’; ‘me’ means ‘I’; ‘esempio’ means ‘example’; ‘paymento’ means ‘payment’; ‘da’ instead ‘the’ and ‘Allo’ instead of ‘Hello’ It also depicts that similar English like sounds make him confused. Besides, he used some Italian word ‘Grazie’ that represents thankfulness in Italian. In addition he used some expressions like ‘auh’ ‘um’ these are tonal stress. On the other hand, the style of writing email was kind of informal as he did not use greeting word and started writing saying his efficiency of English language. Besides, the semantic and pragmatic formation is not correct or inarticulate as he said, “Look’s like my clumsy fingers ...the language barrier”. It perhaps depicts the diverse culture of writing. However, his English writing skill is better than speaking nonetheless he has good communication skills, that has cultural relevance which is understandable and responsiveness. From the reply part, the participant kept politeness in every reply as she used hedges like, please, could, would etc and addressed the client ‘sir’ and promised for perfection that is a linguistic strategy to engage. The suprasegmental feature of the Italian client, the pitch was tonal and loud in contrast the Bengali speaker had down voice although both are multilingual so the use of English language has diversity. The use of technical English like ‘invoice’, ‘paypal’, digital payment etc in this conversation is used.

Scenario 04,

American client, female, age 34 (written conversation via email)

Hi There,

Thank you for your email. I hope you're doing well, it seems you had a great weekend.

I would like to show you some work that we do in our institution like 'lingerie' and 'bathing suits'. I want to know if it is okay for you to do those jobs. Basically, I'm asking for any cultural or religious barriers if you have one. As I know most of you practice Islam and it has some barriers for doing this sort of work ins't it? We loved your previous work so let me know because we are searching for a reliable partner for a long time collaboration. We eagerly respect your point of view. Thank you.

Amenda Clery

Reply,

Dear, Amenda

Thank you for understanding our situation. We are so delighted to work with you and we definitely want a long term collaboration as well. We are quite competent in this work but being in a muslim culture we have some barriers. Yes we can if it could be only the product photography then we can assure you a great result of retouching.

Thanks.

Analysis of Scenario 04,

This is an example of linguistic strategy, how using linguistic politeness helped to maintain both company's productivity and relation. Linguistic strategies are the ways speakers manipulate their linguistic content of speech for their purpose. The way the replier said 'no' without saying directly and maintained the policy of company. It's the linguistic strategy (politeness) which is very important in one way communication especially to engage in international trade. The linguistic tone is understanding and has responsiveness that also depicts the interactionist communication approach. This was quite evident because she was okay to understand the limitation of work. The writing was fluent and pitch: intonation is visible. She used 'isn't it?', however the conversation was formal as well. She constantly used hedges that is a confronting linguistic behavior..

Overall Findings:

All the scenarios portrayed the use of English language in communication using modes of business language. Basically it depicts the cultural diversity that provides opportunities to engage in conducting international business activities overseas. The cultural diversity in linguistic practice was evident such as formal-informal, linguistic strategy etc. The communication was in two ways: both writing and speaking. For instance one client was fluent in writing and stressed in speaking, one was polite and other was elaborating. All these differences show the cultural diversity and the importance of the English language to communicate. English is commonly used in most countries, so advertising, communication through English helps companies to upgrade their business to a global level. Therefore, linguistic strategy should be maintained to avoid any kind of miscommunication and it is evident that the English language here in this business plays a major role in conducting business overseas.

