

**“Hej Seppo,
Could you pls comment on this!” -
Internal Email Communication
in Lingua Franca English
in a Multinational Company**

This book examines the internal email communication of a multinational company in lingua franca English. The corpus consists of 282 emails written by the company’s Finnish and Swedish employees at different organizational levels. To determine the corporate context where the messages were produced and used, background information was elicited from the writers and recipients and sources such as a communication survey carried out in the company were used.

The book focuses on the nature of genres in email; it shows how they are used to do business and describes the features typical of their discourse. It also sheds light on the reported differences between Finnish and Swedish communication styles. Although the study is not concerned with teaching, the implications for teaching business communication are obvious: in a shared corporate context, genre knowledge is more essential for a business practitioner’s professional success than impeccable language skills.



Anne Kankaanranta - “Hej Seppo, could you pls comment on this!” -
Internal Email Communication in Lingua Franca English in a Multinational Company

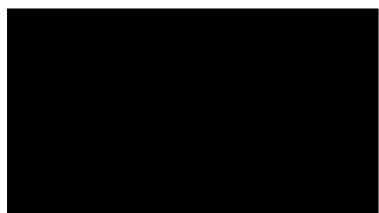
Anne Kankaanranta

**“Hej Seppo,
Could you pls comment on this!” –**

**Internal Email Communication
in Lingua Franca English
in a Multinational Company**



“Hej Seppo,
could you pls comment on this!” –
Internal Email Communication
in Lingua Franca English
in a Multinational Company



“Hej Seppo,
could you pls comment on this!” –
Internal Email Communication
in Lingua Franca English
in a Multinational Company

Anne Kankaanranta

University of Jyväskylä
Centre for Applied Language Studies
Jyväskylä 2005

**“Hej Seppo,
could you pls comment on this!” –
Internal Email Communication
in Lingua Franca English
in a Multinational Company**

Centre for Applied Language Studies
P.O. Box 35
40014 University of Jyväskylä
<http://www.solki.jyu.fi>
solki-info@cc.jyu.fi

© Anne Kankaanranta and University of Jyväskylä/
Centre for Applied Language Studies

Layout and cover Sinikka Lampinen
Cover drawing Hannu Kalla

ISBN 951-39-2320-7

Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä 2005

ABSTRACT

Kankaanranta, Anne
"Hej Seppo, could you pls comment on this!" - Internal Email Communication
in Lingua Franca English in a Multinational Company
Jyväskylä: Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Jyväskylä,
2005, 459 p.
ISBN 951-39-2320-7
Finnish Summary
Diss.

This dissertation examines company-internal email communication in lingua franca English in a multinational company. It analyzes a corpus of 282 emails written by the company's Finnish and Swedish employees at all organizational levels, from vice president to secretary. In addition to the email corpus, the case study makes use of contextual information collected via questionnaires, an interview, a focus group, and some literary sources. Although the research focuses on the nature of genre(s) in email, it also sheds light on differences between Finnish and Swedish communication styles. Genre theory provides the theoretical foundation for the study.

The study was motivated by three factors, which also contribute to its significance for today's business. First, in multinational companies English is increasingly used as the shared language of internal communication. Second, email technology enables direct communication links between corporate employees all over the world. Third, both Finns and Swedes agree that some differences exist in their communication styles.

The findings of the study show that the email messages in the corpus can be viewed as representative of three email genres, which are a response to the various situations arising in a corporate context. The *Noticeboard* genre informs the employees about corporate issues, the *Dialogue* genre exchanges information about them, and the *Postman* genre delivers documents or appended messages for information and/or comments. The discourse in the

Dialogue genre is more 'spoken' than that in the Postman genre, which exhibits the outdated 'written' phraseology of traditional business correspondence. Finnish and Swedish approaches to email communication are similar in orientation towards people and discussion, but differ somewhat with respect to the directness of their requests.

To conclude, the three genres are essential components in a business professional's daily work. Although the study is not concerned with teaching, the implications for teaching business communication are obvious: genre knowledge is more essential for a business practitioner's professional success than impeccable language skills.

Keywords: business communication, internal communication, email, lingua franca English, genre analysis, genre

Author's address Anne Kankaanranta
Department of Languages and Communication
Helsinki School of Economics
P.O. BOX 1210
00101 Helsinki
anne.kankaanranta@hse.fi

Supervisor Kari Sajavaara
Professor Emeritus of Applied Language Studies
Centre for Applied Language Studies
University of Jyväskylä

Reviewers Priscilla S. Rogers
Associate Professor of Business Communication
Ross School of Business, University of Michigan

Eija Ventola
Professor
Department of English
University of Helsinki

Opponent Priscilla S. Rogers
Associate Professor of Business Communication
Ross School of Business, University of Michigan



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process of writing a Ph.D. dissertation is like running a marathon. It requires a lot of energy but in the end, like a marathon, it is simply a matter of putting one foot in front of the other. Although the race was mine alone and only my name appears on the cover of this final product, I would not have been able to reach the finishing line without the support from a number of people and institutions.

First, I owe a special debt to my supervisor Professor Kari Sajavaara, who has always believed in me. He was always there to support me in spite of some total stops during the long process. In the later stages, his support even gained momentum: in fall 2003, after reading my manuscript for a licentiate thesis, he persuaded me to take on writing a Ph.D. dissertation instead. The half-marathon was turned into a full one – thanks to him.

Second, I'm most grateful to my two external reviewers: Priscilla Rogers, Associate Professor of Business Communication at the Ross School of Business, the University of Michigan and Eija Ventola, Professor of English at the University of Helsinki. Their perceptive comments and constructive feedback improved the dissertation tremendously.

Third, I wish to acknowledge the supportive research environment at the Department of Languages and Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE). In particular, I would like to thank my two bosses, Tuija Nikko, our director, and Professor Mirjaliisa Charles, my immediate superior. Tuija has always tried to find ways to encourage research in spite of the scarce financial resources and heavy teaching load of the department. Mirjaliisa's understanding and unfailing support during the process were invaluable. She has got the rare ability to give you her full attention in the midst of a busy working day. I appreciate her sound judgement, commitment, and professionalism.

In addition, my English Business Communication colleagues (Mike Baker, Geoff Hilton, Ulla Höckerstedt, Leena Louhiala-Salmi-
nen, Gwen Merrill, David Miller, and Maija Tammelin) deserve heartfelt thanks for having readjusted their schedules to accommodate my research leaves. And it is not only their flexibility that I have to thank them for but also their interest and enthusiasm in something that for a long time was just a sketchy idea and stacks of papers piled all over the office. Especially, David Miller, who I share an office with, has put up with a disorganized fellow lecturer; his wisdom and common sense have helped me over many a hurdle on the way (although the office may still look a bit messy). As an experienced business communication instructor, he has challenged me to write up research that would benefit, not only academia, but also the business practitioners and students. I have done my best to meet that challenge. The one colleague and a dear friend who has inspired me most is Leena Louhiala-Salmi-
nen, a connoisseur of business genres but also of those related to perseverance, time management, and open exchange of ideas. We have travelled a long way together via Uppsala, Sydney, and Albuquerque since 1988 when we started as new lecturers at the HSE Languages Department. Over these years, I have enjoyed working with her, learning from her, and laughing with her. Thank you, Leena!

I also want to express my warmest appreciation to all my colleagues in the department. Their dedication to their work has encouraged me to strive for the best. In particular, I have benefited from and, most of all, enjoyed 'casual Friday lunches' with Marja-Leena Sarvikivi, chats hanging around at each other's doors with Marketta Majapuro, stimulating coffee breaks with Aija-Lee-
na Nurminen, and a mutual interest in 'requests' with Sirkka-Liisa Lainio.

Fourth, I'm very much indebted to the eight Stora Enso employees who gave me their entire email boxes for research purposes. It is a privilege to gain access to such authentic data. Unfortunately, these people cannot be thanked individually and

none of them appear in the study under their real names. Without their contribution and the cooperation with the company this study would not exist. In particular, I would like to thank Paavo Jäppinen, Vice President, for all his assistance during the process.

For the financial support, which made it possible to focus on research rather than try to combine it with teaching duties, I am indebted to a number of sources. In particular, I would like to express my thanks to the Foundation for Economic Education for the grant in spring 2003 and to the Morley scholarship committee for the scholarship covering the costs of a two-month study at the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Michigan in fall 2000. My stay in Ann Arbor as a visiting scholar was filled with hard work in an inspiring environment – thanks to Professor John Swales, his Ph.D. students, Dushyanthi Mendis in particular, and the ELI staff.

I would also like to thank the Board of the Department of Languages and Communication at HSE for their trust in turning my lectureship into a research position for six months in spring 2000. That time meant a kick-off for the dissertation and it also served as a springboard for my contribution in a major research project “Finnish, Swedish, or English? Internal communication in recently merged Finnish-Swedish companies” financed by the Academy of Finland, led by Professor Helena Kangasharju, and carried out by researchers from the department. In addition, thanks go to the HSE Foundation for funding trips to international conferences. Presenting papers and networking with fellow researchers from all over the world have not only inspired me but also contributed to my academic skills. Further, I would like to thank the Centre for Applied Language Studies at the University of Jyväskylä and its director Minna-Riitta Luukka for funding a two-month research leave to complete the manuscript in fall 2004. Also, special thanks are due to Sinikka Lampinen and Hannu Kalla for making this research look attractive.

I feel very happy about the support I have received from my friends. They have given me the much-needed psychological

boosts on the way: with them I've have celebrated the ups and lamented the downs of the long journey. Pirjo, thanks for everything involved in being my friend for over 35 years; Mirjami, for your 'energizing influence'; Airi, for not taking anything for granted; Anne, my favourite painter, for introducing me to another world of lonely work; Eeva, for sharing your enthusiasm and experience about a teacher turning into a researcher; Eija, for reminding me of the funny side of life; and all my other friends, although not named, still remembered and appreciated.

Finally, I would like to express my very special thanks to my family: my dear sister, her husband, and Seppo. Without Eppu and Hannu, their love, optimism, and humour I wouldn't be here. They have made me switch off from academic work in the diversions of country life in Kiipu. Under their feet grass never grows - I have tried to follow their example. For three summers, Seppo, the only marathon man of my life, has provided me with both a solitary nook in which to work on the dissertation and also with excellent company to help me get my mind off it. I am grateful for his persistent encouragement. Most of all, thanks for the laughs and the love.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, who would have enjoyed the day.

