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Title: Intercultural Communication Strategies: Discursive Strategies between Americans and Thais in an English-Language Asynchronous Argumentative Online Forum and Their Impact for Language Education

This dissertation aims at investigating the speech act of disagreement as it is carried out linguistically in an English-language asynchronous online forum between unacquainted Americans and Thais. The analysis and interpretation of the data from both "emic" and "etic" perspectives are based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) pragmatic theory of politeness, Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimension, Spencer-Oatey's (2008) theory of rapport management, and Davis & Henze's (1998) ethnographic methods.

Two research questions were posed: 1) How did the participants from the three groups disagree? 2) What variables influenced how disagreement was expressed? Collection of natural data from the participants' performances online showed that disagreement was expressed in two ways: softened and aggravated disagreement.

To soften the illocutionary force of disagreement, the participants of the three groups enhanced their interlocutors' face by means of positive politeness strategies, and off-record strategy. The participants lessened the imposition of their opinions on their interlocutors' face and rights by means of negative politeness strategies. To strengthen their disagreement, the USA participant and the two TEFL participants attacked or threatened their interlocutors' face, sociality rights and obligations by three means: 1) bald-on-record strategy, 2) negative politeness strategies, and 3) off-record strategy: rhetorical questions.

Based on both "emic" and "etic" accounts, variables of politeness can be subsumed under three general headings: face concern and rapport management, culturally-specific conventions in interaction, and contextual and situational factors. These variables are intricately related during the participants' dynamic co-construction of their disagreement with their co-participants.

Rees-Miller's (1995) three phases of pragmatic-awareness raising are proposed for an EFL teaching approach. They are: 1) making American pragmatic norms of academic disagreement accessible to students, 2) providing real examples of language to use, and 3) providing opportunities for students to practice