

## **Abstract**

Strasser, Thomas. 2004. *The use of English as a Lingua Franca in a large Austrian company*. MA thesis, University of Vienna.

In examining the usage of English as lingua franca in a large Austrian company, the primary goal of this thesis is to highlight the typical characteristics of ELF business communication. The data gathered for this purpose consists entirely of exemplary ELF telephone conversations between employees of the Lenzing Corporation and their international clients.

Since most conversations are of a business nature, chapter three addresses the theme of business negotiation. Examples are drawn from the existing literature to demonstrate the characteristics of business telephone negotiation, such as opening the call, formulating summaries, defining the problem, etc.

Chapter four is dedicated to the most significant part of the research, namely the analysis of salient features of ELF communication. With particular reference to Firth's informative article "The Discursive Accomplishment of Normality," principles such as "let-it-pass" or "make-it-normal" will be discussed and compared with the data at hand. Most importantly the roll of grammatical and lexical mishaps will be examined in order to show the extent that these are relevant to the interlocutors and accordingly to fluent conversation. Additionally, this paper seeks to reveal that the participants in business ELF communication are especially committed to creating a cooperative and collaborative atmosphere during the interaction. To this end, marked linguistic expressions are largely avoided and the focus is limited essentially to the content of the business interaction.