Helsinki, September 2005

CONTENTS

Abstract

Acknowledgements

1	INTRODUCTION	19
1.1	Objective of the study	26
1.2	Overview of the study	30
2	THE NOTION OF GENRE IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS	32
2.1	Two background concepts	34
2.1.1	Social constructionism	34
2.1.2	Intertextuality	43
2.2	Two branches of genre analysis	46
2.2.1	Genre in ESP	49
2.2.2	Genre in North American New Rhetoric	51
2.3	Seven key tenets of genre approaches	52
2.3.1	Communicative purpose as a privileged criterion for genre identification	56
2.3.2	Genres as typified social action in recurrent situations	60
2.3.3	Discourse community as a user of genres	64
2.3.4	Genre names – evidence for social recognition	69
2.3.5	Form of genres	73
2.3.6	Content of genres	89
2.3.7	Dynamic and evolutionary potential of genres	93
2.4	Summary	100
3	PREVIOUS RESEARCH INTO THE HYBRID NATURE OF EMAIL COMMUNICATION AND POLITENESS IN BUSINESS MESSAGES	102
3.1	Hybrid nature of email communication	102
3.2	Politeness in business messages	110
3.2.1	Comparisons between native and non-native business writers' politeness	115
3.2.2	(Business) requests on email	118
3.2.3	Politeness in company-internal communication	120

4	DATA AND METHODS	123
4.1	Data	124
4.1.1	Email messages	125
4.1.2	Data other than email	129
4.2	Methods	133
4.2.1	Methods of data collection	133
4.2.2	Methods of analysis	134
5	SHARED CONTEXTUAL FEATURES OF INTERNAL ENGLISH EMAIL MESSAGES	139
5.1	Corporate context of e-writing in Stora Enso	140
5.1.1	Core statements of mission, vision, and values	141
5.1.2	Organizational subsystems	142
5.1.3	Environmental factors	150
5.2	Stora Enso discourse community	156
5.3	Informational and Relational content	164
5.4	Email as a medium	170
5.5	Business English Lingua Franca as a code	179
5.5.1	Nature of BELF in the messages	185
5.5.2	Finnish and Swedish in the BELF messages	193
5.6	Summary – support for one email genre	199
6	COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSES OF THE EMAIL MESSAGES	204
6.1	Message types according to their communicative purpose	206
6.1.1	Noticeboard messages	211
6.1.2	Postman messages	214
6.1.3	Dialogue messages	220
6.2	Distribution of message types	229
6.3	Names of message types	231
6.4	Focus group’s views of purposes of three messages	234
6.5	Summary	238
7	SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE FEATURES IN THE MESSAGE TYPES	241
7.1	Spoken language features	245
7.1.1	Dialogue messages	251
7.1.2	Noticeboard messages	256
7.2	Traditional business letter discourse	259
7.2.1	Postman messages	261
7.3	Summary	263

8	MOVES IN THE MESSAGE TYPES	271
8.1	Identification and order of moves	273
8.2	Framing moves	282
8.2.1	Move I: Identifying subject	282
8.2.2	Moves II, VII, VIII and IX: Salutation, Pre-closing, Closing and Signature	288
8.2.3	Move III: Referring to previous contact	295
8.3	Content moves	302
8.3.1	Move V: Providing information	302
8.3.2	Move IV: Indicating enclosure	317
8.3.3	Move VI: Requesting	326
8.4	Summary – support for three email genres	330
9	TEXTUALIZATIONS OF SALUTATION, CLOSING, AND SIGNATURE MOVES	339
9.1	Salutation move	339
9.1.1	Messages to single recipients	340
9.1.2	Messages to multiple recipients	343
9.1.3	Use of salutations in the three genres	345
9.2	Closing and Signature moves	351
9.2.1	Signatures in messages to single recipients	353
9.2.2	Signatures in messages to multiple recipients	355
9.2.3	Use of closings and signatures in the three genres	357
9.3	Summary	359
10	TEXTUALIZATIONS OF REQUESTING MOVE	363
10.1	Definition of request	364
10.2	Impositions	370
10.3	Direct and indirect requests	377
10.3.1	Direct requests	381
10.3.2	Indirect requests	390
10.4	Summary	395
11	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	400
11.1	Nature of genres in internal email communication in English lingua franca	409
11.2	Limitations and suggestions for further research	420
11.3	Implications for business practitioners and for the teaching of English business communication	425
11.4	Concluding remarks	431

SUMMARY IN FINNISH	432
REFERENCES	435
APPENDICES	451

FIGURES

FIGURE 1.	Business Communication Systems Map (from Suchan & Dulek 1998: 99).....	39
FIGURE 2.	Inboxes of the four participants of the message exchange in example (21).	176
FIGURE 3	A message community of four messages.	219
FIGURE 4	Dialogue, Postman, and Noticeboard messages on spoken-written continuum.	264

TABLES

TABLE 1	Features of International Business English (Johnson & Bartlett 1999: 9).	81
TABLE 2	Overall linguistic profile of email proposed by Baron (1998: 151-155).	104
TABLE 3	Pseudonym, mother tongue, sex, age, position, corporate or local function, and the country of location of the informants.	126
TABLE 4	Distribution of messages and writers according to the mother tongue and sex.	128
TABLE 5	Data used to meet the aims of the study.	132
TABLE 6	Methods/ models focusing on text and context used to meet the aims of the study.	136
TABLE 7	The relationship between the informants' job roles and the variety of the subject lines in their messages.	144
TABLE 8	Distribution of English messages of all internal messages in informants' mailboxes.	180
TABLE 9	Features of International Business English with examples from the corpus.	191
TABLE 10	Criteria used to identify different communicative purposes.	209
TABLE 11	Informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Noticeboard messages presented to them.	213
TABLE 12	Informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Postman messages presented to them.	218
TABLE 13	Informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Dialogue messages presented to them.	226

TABLE 14	Distribution of the three message types of internal English email messages according to informant.	230
TABLE 15	Names given to the messages by the informants.	232
TABLE 16	Focus group members' perceptions about the communicative purposes of three messages representing the three message types.	236
TABLE 17	Informants' views of alternative media to replace email messages.	242
TABLE 18	Features of involvement with examples from the corpus.	248
TABLE 19	Distribution of features of involvement in 25 Dialogue messages with ranking of their respective frequency and comparison with Nickerson's (2000) findings.	254
TABLE 20	Distribution and ranking of features of involvement in the 25 Noticeboard messages with comparable data about the Dialogue messages.	257
TABLE 21	Traditional business phraseology according to the message type.	260
TABLE 22	Summary of the focus group's views of the language of the Dialogue and Noticeboard messages.	270
TABLE 23	Moves in the Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue messages.	273
TABLE 24	Interplay between Moves I and V in the Noticeboard messages.	304
TABLE 25	Interplay between Moves I and V in the opening messages of the Dialogue type.	309
TABLE 26	Interplay between Moves I, Vri and Vr in the response messages of the Dialogue type.	312
TABLE 27	Interplay between Move VI of the opening message and Move Vri of the response message of the Dialogue type.	313
TABLE 28	Interplay between Move Vn of the preceding message and Move Vr of the subsequent message.	315
TABLE 29	Subject line, attachment name, and Move IV.	318
TABLE 30	The most common textualizations of Move IV and their number.	320
TABLE 31	Interplay between Moves I and IV in the Postman type.	321
TABLE 32	Salutation moves in messages to a single recipient. ...	340
TABLE 33	Salutation moves in messages to multiple recipients. ...	344
TABLE 34	Distribution of Requesting moves according to the imposition, i.e. a physical act (VIa), a verbal response (VIvr), and a conditional request (VIif).	371

TABLE 35	The most common impositions and their number according to the mother tongue of the writer.	373
TABLE 36	Verbs requesting comments, opinions, etc. and their number as used by Finnish and Swedish writers.	376
TABLE 37	Distribution of direct and indirect requests among Finnish and Swedish writers.	379
TABLE 38	Distribution of direct requests (in the imperative and interrogative) of all requests by Finnish and Swedish writers.	382
TABLE 39	Use of imperatives alone and with <i>please, kindly, and let's</i> by Finnish and Swedish writers.	383
TABLE 40	Distribution of interrogatives, i.e. yes-no and wh-questions, by Finnish and Swedish writers.	388
TABLE 41	Realizations of indirect requests by Finnish and Swedish writers.	391

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	Length and description of the collection period, distribution of outgoing and incoming mail, distribution of internal vs. external messages, and distribution of messages written in different languages in the informants' mailboxes.	451
APPENDIX 2	Questionnaire (a) to the informants concerning background information about them and the collection period.	452
APPENDIX 3	Questionnaire (b) to the informants concerning messages written and/or received by them.	453
APPENDIX 4	Questionnaire to the focus group consisting of international business people.	454
APPENDIX 5	Distribution of English messages of all internal messages in the informants' mailboxes.	459

1 INTRODUCTION

Recent turbulence in the corporate world resulting from globalization and advances in communication technology has meant major changes for internal communication in companies. In the last few decades, an increasing number of cross-border mergers and acquisitions have been negotiated and completed. This trend has been especially prominent in Scandinavia since the early 1990s (Cartwright 1998: 5). More specifically, the number of mergers across the Gulf of Bothnia, that is, between Finland and Sweden, has expanded to the extent that it has attracted a great deal of interest among organization researchers (see e.g. Vaara 1999, 2002; Säntti 2001; Söderberg & Vaara 2003). In spring 2005, Swedish companies were the primary targets of the acquisitions by Finnish companies, and Finnish companies ranked first on the Swedish companies' buying agenda (Kallionpää 2005). While small family businesses may still be securely rooted in the home country, cross-border mergers create large entities in pursuit of synergy benefits and more effective strategies to meet the challenges of competition in the world markets. For example, the ten biggest companies based in Finland generate almost 90% of their turnover abroad with 60 % of their staff being located outside the country; the corresponding figures for 1983 were 60% and 15% respectively (Ali-Yrkkö & Ylä-Anttila 2002: 8).

This globalization of corporations is closely intertwined with the huge advances in communication technology in the past 25 years. Today, email¹ technology is ubiquitous in the (western) corporate world but it was only in the late 1970s that the first electronic typewriters emerged together with telex machines

1 The spelling *email* rather than *e-mail* is used in this study since hyphens can be seen as temporary scaffolding in the building of new words (see e.g. Andrews 2003: 7-8). This study adopts the practice of spelling email without the hyphen thus aiming to make a statement about the permanency of email in today's world.

(Nikali 1998). Today, in addition to written messages, it is possible to transmit pictures, video clips, and sound electronically. Email provides easy contacts with colleagues on the other side of the globe as well as with those in the office next door; work and interaction with physically separated colleagues takes place virtually. Replies to inquiries may come within seconds while the process took several days, even weeks, when business letters were exchanged with overseas contacts by regular mail. All personnel of a company can also be reached by clicking on the *Send* icon in the email template. Via computer links, the units of a multinational company in different parts of the world are connected to enable the coordination and running of corporate activities. Globalization as it is known today would not be possible without modern communication technology.

The advances in technology have occurred simultaneously with changes in dominant cultural values, which have contributed to the changing work environment. The overall democratization of contemporary society has meant changes in language use; discourse has become more informal and conversational (e.g. Fairclough 1992a: 200–225). The first comprehensive survey study of the use of English among Finnish business professionals (Louhiala-Salminen 1995: 102–103) showed a distinctive trend towards more informal language and personalization of communication, which was partly due to direct communication links between the sender and the receiver through the fax machine. Consequently, the technological advances in the Finnish business environment resulted in changes in the social context of the business community, which caused the changes in discursive practices from ‘formal’ business correspondence to ‘informal’ message exchange.² The influence of these new practices on the social context meant that the need for specialists in (foreign) languages, i.e. secretaries,

2 Business correspondence here refers to format-bound business writing including specific document types such as requests for quotation, offers, and orders, whereas message exchange emphasizes non-format-bound writing, such as various updates and inquiries.

dropped as business professionals started to write their own texts, and the link between the writer³ and the recipient became direct. Without these direct communication links between staff members, the operations of multinational companies would be more complicated, maybe often impossible.

When companies grow through mergers and acquisitions, people of different nationalities and with different mother tongues may become colleagues overnight. In this new situation, the integration of activities and the operation of the new combine call for a common language to be used in internal communication. Today, such language is increasingly English. In 2002, all but one of the fourteen engineering companies listed on the Helsinki Exchanges Main List had English as their official language; only one company used Finnish as the corporate language. In addition, English was the corporate language of half of the smaller companies quoted on the Pre List (Nurmi 2002).

The use of English is not gaining ground only in business; it is boosted by globalization (see e.g. Crystal 1997; Widdowson 1997; Graddol 1999a, 1999b; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1999; Svartvik 2000).⁴ To better reflect this pluralism of users and use, the word *English* has gained a more democratic alternative in *(World) Englishes* (see e.g. McArthur 1998). In this environment, English is no longer the preserve of its native speakers but rather, common property of its users, a *lingua franca*, with different varieties emerging among particular user groups. It has been estimated that around 80% of the interactions in which the language is English take place between non-native speakers (Beneke 1991 as quoted in Lesznyák 2002: 161). Business people, for example, have used *Euro-English* as a label for the variety they need in their daily operations (see e.g. Louhiala-Salminen 1995); the same label is

3 In Goffman's (1974) terms the frame invoked by the business professional changed from that of the *principal* to that of the *author*.