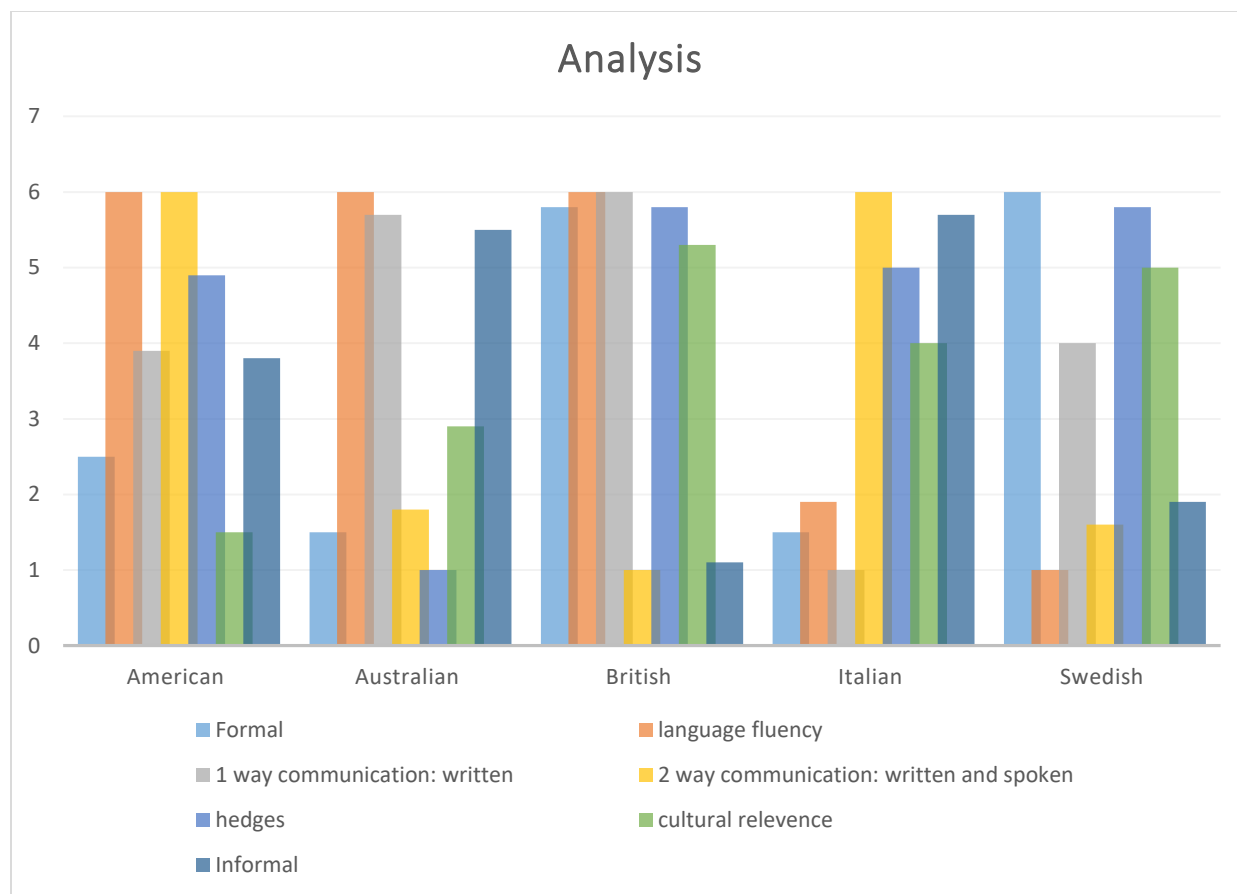


Chart: 01

This chart demonstrates the overall linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis based on the conversations given above.

Chapter FIVE

Conclusion

The analysis of this report shows the use of the English language to enrich global business by communicating. The data shows how clients construct requests, complain, query and how linguistic strategies are applied while communicating with people from different linguistic backgrounds. Both written and verbal communication indicates the difference in multilingual people. On the other hand, 'linguistic politeness' and 'direct speech' have been taken broadly from academic perspective to avoid miscommunication. The interaction with the clients depicts the cultural relevance, some were very interactive and some variationist. Overall the study evokes linguistic skill especially while dealing with multilingual or non-English speakers. Therefore, English is the language that is connecting business concepts in the global market. Every mode of business is running through technology and the language is English. The usefulness showcases the ability to share experiences and allows companies to reach the largest number of potential customers.

5.1 Limitation of study

It is always interesting to communicate with people from different linguistic backgrounds and cultures to learn about them. However, I had to maintain company policy that did not let me learn more from business talk. Evenmore, I couldn't record the verbal communication, company restricted the links to share with others. On the other hand, because of time shortage and deadlines I couldn't collect that much data I had to analyze these brief conversations. The analyses are based on only these particular conversations; there are no controversial viewpoints.

5.2 Recommendation for further studies

In this internship journey, I learned a lot of technical languages, use of different applications and websites. I communicated with various people and learned their culture and behavior. The report was explained linguistically and some practical tasks were applied like linguistic strategy, politeness, direct speech, two skill conversation etc. The data I collected in a very short period so I would recommend some points. First to collect more data from the same background that helps to compare and explore more about speech acts by using English while communicating. Another recommendation is to keep evidence of data that will not only help to write but also as a proof. Those who are interested to work in an IT company must be profound on human behavior and have to understand people's intonation, expressions and mood. So before entering this journey one must be well trained on linguistic behavior as these companies deal more with written communication than verbal.

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