4 This phenomenon has also attracted the attention of international and national press (see Cohen 1996, Baker et al. 2001, The Economist 2001, Nurmi 2002, Norrmén 2003, Hiidenmaa et al. 2003, Nikula et al. 2003, Josephson 2004).

also used by linguists, some of whom use the word *Euro* to refer to the European Union and some others to Europe as a whole (Jenkins et al. 2001, McArthur 2003). Jenkins et al. (2001: 18–19) have also pointed out that native speakers of English should prepare for encounters with non-native speakers of the language by acquiring skills necessary to adjust their speech; they even suggest that these lingua franca skills could be acquired in school alongside the learning of English as a mother tongue. Charles & Marschan-Piekkari (2002: 25) further argue that together with non-native speakers, native speakers should be offered corporate language training programs aimed at improving horizontal communication in multinational companies.

The lingua franca between Finns and Swedes has traditionally been Swedish,⁵ which is one of the two official languages of Finland. In Finnish-Swedish mergers, the choice of the corporate language has been between Swedish and English; Finnish has never been a viable option as it is not a language shared by Finns and Swedes. Recently, however, English has become an increasingly dominant language in Nordic business encounters, and it is also widely used as a corporate language (Björkman et al. 2003: 219). English is used increasingly also in other domains in the Nordic countries, as is shown by e.g. Taavitsainen & Pahta (2003) in their overview of “English in Finland”⁶ and by Modiano (2003) in his “Euro-English: A Swedish Perspective”.

Increased use of English as a corporate language elsewhere in Europe is a clear trend according to Vollstedt (2002: 103), who conducted a survey in 20 multinational companies in Europe. The overwhelming majority of these companies had either changed their internal language from German or French to English or was in the process of doing so. Only two companies used German as

5 In contacts between the Nordic countries, a variant called ‘Scandinavian’ has been used featuring all the main languages of the region except for Finnish.

6 See also <http://www.jyu.fi/tdk/hum/englanti/EnglishVoices/> for information on a major research project run by the University of Jyväskylä on the use of English in Finnish media, education and professional settings.

their corporate language. Vollstedt (2002: 90–92) attributes this change to two reasons: the overall Anglicization of the world, on the one hand, and innovations in communication and information technologies, influences of corporate culture, legislative regulations, and issues of power and equality, on the other.

In Finnish-Swedish mergers, English can be considered a neutral language which emphasizes equality between parties of non-English origin and balances the relationships within the merged organization (Piekkari et al. 2005). The strategy of choosing English as the corporate language has even been recommended specifically for reasons of equality and power balance by e.g. Tienari & Vaara (2001). In this way users are more or less equal in their competence or incompetence of English, as neither party 'owns' the shared code. When the mother tongue of one of the merging parties is chosen as the corporate language, problems may arise. An illustrating example of such a situation is the choice of Swedish as the language of the top management in the banking merger of the Finnish Merita and the Swedish Nordbanken in 1997, which has been found problematic by a number of organization researchers (e.g. Sääntti 2001, Björkman et al. 2003, Piekkari et al. 2005, and Vaara et al. 2005; see also Louhiala-Salminen 2002b). A number of Finnish employees felt professionally incompetent and handicapped because of their limited skills in Swedish (Björkman et al. 2003: 217). It can be assumed that Finnish employees felt that Swedes gained the upper hand through the choice of their mother tongue as the corporate language. In 2000, when Merita Nordbanken merged with a Danish financial services group Unidanmark, the corporate language was changed to English.

The choice of English as the corporate language inevitably increases its use in the new combine. For example, Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 149–150) questionnaire survey in Stora Enso and Nordea shows that the use of English had increased since the mergers of Stora and Enso and Nordbanken and Merita. When Enso of Finland and Stora of Sweden merged in 1998, English

was announced as the corporate language in the first press conference. Since then its use has increased in the new combine but it is also true that it was frequently used before the merger because of the international nature of both paper companies. After the merger of Merita and Nordbanken, the use of English more than doubled.

When English is used in external communication, i.e. negotiating contracts and corresponding about business deals, the communicators are either buyers or sellers in pursuit of the overall purpose of the communication: to achieve the goals of buying-selling negotiation (see e.g. Charles 1994, Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999). The stages in this negotiation are reflected in the documents exchanged between the parties. For example, Yli-Jokipii (1994: 52) classifies them into those needed at the stages of pre-deal, on-deal, and post-delivery. At each stage, certain documents are typically exchanged in a predetermined sequence; for instance, in the post-deal stage, *reminder*, *complaint*, and *adjustment*. Before the radical advancement in communication technology, these documents were business letters delivered by mail and their conventional form and content remained practically unchanged for decades (cf. Afzelius 1914, Ashley 1984; see also Yates & Orlikowski 1992). Any member of the international business community involved in foreign trade was able to describe their typical form and content, make use of them, and also knew the specific names used for them as was indicated, for example, by Louhiala-Salminen (1995) in her survey of the Finnish business community.

When English is no longer used only to either buy or sell the company's products but rather to make the buying and selling possible, its usage expands from relatively specific functions between buyers and sellers to any activity relevant in running the company. It is needed in accounting, finance, and management. In other words, English assumes the same functions as the mother tongue has in monolingual work environments. The situations of internal communication are more versatile than those of external

communication and the documents used cannot be as explicitly defined as in foreign trade. It may be suggested that the high frequency of non-format-bound English messages by Finnish business professionals, as indicated by Louhiala-Salminen's (1995, also 1999b) survey, is partly due to the fact that 55% of the respondents used English with their colleagues in the parent or subsidiary companies abroad. This type of communication can be identified as internal communication.

Internal communication has attracted some interest among business communication researchers, for example from the perspective of language training in multinational companies (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari 2002), discourse practices in multicultural distributor meetings (Poncini 2002), and comparison of Turkish and English memos written by Turkish business practitioners (Akar 1998). Research on internal email communication has been conducted by, for example, Mulholland (1999), who investigated email exchanges among administrative staff at an Australian university preparing for internal meetings, Alatalo (2002), who focused on the language in some problematic messages, and Nickerson (2000; see also 1999a, 1998), whose genre analysis focused on management messages in a multinational company. In Mulholland's (1999), Alatalo's (2002) and Nickerson's (2000) studies the choice of the messages investigated was limited and the studies were not based on a representative sample of the message exchanges occurring in the companies under study. In addition, the subjects in Mulholland's (1999) study were native speakers of English, while Alatalo (2002) and Nickerson (2000) had their data from both native and non-native speakers of English.

Internal communication and the use of English among Finns and Swedes, as well as their respective mother tongues, were in focus in a major research project in Finland in 2000–2002; the two case companies were Stora Enso and Nordea. The name of the project was 'Finnish, Swedish or English? In-house communication in recently merged Finnish-Swedish corporations' (see <http://www.abo.fi/instut/fisve-svefi/english/kangasharju-charles.html>).

More specifically, the project mapped out the changes in communication practices brought about by the mergers, staff attitudes towards the changes, and with the help of authentic data it investigated salient features of internal communication in the case companies. The project comprised five subprojects: first, a questionnaire survey with follow-up interviews on communication in the companies (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b); second, analyses of in-house meetings and negotiations (Charles & Louhiala-Salminen, in press; Kangasharju, in press; Nikko, in press; Börestam 2005; Hirsto 2002; Paatola 2002); third, a comparative analysis of Swedish texts produced in Sweden and Finland (Peltonen, forthcoming); and fourth, an investigation of the Stora Enso staff magazine (Nissinen 2001). The fifth subproject is the present study focusing on email communication in Stora Enso.

In spite of the expanding use of English as the *lingua franca* in internal email communication, there have been few studies focusing on messages written by a diverse group of non-native corporate employees. This study seeks to explore this less researched area.

1.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study explores an area in the textual world of a multinational company through its electronically transmitted documents. It is a case study with both textual and contextual analysis of a sample of 282 English email messages written by Finnish and Swedish Stora Enso employees at all corporate levels to recipients most of whom are also Finns and Swedes. As mentioned above, the globally operating paper company Stora Enso was formed through a merger of the Swedish Stora and the Finnish Enso in 1998. In 2004, Stora Enso was the second largest Finnish company, preceded only by Nokia, with nearly 44,000 employees and a net turnover of more than EUR 12,000 million (Talouselämä 2005).

The study was motivated by the changes discussed above that affect communication practices in multinational companies. In particular, it was motivated by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 15, 25–26, 20) questionnaire survey carried out in the company which showed that internal communication accounted for 80% of all communicative events, every fifth of the events took place in English, and email exchanges accounted for around one fourth of the time spent by the employees on various communication media/situations. Thus, it can be assumed that the messages play an important role in the running of the company. On a more abstract level, email exchanges operationalize the company's mission, vision, and values in everyday activities of its employees.

The overall aim of the study is to investigate the nature of genre(s)⁷ in internal English email communication with the help of an email corpus embedded in the organizational context. Recent research in email communication reflects the inherent dynamism of the concept of genre; see, for instance, Mulholland (1999), who regards all email messages as representative of *one email genre*, whereas Nickerson (2000; also Orlikowski & Yates 1994) identifies *a number of email genres*, and Bhatia et al. (2002) regard the issue as problematic. Yates & Orlikowski (1992) and Orlikowski & Yates (1994) adopt a more flexible approach and argue that, depending on the level of abstraction, email messages can be identified as representing one genre comparable to the business letter genre or as representing a number of genres comparable to order letters, recommendation letters, etc. The present study contributes to the discussion about the existence of one or many email genres in terms of the situation in a multinational company in which internal email messages are written in lingua franca English by Finnish and Swedish speakers.

⁷ To avoid situations like this in which parentheses are used around the plural -s at the end of the word *genre* every time the discussion applies to both singular and plural forms of the word, a decision was made to use the plural form only.

The study has five specific aims. It aims to

1. identify shared features of the organizational context in which the genres are produced and used, that is,
 - corporate and social contexts, and
 - content, medium, and use of lingua franca English, Finnish, and Swedish in the messages;
2. identify the genres by focusing on their communicative purposes and the action they accomplish;
3. identify salient discourse features of the genres, that is
 - the features contributing to the spoken and/or written quality of the messages, and
 - the moves contributing to the communicative purposes;
4. describe how Salutation, Closing, and Signature moves are textualized and to what purpose;
5. describe how the Requesting move is textualized and to account for the prospective differences between Finnish and Swedish writers.

The first three aims are motivated by the desire to investigate the nature of genres in the corpus; the investigation focuses on the organizational context of production and use of the genres, their communicative purposes, and discourse features. Meeting these aims sheds light on the question about the number of genres manifest in the corpus. Aims 4 and 5 focus on the textualizations of certain moves; they emerged during the research process. Aim 4 is motivated by the contradictory findings of previous research relating to the frequency of the moves (cf. Orlikowski & Yates 1994, Gains 1999, Baron 2000 with Louhiala-Salminen 1999a, Alatalo 2000, Nickerson 2000) and aim 5 by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) questionnaire survey in the company, which pointed at some differences between Finnish and Swedish communication.

The presentation of the findings is performed in the order of the aims. First, in accordance with genre-based approaches, the messages are situated in their environment of production and use

with the help of ethnographic data provided by e.g. questionnaires to some writers and recipients of the messages, a focus group survey, and an interview with one Stora Enso employee (see Chapter 4). The messages are viewed as a collection sharing certain features such as the corporate and social contexts,⁸ the content of the messages, the medium, and the use of English as the lingua franca between Finnish and Swedish speakers and the incorporation of the mother tongues in the English messages. Exploration of the messages in their context contributes to the understanding of how e-writing, i.e. writing email messages, in the company shapes and is shaped by the writers and recipients of the messages. Second, the communicative purposes that the messages serve in the particular corporate and social contexts is used as the primary criterion in the identification of the genres. The initial identification is complemented by the identification of the action the messages accomplish; also the names used to refer to the messages by the informants are used to shed light on the number of prospective genres. Third, the discourse features of the genres are viewed from two perspectives. To begin with, as email is said to represent a hybrid between spoken and written language, this study sets out to find out if some of the genres exhibit more features of spoken or written discourse than others and if some features are shared by all the messages. This investigation also sheds light on the role of email in relation to other communication media, such as the fax, telephone, and internal mail service. Then, the moves that contribute to the fulfilling of the communicative purposes of the genres are identified. Fourth, the textualizations of the Salutation move together with the Closing and Signature moves, which frame the message, are in focus in an attempt to account for their purpose in the corpus. Finally, the textualizations of the Requesting move are taken up in light of Louhiala-Salminen's

⁸ This study recognizes the controversiality of the notion of context but does not aim to explore it. For more on context, see e.g. Duranti & Goodwin (1992) and Heikkinen (2004).

survey (2002b) questionnaire survey in the company. Since both the Finnish and Swedish respondents experienced differences in each other's communication, a decision was made to investigate whether their views were reflected in actual language use. A comparison between Finnish and Swedish writers' requests was considered an interesting topic because previous research had shown that cross-cultural differences exist in how requests are worded in business messages.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The present study is organized into eleven chapters. Chapter 2 discusses genre theory and the related concepts of social constructionism and intertextuality, which provide the background for this study. Seven key tenets of genre theory relevant for the study of professional discourse in internal communication will be in focus, and previous research, in the area of business communication in particular, is drawn upon. Since the present study also draws on previous research into both email communication, its spoken nature in particular, and politeness in business communication, which do not fall under the notion of genre in applied linguistics, they are reviewed separately in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 the data for the study and the methods used in its collection and analysis are introduced and discussed. The six subsequent chapters then present the analysis and report on the findings of the study. Chapter 5 introduces the shared contextual features of the internal English email messages; the corpus is positioned in the corporate and social context in which the texts are produced and used. In addition, the shared features of the content, medium, and the language of the messages are in focus. Chapter 6 performs the initial identification of the prospective email genres found in the corpus using the communicative purpose as the primary criterion. The analysis of the prospective genres continues in Chapter 7, which discusses their discourse features

in relation to the distribution of spoken and written language in the messages, and in Chapter 8, which gives an account of the moves contributing to the communicative purposes. Chapters 9 and 10 discuss the textualizations of four moves in more detail. The textualizations of the Salutation, Closing, and Signature moves are in focus to account for the rationale behind their frequency (Chapter 9) and those of the Requesting move to account for the possible differences between Finnish and Swedish writers (Chapter 10). The final chapter returns to the aims of the study presented in the Introduction and discusses the findings and their implications for business practitioners and the teaching of English business communication in particular.

2 THE NOTION OF GENRE IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the present study: the notion of genre in applied linguistics. It introduces the specific concepts of the theory relevant for the study and builds up methods used in the analysis.

The term *genre* has been used in a number of different fields, including linguistics, literary studies and rhetoric, as the overviews given by e.g. Swales (1990: 33–44) and Paltridge (1997: 5–28) indicate. The interest in genre theory in applied linguistics has evolved from pedagogical concerns; it has served as a useful framework and tool for language and communication teachers whose work involves the need to classify events, actions, and textual products to make them digestible to learners. Within the discipline of business communication, the emergence of studies applying the concept of genre in recent years may be attributed to its suitability in investigating the new and changing business environments introduced in Chapter 1. Current genre research aims at creating some ‘order’ to the ‘chaos’ of the business world by identifying and analyzing various types of action, situations, and documents that seem to recur when business is conducted.

Genre theory is multidisciplinary by nature and genre accounts have drawn on multiple sources, for example social constructionism (e.g. Berger & Luckman 1966, Bruffee 1986) and the notion of intertextuality (Bakhtin 1986). Both of these contribute to the understanding of genres in their context, which is considered crucial in modern genre approaches. In other words, genres are seen to be situated in the locations where they are used, and they should be studied in these actual social contexts of use (Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995: 2). To better understand this relationship, social constructionism and intertextuality are introduced separately.

Genre theory is considered a suitable framework for the present study, which is concerned with a novel, and less-researched, situation in which business messages are written and exchanged. In other words, the focus is on internal messages written in *lingua franca* English, and delivered via a fairly new communication medium which enables features traditionally connected with either writing (e.g. keyboard, printing facility) and speaking (e.g. immediacy, transitory nature via deletion facility). In addition, since the messages are viewed in their organizational context of use, both the notion of social constructionism and that of intertextuality are relevant in their analysis.

The present investigation draws on a number of genre approaches and studies in its pursuit to account for the salient features of company-internal email communication. In particular, this study is indebted to the perspectives offered by Swales (1990, 1998, 2002), Bhatia (1993, 1997a, 2002), Miller (1984), Yates & Orlikowski (1992, 2002), and Nickerson (2000). In addition, Louhiala-Salminen's (1995, 1996, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2002a, 2002b) extensive research has been used to explore the particular features of and changes in English business communication and genres in the Finnish context.

This chapter first presents the two background concepts of social constructionism and intertextuality relevant in the analysis, and then it briefly introduces two branches of genre theory used in the present study; finally, it discusses the seven key tenets of genre approaches used as the framework in the analysis of data. Examples from genre studies in business communication in particular are used to illustrate the seven key tenets.

2.1 TWO BACKGROUND CONCEPTS

2.1.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

In his seminal article “Social construction, language, and the authority of knowledge: A bibliographic essay”, Bruffee (1986) discusses the implications of a community’s actions, knowledge, and discourse conventions as social constructs. Bruffee’s (1986: 774) definition, “A social constructionist position in any discipline assumes that entities we normally call reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts, selves, and so on are constructs generated by communities of like-minded peers”, entails that the reality itself is socially constructed, excluding the existence of objective facts (see also Berger & Luckman 1966; Duranti & Goodwin 1992 for socially constituting and interactively sustaining context). Through social constructionism community has become an important focal point in professional communication research and also discourse conventions play a central role as communities are constituted by the language their members employ (Thralls & Blyler 1993: 9–11).

The role of genre in social constructionism can be viewed from different angles. According to Devitt (1993: 577–580), genre is the tool that mediates between the particular and the surroundings, that is, the text and the social context with its multiple situations. In the vein of social constructionism genres not only respond to, but also construct, recurring situations, and participants, i.e. writers and readers, reach the situation through genre. Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995: 17–21) refer to this phenomenon as *duality of structure* (see Giddens 1984). Devitt (1993: 578) thus suggests that the construction of genre, i.e. perceiving and creating traces of genre, helps to construct the situation:⁹

⁹ Devitt (1993: 577) relies on Halliday’s (1978: 31–35) definition of situation, including a field (roughly, what is happening), a tenor (who is involved), and a mode (what role language is playing) but suggests that “our construction of genre is what helps us to construct the situation”.

“when we as readers recognize the genre of a particular text, we recognize, through the genre, its situation”. Similarly, when a writer faces a writing task he/she confronts multiple situations and must define a specific situation in relation to that task. By choosing a genre to write in, the writer has selected the situation entailed in that genre.

Devitt (1993: 577) also recognizes the difficulty of the notion of context as a larger frame for situation. In linguistics, it has been regarded as a somewhat controversial issue since it is difficult to define. For example, everything in the surrounding environment (e.g. temperature) may not be relevant for language use but some aspects outside the surrounding environment (e.g. previous texts) are. Drawing on Halliday & Hasan (1989; see also Miller 1984), Devitt (1993) asserts that these larger frames of situation are also socially constructed.

Freedman and Medway (1994: 5) discuss genres as containers and creators of knowledge. They point out that social constructionism implies that texts, i.e. realizations of genre, are not simply ‘containers of knowledge’, but the composing of text itself contributes to the social construction of what that knowledge actually is. However, they do not limit their discussion here but, drawing on Geertz (1973), assert that it is not only knowledge that is socially constructed but also other aspects of human existence, such as culture.

Rubin (1988: 1) gives a simple account of how written discourse and the social context are intertwined: “written discourse is shaped by the social context in which it takes place” and “writing (and the activities surrounding it) shape social contexts. Social contexts and written discourse stand in a reciprocal, mutually constructive relationship, one to the other”. In his investigation into the influence of social constructionism on written communication, Rubin (1988: 2) identifies four types of interrelated social constructive processes (for accounts of social constructionism in business and professional communication, see also Blyler & Thralls 1993, Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson 1999):

First, writers construct mental representations (such as audience, purpose, and topics for discussion) of the social contexts in which their writing is embedded; second, writing as a social process can create or constitute social contexts; third, writers create texts collectively with other participants in discourse communities; fourth, writers assign consensual values to writing and thus construct a dimension of social meaning. In what follows, examples to illustrate the four processes are given.

First, Finnish and Swedish writers have conceptions about each other's (and naturally of their own) communication styles; they may be stereotypical such as 'Finns are direct', or 'Swedes talk a lot' (see e.g. Ekwall & Karlsson 1999, Karlsson 2005). These representations do not necessarily have much to do with reality but serve as easy criteria to categorize; the stereotypical conception of 'the silent Finn', for example, is questioned in Poncini's (2002) study of multicultural business meetings in which the Finnish participant was the most active speaker.

Second, to illustrate the reciprocal relationship between the social action constituted by writing and the social context in which it takes place (see also 2.1.2) Rubin (1988: 11) uses a change in salutations as an example. For instance, a change from 'Dear Mr. X' to 'Dear Herb' reflects the change in the relationship but it also reinforces it, i.e. the context shapes and is shaped by the discourse. Thus, writing can be seen as human action that constructs roles between writers and readers. Writers and readers who choose to don the roles and participate in the contexts in question form a discourse community where a text has a certain relevance (for the complete list of the defining characteristics of a discourse community, see 2.3.3; see also Swales 1990: 24–26). For example, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 304) suggest that a variety of communities exist in organizational settings where communicative practices are shared and recognized as genres. In most industrial countries a genre such as business letter may be shared, whereas a genre such as audit report may be specific to transorganizational groups such as occupations and industries. Moreover, every time

writing takes place the writers have constructed a fundamental aspect of the social context: they have defined a situation appropriate for writing (Rubin 1988: 14).

Third, the collaborative production of writing is realized either directly through multiple authorship or indirectly through intertextuality, that is, references to other texts (see also 2.1.2). Rubin (1988: 16) talks about 'inherent conversationality in writing', by which he refers to the ways in which writing parallels conversation as collective production: written correspondence and joint authorship can be given as examples. Email message exchanges or letter-writing exchanges that Rubin (1988) uses as an example are instances of written conversation where turns are taken, topics shifted, and coherence maintained in much the same way as in spoken conversation (see also Murray 1991 for conversational analysis of electronic messages and De Rycker 1987 of correspondence). This type of noncontinuous discourse in email similar to conversation requires that preceding utterances constitute a context with the help of which any subsequent utterance can be interpreted (see e.g. Louhiala-Salminen 1999a: 158, Nickerson 2000: 168).

Fourth, the consensual social value assigned to the written medium is socially constructed by the group involved (Rubin 1988: 20). For example, Yli-Jokipii (1994) discovered that British business practitioners prefer the written medium in initial business contacts, whereas Finns tend to use the telephone. Gunnarsson (1997: 184) points out that Swedish banks rely more on oral communication than their British counterparts. It has also been suggested that writing has gained momentum in the past few years because of the advances in technology such as email (Louhiala-Salminen 1995, 1999b).

Two recent investigations into English written business discourse show how the genres used and the social context where they are used are intertwined. Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 86) examined business faxes as socially constructed messages that represent a genre that is constituted by, and constitutive of, the

social practices within which they are situated, that is international business discourse community. Similarly, Nickerson's (2000: 184; see also 1999b) investigation into the organizational genres of a multinational corporation suggests that the relationship between the organizational context and the genres used within it is reciprocal.

As the above discussion shows, written discourse of an organization is not autonomous but embedded in the social context in which it is produced and used and on which it also has an influence. Drawing on organizational theory, Suchan & Dulek (1998) adapted open systems thinking in the social constructionist view of business communication in corporate context. As their model of Business Communication Systems Framework examines the forces at play in the complex corporate environment affecting business communication, it was considered suitable to investigate email communication in the case company. The framework is introduced below.

Business communication in corporate context. – Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework situates business communication (both written and spoken) into the context of an organization, in which a number of forces are at play in the organizational system itself and in the surrounding environment; a system is a set of interrelated elements that forms a whole and cannot be understood by dissecting only one element.

According to Suchan & Dulek (1998: 93), a company's core statements of mission, vision, and goals define why the company exists and what it hopes to do; they stand in the center of the company's activities. These core statements are supported by and realized through the four connecting subsystems of *task*, *structure*, *control*, and *technology*. Together they form the organizational system that is surrounded by the environmental communication factors. Figure 1 shows a Business Communication Systems Map developed by Suchan & Dulek (1998: 99) with the four subsystems superimposed over four traditional business job roles and surrounded by environmental factors.

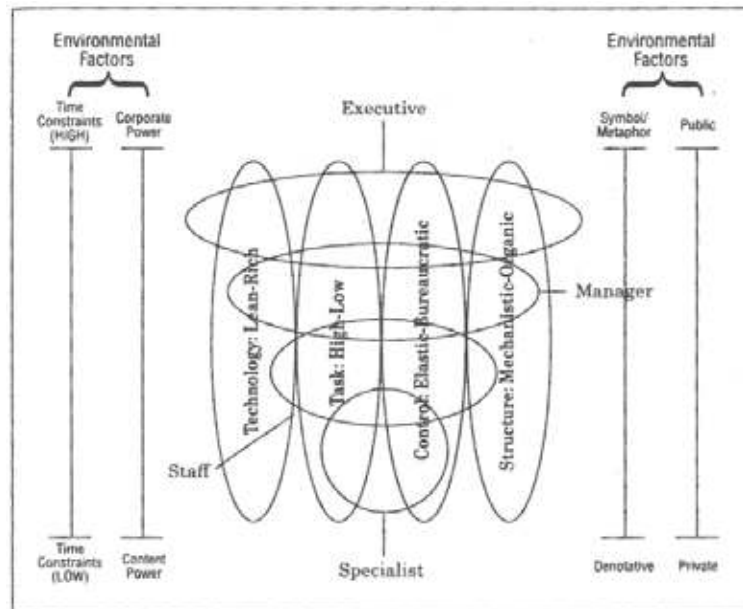


FIGURE 1. Business Communication Systems Map (from Suchan & Dulek 1998: 99).

As can be seen from Figure 1, the forces at play in business communication in a corporate context represent a complex system with the job roles, subsystems, and environmental factors closely intertwined and interrelated. The four horizontal ovals represent organizational job roles and the shape of the ovals represents the knowledge needed to fulfill the job role: Executives need broad corporate knowledge but Specialists' knowledge is focused and goes deep. The four ovals of task, structure, control and technology representing the four subsystems superimposed over the job roles influence written communication of the occupants of those roles and the subsystems interact with each other in service of the organization's core statements of mission, vision, and goals. Although the scales representing environmental communication factors are outside the ovals, they are embedded within the overall system and change according to the place where the communication takes place.

The four key subsystems help understand what role written business communication plays within Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Map. Subsystem # 1 consists of tasks, or jobs, that must be done within the organization for the organization to reach its goals defined in the core statements. Some jobs require adaptation to new, unexpected situations whereas others have predictable requirements; variety in the jobs is thus different. Furthermore, some jobs can easily be divided into steps and procedures, whereas in others no predetermined set of steps can ensure task success. Based on these differences, corporate jobs can be divided into high uncertainty ones, that is, executive and managerial, and low uncertainty ones, staff and specialist.

Subsystem # 2 is organizational structure, which can exist anywhere from highly mechanistic with standard, formal and centralized functions to highly organic with more fluid and changing functions to enable adaptation to turbulent environments. This subsystem enables employees to coordinate tasks to produce outputs that meet customer needs.

Subsystem # 3 is control, through which it is ascertained that corporate employees can perform their tasks and that they get rewarded to steer their behavior. Control is closely linked with organizational structure; mechanistic structures tend to be bureaucratically controlled, whereas organic structures have more elastic control systems.

Subsystem # 4 consists of technology and may involve anything from communication technology to high-tech manufacturing processes. Because of the nature of this study, the focus is only on email communication and its influence on the organizational system. Louhiala-Salminen (2002a: 224) makes an apt observation of the role of the computer and the email system: 'the box' with the email technology was the initiator of most activities in a business professional's working day. Email messages are delivered to the computer, to the recipient personally. Still, the email technology does not invade the recipient's personal space in the same way as intervening telephone calls do because the

users can access the system in their own terms (see Baron 2000: 232). In addition, since the technology is independent of time constraints, business matters can be dealt with at any time of the day without imposing on the recipients (see e.g. Sproull & Kiesler 1986, Sims 1996).

The somewhat controversial media richness theory (e.g. Lengel & Daft 1988) discussed by Suchan & Dulek (1998) in connection with the technology subsystem clarifies the influence of the subsystem and its interaction with the other three subsystems. Effective media choice means that a task's need for information and the 'richness' or capability of the media to provide that information are congruent. For example, routine tasks can be communicated through lean media, such as email, whereas non-routine, high uncertainty tasks require a richer medium such as face-to-face discussion. However, also other features, such as social definitions of media appropriateness, email's compatibility to job tasks, functionality, and ease of use have been found to be influential in media choice (e.g. Markus 1994, Sullivan 1995, Ku 1996, Ziv 1996, El-Shinnawy & Markus 1998). For instance, Markus (1994: 519) challenges the media richness theory by claiming that social definitions of the medium's appropriateness explained choices of the corporate managers in her study: email was regarded as the primary medium of internal work-related communication and the telephone as the primary medium for maintaining social relationships at work. This means that social processes can powerfully shape the adoption and use of media in organizations. She further suggests that social processes can result in differences between organizations in the patterns of using media.

The scales outside the ovals in Figure 1 represent environmental factors whose influence depends on which job role level the communication occurs. For example, *time constraints* on business communication tend to be higher at the executive/managerial level than at the level of staff or specialist jobs, and *corporate power* on the executive level is derived from position

whereas on the specialist level it is based on expertise in a specific area. According to Suchan & Dulek (1998), executives are also more likely to use *metaphoric* language, i.e. language with figures of speech, than specialists whose language use can be characterized as *denotative*, i.e. focusing on direct specific meanings. Finally, in the scale *public-private* communication, executives tend to have larger audiences than staff or specialists.

With the help of Suchan & Dulek's (1998) framework, the genres of business communication can be situated in their context of production and use. For example, Nickerson (2000: 35-46) drew on this framework to define the context of British subsidiaries operating in the Netherlands although Driskill's (1989) account of contextual factors surrounding a business organization (e.g. type of business activities, size, national culture, corporate culture) received more emphasis in her study.¹⁰ One of Nickerson's findings was that certain *tasks* were always accomplished in English such as reporting to the Head Office on a regular basis or sending copies of horizontal communication with other subsidiaries to the Head Office (Nickerson 2000: 82; also 1998).

In the present study, Suchan & Dulek's (1998) framework was used to account for the corporate context of Stora Enso in which the email corpus was embedded (see 5.1). The framework was applied to the extent it was possible in view of data available, that is, the email corpus, the questionnaires to some of the writers and recipients of the messages, an interview with one of them, and literary data about the company and its communication practices in particular. To complement Suchan & Dulek's (1998) framework the concept of intertextuality was of importance since the data was viewed in the midst of other communicative events in the corporate context and messages delivered via other media were likely to impact those delivered via email.

10 Some of Driskill's (1989) factors seem to be embedded in Suchan & Dulek's (1998) framework. For instance, corporate activity can be regarded as being verbalized in the mission statement; national and corporate cultures may influence how employees approach and perform their tasks or what the organization structure or control system is like.

2.1.2 INTERTEXTUALITY

The evolution of a new genre and reference to an existing one take place through a process of intertextuality. Fairclough (e.g. 1992a, 1992b) draws both on Bakhtin (1986) and, especially, on the account of Bakhtin's work given by Kristeva (1986), to explore the concept of intertextuality. Bakhtin (1986) points out that, because intertextuality exists between utterances, it may also exist between speech genres. This is because a speaker "presupposes not only the existence of the language system he is using, but also the existence of previous utterances – his own and others' – with which his given utterance enters into one kind of relation or another" (Bakhtin 1986: 69). What this means is that each utterance is linked to previous and subsequent communicative events and "our speech . . . is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness and varying degrees of our-own-ness" (Bakhtin 1986: 89). As Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995: 17) point out, "no act of communication springs out of nothing". Through intertextuality, past and future writers are present in the process of writing and in the final product, the texts and genres produced. Johns (1997: 35) argues that genre users have a shared awareness of intertextuality: individual texts are influenced by previous experiences of all kinds, by texts of the same genre but also by texts and spoken discourses from outside the genre. However, once we recognize a situation that others or we have responded to in the past, our response to that recurrent situation can be guided by past responses. In this way, genres make life easier for the writer (Devitt 1993: 579).

Fairclough (1992a) incorporates intertextuality as an important element in the analysis of texts to investigate text genres as forms of social action that contribute to the organization of the communities within which they are used. He distinguishes between text analysis, where the concern is with vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure, and analysis of discursive practice, which involves the speech acts occurring in the texts, the

coherence of texts and, finally, their intertextuality. Fairclough (1992a: 84–86) proposes a distinction between *manifest intertextuality*, where specific reference is made to other texts within a text, and *constitutive intertextuality* (or *interdiscursivity*), which refers to the constitution of texts out of types of convention of orders of discourse. Fairclough (1992a: 124–125) asserts that societal and institutional orders of discourse have primacy over particular types of discourse, such as genres, styles, registers and discourses, which again are constituted as configurations of diverse elements of orders of discourse. Interdiscursivity in business letter genre is discussed by Bhatia (2005: 34), who considers business letters as part of a long-established tradition of letters. In today's professional practice, the genre can be highly versatile, complex, and dynamic depending on the specific communicative objectives of a professional community within the turbulent context of global business practices and cultures.

The intertextuality between genres is created through their relationships. As Fairclough (1992a: 126) puts it: "a society, or a particular institution or domain within it,¹¹ has a particular configuration of genres in particular relationships to each other, constituting a *system*. Orlikowski & Yates (1994), on the other hand, use the concept of *genre repertoire* to refer to a community's set of genres, or the set of organizing structures, which therefore constitute a vital part of that community's established communicative practices. Orlikowski & Yates (1994: 542) point out that "members of a community rarely depend on a single genre for their communication. Rather, they tend to use multiple, different, and interacting genres over time. Thus to understand a community's communicative practices, we must examine the set of genres that are routinely enacted by the members of the community". Devitt (1991: 340) maintains that the genre set of a community reveals the community's situations, its recurring

11 This community can be compared to Swales's (1990) discourse community, which uses one or more genres in the furtherance of its goals.

activities and relationships; the genre set accomplishes its work. Investigations into the sets of genres used by a specific community include for example Devitt's (1991) study of written texts used by tax accountants and Bazerman's (1994) description of the historical development of the patent system.

Both concepts of manifest and constitutive intertextuality were applied by Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999) to investigate the genre of business fax and by Nickerson (2000) to investigate organizational email genres of a multinational corporation. The most common realization of manifest intertextuality in Akar & Louhiala-Salminen's (1999) fax data was reference to previous communication, such as the previous fax or telephone conversation, as in *Thanks for your fax of today*. The patterns employed were easily identified and, to a great extent, conventionalized, for example sending back the same fax and putting a comment on it. In Nickerson's (2000) email corpus references to either previous or future corporate event were manifest in every message, which suggests that the email genres were instrumental in facilitating organizational goals. An example of constitutive intertextuality discussed by Akar and Louhiala-Salminen (1999: 218) is "the transfer of oral language features into the written mode". They argue that in fax communication, as in spoken interaction, there is shared knowledge between parties, the possibility of immediate feedback, and some indication of experiential involvement (see Chafe 1982). The same phenomenon was evident in Nickerson's (2000) corpus: for example, around 30 % of the messages of one email genre did not elaborate on the subject of the message, other than identifying it in the subject line. Such a message could not achieve its purpose successfully unless the writer and the recipients shared the context.

The notion of intertextuality is central for the present study in three respects. First, manifest intertextuality was used in the analysis of the data to see how references to other, both previous and subsequent, communicative events, employees, and corporate activities contributed to the understanding of the embeddedness

of the messages in the organizational context (see 5.2, 5.3, 8.2.3). Second, as the study focused on business messages transmitted through a fairly new entrant among the communication media, the evolution of new electronic genres was viewed through intertextuality. For example, as email is said to combine features of both spoken and written language (e.g. Collot & Belmore 1996; Baron 1998, 2000), it could be assumed that the messages would contain constitutive intertextual manifestations in the form of spoken language features, as Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999) showed in the case of fax communication and Nickerson (2000) in the case of email communication, but possibly also manifestations of written business genres (see 7.1 and 7.2). Finally, the concept of intertextuality was used to shed light on the relationships between prospective genres, which the technology allows through its forwarding function (see 6.1.2).

2.2 TWO BRANCHES OF GENRE ANALYSIS

The current branches of genre analysis in applied linguistics have been outlined basically in the same way by Yunick (1997), Paltridge (1997), and Hyon (1996), that is, as genre in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (e.g. Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993), genre in North American New Rhetoric (e.g. Miller 1984, Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995, Yates & Orlikowski 1992, Bazerman 1994), and genre in systemic functional linguistics (e.g. Martin 1985, Halliday & Martin 1993). The present study draws on the first two, genre in ESP and New Rhetoric. In systemic functional linguistics the notion of genre only represents one aspect of a larger theory of functional language use, and its role in relation to the central concept of the theory, i.e. register, is somewhat contentious (cf. Martin 1985, Kress 1993). For this reason, it was decided that the nature of the present study would best be served by ESP and

New Rhetoric branches focusing on the notion of genre specifically and not on functional language use overall.¹²

Traditionally, ESP (and systemic functional linguists) has focused on the text and its formal characteristics, whereas New Rhetoricians have been more interested in the social context in which the text occurs. Even though the main difference between the genre-based approaches is thus the amount of attention given to the text versus the context, the branches have approached each other and are not independent of each other. For example, in 1993 Bhatia (1993: 22–36) within the ESP tradition introduced his seven-step framework for analyzing unfamiliar genres. Only one of the steps focuses on the linguistic analysis, albeit it attains most emphasis, and the rest are concerned with context. The contextual analysis involves the placement of the genre-text in a situational context, surveying existing literature, refining the situational/contextual analysis, selecting corpus, studying the institutional context, and checking the findings against reactions from specialist informants; however, Bhatia (1993) does not introduce any specific tools that could be used in the analysis but rather lists the areas of interest.

In the early 1990s, Swales (1993: 689) described the difference between the branches of genre analysis by referring to archaeologists and anthropologists. Genre analysts of the ‘archaeology’ type focus on the textual characteristics of genre exemplars, only on “the pots and shards of some otherwise unknowable vanished culture,” whereas ‘anthropologists’ also focus on the context of situation and context of culture, that is, operational contexts of the genres (Swales 1993: 689). The blurring between the archaeologists and anthropologists can be detected for instance in Bloor’s (1998: 55) criticism of Hyon’s (1996) three-

12 In addition, there is a lack of studies of interpersonal business messages using the genre approach in systemic functional linguistics in the analysis (but see Alatalo, forthcoming). However, published business texts such as insurance terms and conditions have been investigated (Kuronen 2004). Traditionally, Australian genre theorists have concentrated on primary and secondary school genres, adult migrant English education, and workplace training programs (Hyon 1996: 699).

partite classification into ESP analyses, New Rhetoric studies, and systemic functional linguistics. Bloor (1998) argues that the classification is inherently artificial in claiming that the ESP approach pays particular attention to formal characteristics of genres while focusing less on the surrounding social contexts. Bloor (1998) takes Swales's work with Rogers (Rogers & Swales 1990, Swales & Rogers 1995; see also Witte 1992) as an example of how language and social forces are intertwined. Similarly, business communication researchers (see e.g. Akar 1998, Louhiala-Salmi-nen 1999a, Nickerson 2000) combine the ESP tradition with the North American New Rhetoric approach by paying close attention to both linguistic and contextual aspects of genres. Still, Rogers (2001: 18) argues that genre studies tend to privilege the genre at issue and tend to ignore "the seemingly seamless, organic, complex interplay of writer/speaker, genre, reader/listener and the influence of context". More specifically, research in audience response is lacking according to Rogers (2000: 429).

Johns (2002: 12-13) argues appropriately that, in spite of the obvious differences and tensions between the genre approaches, there are a number of principles that they share. A few of those principles relevant in this study illustrate the point. First, texts are socially constructed and the influence of community and culture is thus considerable. Second, texts are purposeful and their functions are at least partly determined by the context and community. Third, textual conventions are often subject to community constraints and the writer needs to consider working within those boundaries. Fourth, the language of genres is purposefully chosen and used by expert writers, and finally, genres are never free from the values and purposes of those producing and processing them. To simplify, drawing on Bhatia (1997a: 630-635), genres, independent of the genre approach, are conventional (so that they can be identified) but simultaneously dynamic so that they can respond to (un)familiar rhetorical contexts.

The two genre branches relevant for the present study are next briefly introduced and then the seven key tenets selected to

characterize the theoretical framework and used to identify the genres of the corpus are discussed in relation to the aims of the present study.

2.2.1 GENRE IN ESP

The genre-based approach in ESP is, by definition, concerned with purpose and stems from the need to be able to define and limit the scope of 'S'. In ESP, genre is considered a tool for the analysis and teaching of spoken and written language required of non-native speakers for the purposes of specific academic and professional situations (Hyon 1996: 695). This approach differs from North American New Rhetoric (and systemic functional linguistics) since it is focused on English as a second or foreign language. According to Hyon (1996: 695), "scholars in this field have framed genres as oral and written text types defined by their formal properties as well as by their communicative purposes within social contexts". In essence, then, this approach is linguistic in orientation and interested in structural characteristics of the genre (e.g. Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993), but it has been influenced by Miller's (1984) social constructionist view of genre. As a matter of fact, both Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) argue for an analysis thoroughly grounded in the knowledge of the relevant social purposes within which a text is embedded; Bhatia (1993: 22–36) also introduces a seven-step framework accounting for both the situational/contextual and linguistic analysis of unfamiliar genres. Swales's (1990) seminal publication *Genre Analysis* has been highly influential in the ESP tradition of investigating genres. His definition of genre is given here in its entirety (Swales 1990: 58):

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose

is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community. The genre names inherited and produced by discourse communities and imported by others constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation.

The definition emphasizes the significance of the communicative purpose as a key determinant of a genre and suggests that members of the discourse community recognize the purposes, which provide the rationale for the genre. The rationale, on the other hand, shapes the genre and provides it with internal structure and style. Furthermore, Swales asserts that exemplars of genres vary in their prototypicality. A final point in his definition concerns genre names, which, in his opinion, need further validation. Bhatia (1993: 15–16) argues that even though Swales (1990) offers a good fusion of linguistic and sociological factors in this definition, he does not account for the psychological factors that come to play when expert genre writers exploit genre constraints to pursue their private intentions. Bhatia (1993: 13) adds this aspect explicitly to his definition. It may also be suggested that the aspect is – at least partly – covered by Swales’s notion of prototypicality. Swales (1990: 49) argues that genres vary in their prototypicality, which can be seen to suggest that expert users are equipped to exploit the genre constraints to meet their particular private purposes.

The present study makes use of all the key notions of genre in Swales’s (1990) definition, as is discussed in 2.3. The communicative purpose was used as the primary criterion in the identification of the genres in the discourse community of Stora Enso. Genre names were investigated in terms of the perceptions of the discourse community members themselves. In addition, the form and content of the genres, which used to be the traditional criteria in genre identification, and whose relevance is shared by North American New Rhetoricians, were also central in the present

study. However, ESP and the New Rhetoric tradition approach them somewhat differently. ESP approaches the form and content from the point of view of a non-native language user (or learner) and is particularly concerned with lexico-grammatical and structural features of genres, whereas New Rhetoric rather focuses on physical layout, medium, and the formality or informality of language use in the situational context.

2.2.2 GENRE IN NORTH AMERICAN NEW RHETORIC

North American New Rhetoricians are interested in L1 teaching in rhetoric, composition, and professional writing. According to Hyon (1996: 696), scholars in this area differ from those in the ESP tradition in that they have focused more on situational contexts in which genres occur than on their forms and have placed special emphasis on social purposes, or actions, that they fulfill in these situations. In other words, the social nature of genres is in the foreground (see e.g. Miller 1984, Yates & Orlikowski 1992, Devitt 1993). In line with their focus on the functional and contextual aspects of genres, ethnographic methods, such as observations and interviews, rather than linguistic ones, have been popular for text analysis, offering thick descriptions of academic and professional contexts surrounding genres (for more on thick description, see 4.2; also Devitt 1991, Bazerman 1994). Although, as mentioned above, genre traditions in ESP and North American New Rhetoric have approached each other, they still vary in emphasis. According to Flowerdew (2002: 91–92), the ESP approach looks to the situational context to interpret the text, whereas the New Rhetoric one may look to the text to interpret the situational context.

If Swales's (1990) definition of genre was central for the ESP tradition, Miller's (1984: 159) notion of genres as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" can be said to be revolutionary at its time by offering a new perspective not only in the New Rhetoric tradition but also in ESP. Previously, genres were considered static concepts which were identified by their

formal features, such as the layout, the organization, the meter, and so on. The new conception of genre connecting it to purposes, participants, and themes is derived from Miller's notion of genre as a response to a recurring rhetorical situation. This approach also entails that genres are dynamic: they develop along the changes in recurring situations. (Devitt 1993: 575-576.)

As Freedman & Medway (1994: 1) point out, textual regularities and shared content are among the generic conventions, but genre studies in the New Rhetoric tradition probe further:

...without abandoning earlier conceptions of genres as 'types' or 'kinds' of discourse, characterized by similarities in content and form, recent analyses focus on tying these linguistic and substantive similarities to regularities in human spheres of activity. In other words, the new term 'genre' has been able to connect a recognition of regularities in discourse types with a broader social and cultural understanding of language in use.

For the present study, the key tenet of the genre approach in New Rhetoric was its focus on the interaction between the genre and its context (of production and use). As business email messages, by definition, *do business*, they represent actions that respond to certain recurring situations in the corporate environment. Furthermore, in the investigation of messages delivered via a fairly new entrant among the communication media, the notion of genres as dynamic concepts drawing on pre-existing genres as well as creating totally new ways to respond to the changes in the environment was of relevance.

2.3 SEVEN KEY TENETS OF GENRE APPROACHES

There are seven key tenets of genre theory that were considered relevant for the present study. As the study set out to explore the textual world of a multinational company through its electronically transmitted documents, and aimed to investigate the nature of

the genre in internal English email communication, the seven criteria for genre identification were considered appropriate to meet the aim. Although they are introduced and discussed separately, they function together, and consequently, some overlapping is unavoidable. Business communication research, in particular, that has drawn on these genre characteristics is introduced when appropriate.

The following seven characteristics of genres are discussed below:

- communicative purpose as a privileged criterion for genre identification,
- genres as typified social action in recurrent situations,
- discourse community as a user of genres,
- genre names – evidence for social recognition,
- form of genres,
- content of genres, and
- dynamic and evolutionary potential of genres.

The seven tenets that the present study makes use of come from the genre approaches in ESP and North American New Rhetoric; as pointed out in 2.2, the concept of genre in systemic functional linguistics has not been drawn upon specifically. First, as business is a goal-oriented activity, the communicative purpose was used as a privileged criterion for genre identification. Second, the notion of genres as typified social action in recurrent situations was used to explain how business was done through genres, that is, how genres responded to situations recurring in the corporate life. Third, the Stora Enso staff members, the producers and users of the genres, were approached through the concept of discourse community, and fourth, the names used for the genres by the discourse community members were taken to reflect the users' understanding of the phenomenon. Fifth, the form including the physical layout, medium, and language constitute the easily observable characteristics of genre and were thus important for the initial identification, in particular. Sixth, since the content, or

substance, of the genre explains what content is appropriate to a particular purpose, it was considered essential for the present study. In this way it was possible to characterize what content was necessary to be able to respond to the recurring situations in the corporate context. Finally, in the business environment, where turbulence is the order of the day resulting from changes in the corporate structures and communication media, in particular, the dynamic and evolutionary potential of genres was considered a prerequisite for the business to be able to respond to new changing situations.

Although the present study recognizes the relevance of these key characteristics for genre membership, they are not to be regarded as some set of defining features that always need to be present in a particular genre. Rather, drawing on Swales (1990: 49–52; see also Yates & Orlikowski 1992: 302), genre membership is seen to be based on the degree of prototypicality; some genre exemplars are simply closer to the prototype than others. With this notion, Swales distances himself from a definitional approach to genres in favor of a family resemblance approach. The definitional approach means that an object is defined by identifying a set of simple properties. The family resemblance approach, for its part, stems from the idea that what holds shared membership together is not a list of defining properties but interrelations of a looser kind¹³ (see also Wittgenstein 1958: 31–32 as quoted in Swales 1990: 50). Rosch (e.g. 1978) observes that some exemplars of a membership are ‘better’ than others; for example, robins and eagles are ‘birdier’ than ostriches and penguins.

Following Swales (1990), Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995: 17) argue that texts contain heterogeneous mixtures of elements, some of which are recognizably more generic than others. In other words,

13 To illustrate the point, Swales (1990: 49) defines ‘a bird’ in terms of it being an animal, having wings and feathers, and laying eggs. However, as a roast chicken is also a bird, although the definition of a bird does not seem to apply, it shows that membership is not held together by a shared list of defining features.

genericness is not an all-or-nothing proposition and there is no threshold as such. Communicators engage in (and their texts reveal) various degrees of generic activity. Paltridge (1997: 106–107) suggests that when an instance of genre represents a less prototypical exemplar, genre assignment tends to be established on the basis of pragmatic aspects of the communicative event. In the same vein, a business professional may identify a text in front of him as an exemplar of the memo genre only because it is on his desk; it is part of his daily work environment (Harrington 1992: 204 as quoted in Louhiala-Salminen 1999a: 180). These propositions are supported by Biber (1988: 170) in that “genre categories are assigned on the basis of use rather than on the basis of form” and that genres “are defined and distinguished on the basis of systematic nonlinguistic criteria, and they are valid in those terms”. Supporting this view, Huckin (1995/6) argues that highly context-sensitive methodologies should be used to account for discursal features of genres that are sensitive to cultural factors. Huckin (1995/6: 76–77) cites an example of textual silence; unlike in most other countries, in the United States a job seeker is not supposed to include highly personal data, such as age, marital status, etc. in his/her resume. To correctly interpret the silence for what it is – a way to avoid discrimination and be politically correct – would require socio-pragmatic knowledge of the situation and context in which the genre is typically produced and used.

The idea of prototype is also prominent in Louhiala-Salminen’s (1996: 41, 47) research in business faxes. She suggests that certain typical features are characteristic of fax messages as compared to traditional business correspondence, such as less formal and more straightforward language use, and the writers and receivers have a certain ‘mental framework for faxes’ within which faxes are exchanged. Within that framework, it is obvious that ‘some faxes are faxier than others’ adhering to the typical ‘faxy’ characteristics while others may look like traditional business letters.

The seven key tenets of genre approaches relevant for the present study are introduced below together with examples from business communication research in particular.

2.3.1 COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSE AS A PRIVILEGED CRITERION FOR GENRE IDENTIFICATION

Both Swales (1990: 58) and Bhatia (1993: 13) emphasize the primacy of communicative purpose as a criterion for genre identification; Askehave & Swales (2001), on the other hand, question its central role. Swales (1990: 46) maintains that the main criterion that identifies a collection of communicative events as a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes; in other words “genres are communicative vehicles for the achievement of goals”. According to Swales (1990: 52), other generic properties, such as form and structure, identify the extent to which a genre exemplar is prototypical.

In his treatment of the versatility of genre-based linguistic description, Bhatia (1997a: 632) argues that, using communicative purpose associated with a specific rhetorical situation as a privileged criterion, “genre theory combines the advantages of a more general view of language use on the one hand, and its very specific realization, on the other”. Thus, genre analysis can be seen to be broad in vision and narrow in focus.

Purpose on different levels of abstraction. – Bhatia (1997a), Miller (1984), and Yates & Orlikowski (1992) argue that genres can be defined at different levels of abstraction. According to Bhatia (1997a: 633-634), communicative purpose is a multifaceted concept: it can be identified at a fairly high level of generalization but also at a very specific level; a genre may have a single purpose or it may have multiple purposes. In his later article Bhatia (2002: 281; also 2005) develops the conceptualization and suggests that genres are identified in terms of communicative purposes achieved through the rhetorical/generic values of e.g. description, explanation, evaluation, which are decontextualized, independent of any

specific situation. The generic values give shape to a *genre colony* (*discourse colony* in Bhatia 1997a), which is rather loosely grounded in broad rhetorical context where generic boundaries are overlapping. An example of a genre colony is promotional genres, including individual genres such as sales letters, job applications, book blurbs, etc., in which generic values are combined in various ways to give rise to situated use of language. Then, for example, advertisements can be specified according to the medium (print advertisements, TV commercials, etc.), the product advertised, the audience targeted at, etc. When the analysis moves from the general level of purposes down to a more specific level, so long as the purpose remains the same, the texts represent closely related genres. They become distinctive genres only at a level at which their purposes are clearly different. (Bhatia 1997a: 634.)

Miller (1984: 162) suggests that genre may be defined at different levels of abstraction in different cultures and at different times, depending on “our sense of recurrence of rhetorical situations”, while Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 303) apply the notion to organizational genres. In their view, “the business letter and the meeting might at one point be genres, whereas at another point, these types of communication might be considered too general and the recommendation letter or the personnel committee meeting might better capture the social sense of recurrent situation”. While Miller (1984) argues that genre can only be identified at one of these levels in a specific time and place, Yates & Orlikowski (1992) favor a more flexible approach: the business letter, the recommendation letter, the meeting, and the personnel committee meeting may all be designated as genres of organizational communication if a common subject and common formal features can be identified for each recurrent situation.¹⁴

14 The relationship of genres of a different level of abstraction invokes the notion of subgenres within genres, referring to subordinate relationships. Yates & Orlikowski (1992), for example, argue that a positive recommendation letter is a subgenre of the recommendation letter, which is a subgenre of the business letter. In addition, the term subgenre can be used to refer to genres *within* genres, not implying any subordinate relationship (see Jameson 2000).

Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 166), in her investigations into the possible genre status of the business fax, agrees with Yates & Orlikowski's (1992) views and concludes that in some circumstances a business fax can be regarded as an overarching umbrella genre containing more specific subgenres and, in others, it can be seen as a genre in its own right.

The present study recognizes the possibility of defining genres at different levels of abstraction. For this reason, in its pursuit to explore the nature of the genre in email communication, it set out to investigate email messages as representative of one genre with general communicative purposes equivalent to those of business letter or memo genres, on the one hand, and as representative of different genres with more specific purposes, on the other.

Criticism against, and for, the primacy of purpose in business communication. – Askehave & Swales (2001: 195-196) question both the privileged role of communicative purpose as the criterion for genre membership and the reliability of insiders' own opinions on the purposes. They argue that in spite of the fact that a number of leading proponents of genre-based approaches have privileged communicative purpose (e.g. Miller 1984: 151; Martin 1985: 250; Swales 1990: 58; Bhatia 1993: 13), others pay little attention to this concept (e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995). Askehave & Swales (2001: 197) also claim, without giving reference to any researchers by name, that "most of the important work following the early publications in this field has, in various ways, established that the purposes, goals, or public outcomes are more evasive, multiple, layered, and complex than originally envisaged". Yet, in business communication research the communicative purpose is widely used as an instrument of categorization (see e.g. Louhiala-Salminen 1997, Akar 1998, Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999, Nickerson 2000, Zhu 2000, Pinto dos Santos 2002, Yates & Orlikowski 2002).

Askehave & Swales (2001) specifically question the overall communicative purpose of business messages as suggested by

Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999: 212-213), who write “naturally, the general all-encompassing purpose of business messages is to achieve the goals of a buying-selling negotiation”. Askehave & Swales (2001: 206) claim that although business is premised on competition, in some instances the purpose of achieving the goals of buying-selling negotiation may “sit uncomfortably with all those business moves that are concerned with dismissing inefficient, negligent or costly suppliers and the like”.

However, it can be argued that in business, the ultimate aim of negotiations is a win-win situation. This would mean that if the other party is inefficient, negligent, or in some way costly, the requirement of a win-win situation would not be met. In such a situation, the communicative aim of a single message may, indeed, be dismissing this unwanted business partner; however, the all-encompassing purpose of business messages or business communication would still be the successful close of buying-selling negotiation, but with another business partner. In other words, the writer of a business message may use certain business or linguistic strategies to make sure that the unwanted deal with the unsuitable partner is not realized to be able to focus on more lucrative deals with other business partners.

In their article, Askehave & Swales (2001: 210) suggest that “purpose (more exactly sets of communicative purposes) retains the status as a ‘privileged’ criterion, but in a sense different from the one originally proposed by Swales (1990). It is no longer privileged by centrality, prominence or self-evident clarity, nor indeed by the reported beliefs of users about genres, but by its status as reward or pay-off for investigators as they approximate to completing the hermeneutic circle”. This position has remained practically undisputed (Swales, personal communication, 2003).

In spite of the criticism of the primacy of communicative purpose as a genre criterion by the same theorist who originally emphasized its significance, the present study recognizes its central role in business messages. Like business itself, business communication is a goal-oriented activity; in this context Akar &

Louhiala-Salminen's (1999: 212-213) argument is relevant. In other words, the all-encompassing purpose of all (external) business messages is achieving the goals of a buying-selling negotiation. By the same token, another definition is needed to account for company-internal business messages. It can be assumed that their all-encompassing purpose is to make this buying and selling possible in accordance with the core statements of mission, vision, goals, and values of the given company. In other words, the all-encompassing purpose of furthering corporate activities in service of the core statements are central in internal communication. As is discussed in 4.2, the identification of the purposes on a lower level of abstraction in the present study was based on both the corpus-based text analysis, more specifically content analysis, and the views of the genre users themselves as well as members of a focus group consisting of international business practitioners. Furthermore, the users' and focus group members' opinions about the purposes were put to test by asking another question, which probed the same phenomenon but from a different perspective: they were asked what their reaction to a particular message was, in other words, what they did when they received it (see 2.3.2).

2.3.2 GENRES AS TYPIFIED SOCIAL ACTION IN RECURRENT SITUATIONS

Miller (1984: 151) argues that a definition of genre must be centered on the action it is used to accomplish in a recurrent situation. Her social constructionist view of genre has inspired many researchers over the years (e.g. Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993; Yates & Orlikowski 1992, 2002; Orlikowski & Yates 1994; Bazerman 1994, 1997; Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995; Nickerson 2000). These approaches could be summarized by referring to Devitt (1996: 606), who purports that genres *do* something rather than *be* something. Miller (1984: 151) examines genre as a representative of typified rhetorical action and the connection between genre and recurrent situation. What recurs cannot be understood in materialist terms,

i.e. in terms of objects, events, and people; nor can it be subjective, a perception, as recurrence cannot be unique from moment to moment or person to person. According to Miller (1984: 156), both recurrence and situations are social constructs that are the result, not of *perception*, but of *definition*. Before we can act in a given situation, we must interpret what is going on; we define a situation. The new experience is made familiar through the recognition of relevant similarities, which become constituted as a type. Through this process of typification, recurrence is created. Genres can thus be seen as typified rhetorical actions that are considered to be an appropriate social response by the community that uses them to certain recurrent rhetorical situations (Miller 1984: 159). Or, as Martin (1985: 250) puts it, “genres are how things get done when language is used to accomplish them”.

Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 299-301; also Orlikowski & Yates 1994), drawing on the social constructionist account of genre by Miller (1984) and the structuration theory (Giddens 1984), employed the concepts of *organizational genre* and *genre repertoire*, consisting of the set of genres enacted by the organization, for the study of communication as embedded in social process. Later Yates & Orlikowski (2002; see also Bazerman 1994) also discuss *genre systems*, which refer to interrelated or interdependent genres enacted by members of (possibly) different organizations; to simplify, a genre with a question move is followed by a genre with the response move. Yates & Orlikowski (1992, 2002; Orlikowski & Yates 1994) use the concepts of organizational genres, genre repertoires, and genre systems to explain organizational communication as a structuration process: genres serve as institutionalized templates for social interaction, as organizing structures that both shape and are shaped by individuals’ communicative actions. In other words, a genre can only be understood in the context in which it is used and where its form and substance are social constructs. According to Yates & Orlikowski (2002: 15-16), organizing structures within a

community provide expectations about the purpose, content, participants, form, time, and place of communicative interaction.

Nickerson (2000: 21) gives a good example of how a genre is invoked in response to an exigence or a social motive presented by the recurrent situation (for discussion on exigence, see Miller 1984: 157-162 drawing on Bitzer 1968). For example, this motive may be the need to initiate the beginning of the bargaining process when products are being bought and sold between two companies. The textual realization of a genre provides the means through which such an action is accomplished; the quotation letter sent from seller to buyer represents the action.

As discussed in 2.1.1 under social constructionism, it is clear that genres not only respond to but also construct recurring situations, and participants reach the situation through genre. The recognition of the situations as recurrent by the community is itself a social construct. Thus, “when we as readers recognize the genre of a particular text, we recognize, through the genre, its situation” (Devitt 1993: 578). By choosing a genre to write in, the writer has also selected the situation entailed in that genre. According to Miller (1984: 157-162) context and genre stand in a reciprocal relationship and it can be said that genre mediates between the text and the context.

To recognize a genre as typified social action in recurrent situations, a question needs to be asked: What does it mean to know a genre then? Devitt (1993: 577-580) provides the answer: it means knowing how to respond appropriately in a given situation in addition to knowing how to conform to generic conventions (see also Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995: ix). According to Coe (1994: 158), genre knowledge is viewed by many proponents of North American New Rhetoric as “living in the social unconscious of discourse community; for individual writers, [this knowledge] is at least partially subliminal . . . many (perhaps most) experts use their genres without explicit understanding”. Yates & Orlikowski (2002: 15; also 1992: 303), on the other hand, make a clear distinction between habitual and deliberate genre

use. Sometimes individuals draw on existing genre norms out of habit to facilitate a particular communicative act, tacitly using a standard memo for interdepartmental communication or a standard agenda for a routine project meeting. Other times individuals may draw on genre norms more deliberately to accomplish a communicative action. For example, they may intentionally choose a letter template rather than an informal note genre in composing an electronic email message to an unfamiliar international correspondent. Genres are considered organizing structures that shape, but do not determine, how community members engage in everyday social interaction.

Johns (1997: 21-22) argues that genre knowledge is abstract and schematic, enhanced by repeated, contextualized experiences with texts. As novice members of a discourse community become experienced, they begin to work more easily within familiar genres. Genre knowledge thus provides a shortcut for the insiders to the processing and production of familiar written texts. This knowledge is said to be complex and dichotomous. It is at the same time cognitive (integral to prior knowledge) and social (shared with others). It is repeated in that it evokes previous, analogous contexts in which similar texts were processed; yet, it is evolving, as few, if any, rhetorical situations are exactly the same.

To sum up, viewing genres as typified social action in recurrent situations calls for an understanding – either explicit or subliminal – of what a particular genre is. Genre knowledge refers to a community member's repertoire of situationally appropriate responses to recurrent situations in the particular context in which the genres are produced and used. Suchan & Dulek's (1998) framework, introduced in 2.1.1, contributes to the understanding of the context in which business communication with its genres is embedded. As this study recognizes the significance of action as an inherent quality of business genres, an attempt was made to tap the genre knowledge of some of the expert users of the prospective genres as well as that of some international business

practitioners forming a focus group. They were asked to specify what they did/would have done when they received a particular message (see 6.1).

2.3.3 DISCOURSE COMMUNITY AS A USER OF GENRES

In accordance with social constructionism, Swales's (1990) definition of genre emphasizes the group of people using it, the discourse community. Swales (1990: 23-24) distinguishes the discourse community from the long-established speech community common to sociolinguistics in three respects: first, discourse communities primarily use the written medium for communication; second, discourse communities pursue functional rather than purely social objectives; and third, discourse communities obtain new members by training, persuasion, and relevant qualification, whereas speech communities typically inherit membership by e.g. birth, accident, or adoption. According to Swales (1990: 24-29), the following six characteristics are needed to label a group of individuals as a discourse community:

1. A discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals.
2. A discourse community has mechanisms of inter communication among its members.
3. A discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback.
4. A discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims.
5. In addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis.
6. A discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursal expertise.

Swales (1990: 27-29) gives as an example a hobby group (Hong Kong Study Circle) scattered all over the world but sharing a common interest in stamps of Hong Kong. The group has mechanisms for intercommunication, a newsletter, and scheduled meetings, including an AGM. The contributions in the newsletter contain highly specific terminology and follow specific conventions, and can thus be regarded as genres. Swales (1990) reports on his own unsuccessful attempts to be a community member, an apprentice, as he failed to observe the genre conventions in his first submitted article.

Criticism against the concept. – Three years later, Swales (1993) plays down the importance of the concept of discourse community as having material demographic or geographic substance. He says that it may rather be called a rhetorical community following Miller (1992, as quoted in Swales 1993) and persisting by instantiation and by engagement, rather than existing through membership and collectivity. Bloor (1998: 57-58) disagrees with Swales, who, in her opinion, takes his critics too seriously and “fails to defend a very defensible position”. Bloor responds to the criticism by stating that discourse communities do not interact with the wider speech community, as the opponents had claimed; rather, it is individual members of discourse communities, in their many social roles, who interact with members of other communities. Moreover, Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995: 22-24) argue that genres belong to discourse communities, not to individuals, other kinds of groupings, or a wider speech community. One of the characteristics that established members of these discourse communities possess is familiarity with the particular genres that signal the community’s norms, beliefs, and value systems and are used in the communicative furtherance of those sets of goals. Genres are thus the intellectual scaffolds on which discourse communities construct their shared knowledge.

In his textography of a small university building, Swales (1998: 204) narrows down his definition of discourse community

by calling it a *place discourse community* (PDC), by which he refers to “a group of people who regularly work together (if not always or all the time in the same place). This group typically has a name”. He suggests that for its members, a functioning PDC is “a way of being in the world” (Swales 1998: 204). With his definition, he disclaims the discourse community role of the University of Michigan, of the small building he investigated, i.e. the North University Building, and of the Computing Site in the building because, for example, the members do not have “a settled sense of their aggregation’s roles and purposes whether these be group decision making, group projects, routine business, or individual enterprises endorsed (tacitly or otherwise) by most of the other members”. The two other floors in the North University Building meet the requirements of the PDC, that is, the English Language Institute and the Herbarium. Swales’s (1998: 207) definition also questions the ownership of genres: is it discourse communities who own them (Swales 1990; Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995) or is it genres that ‘own’ discourse communities (see Mauranen 1993)? Swales (1998; see also Devitt 1996) finds evidence for both ownerships but calls for more investigations into the issue.

Bhatia (1997a: 646) claims that a kind of social distance between the legitimate members of a discourse community and those who are considered outsiders is created by the fact that genre knowledge is shared among the community members. This distance may be created through the linguistic resources used to construct a generic form, or it could be in the awareness of the rules of language use, some of which are socially learnt and shared in the community. Genre thus empowers insiders while it, at the same time, tends to silence outsiders (Bhatia 1997b).

Gunnarsson (1997: 145) introduces the concept of *communicative community*, which combines the concepts of discourse and speech community. She admits that the discourse community is a suitable tool for describing differences between written genres, but not for describing the variation in processes and products that is due to social determinants such as different roles, attitudes,

and norms of social individuals. She further argues that the discourse community is not the tool to be used to analyze workplace communication, including furtherance of social aims in addition to functional ones, and also taking individuals in close contact into account. Gunnarsson's (1997: 145-146) concept of communicative community covers both written and oral communication, both communication at a distance and face-to-face, and both expert and everyday social interactions. Further, through its focus on process, it covers reading, writing, and text produced as well as listening, speaking, and discourse produced.

Community at different levels of generalization. - Especially in business communication research, discourse community has been regarded as a useful concept that can be realized on different levels of generalization. For example, Louhiala-Salminen (1995) makes a distinction between a global business discourse community, which does not meet all of Swales's (1990: 24-29) criteria but serves as a useful pre-concept embedding smaller entities. For instance, Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999) suggest that the fax genre is shared by Finnish and Turkish business communities; for non-members of the community the genre remains somewhat mysterious (Louhiala-Salminen 1999c). The national business discourse communities include different sectors of industry, which interact among themselves and with other industrial sectors. A discourse community formed by a company or a corporate group represents the purest version according to Louhiala-Salminen (1995: 36).

Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 304) use the notion of social community to describe how organizational genres may be socially defined at any level above the personal and shared across different kinds of social communities. First, most advanced industrial nations use genres such as memos and business letters. Second, there are genres that are specific to certain organizations in particular societies or cultures, such as the Japanese tea ceremony. Third, transorganizational groups, such as industries and

occupations, share certain genres, for example audit reports. Fourth, companies or corporate cultures have their own genres such as the Procter & Gamble one-page memo. Fifth, genres also exist within intraorganizational groups such as departments and teams (see also Yates & Orlikowski 2002).

The present study adopts the concept of *discourse community* (Swales 1990) to refer to the users of the prospective genres in the corpus; it thus recognizes the relevance of Bloor's (1998) criticism of Swales (1993). Yates & Orlikowski (1992) do not define their *social community* and thus it is difficult to establish how it would differ from Swales's concept. In addition, Gunnarsson's (1997) *communicative community* does not fit the writers of email messages although email messages are said to represent a hybrid between spoken and written language (see e.g. Collot & Belmore 1996). Similarly, the *place discourse community* (Swales 1998) is not suitable as such to characterize the subjects of the present study who were not located in the same place. However, if it is expanded to include communities working closely together in virtual locations, it may be a useful concept in today's virtual working environments.

As the above discussion suggests, business practitioners belong to a number of discourse communities depending on the angle of observation. In this study, the discourse community in focus was that on the level of the company, but it was still limited to its Finnish and Swedish members; the messages were viewed as produced and used by Stora Enso staff members, who used English as a lingua franca. Of course, some of the writers of the email messages belonged to intraorganizational communities such as the sales force in a certain division or a team of communication specialists. Around half of the writers were members of the Finnish and another half of the Swedish business discourse community. Together with other business practitioners from Korea, Greece, etc. they belonged to a large entity of international business professionals using English as a lingua franca. For this reason, a focus group survey was used to find out the perceptions of some other non-native English speakers belonging to the

international business discourse community about the prospective genres in use in the company.

2.3.4 GENRE NAMES – EVIDENCE FOR SOCIAL RECOGNITION

As it is in human nature to name and categorize, and thus indicate a social recognition of a phenomenon, there is usually a genre name for those sharing knowledge of a particular genre (Johns 1997). Among genre theorists, some do not pay any attention to the name, while others consider it important, such as Paltridge (1997: 107), who writes in his definition of genre that “the names and classification of genres given by particular discourse communities provide important information for the analyst in that they reflect the communities’ perception of these events”. Miller (1984: 155) also claims that genres for which we have names in everyday language tell us something important about discourse.

Generic vs. specific names reflecting genre status. – In his extensive discussion on genre names, Swales (1990) points out that for instance, as a class, *letter* lacks sufficient indication of purpose for genre status; it only refers to a means of communication. The same observation holds for the subsets of the class that refer to fields of activity such as business letters or official letters. “It’s only when purpose becomes ascribable that the issue of genre arises as in begging letters or letters of condolence” (Swales 1990: 61). Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995: 17) also argue that traditional generic classifications, such as *business letter*, are so general that they can only describe superficial parameters of form and content. In their opinion, genres and genre knowledge should be localized in terms of both time and place; knowing a genre means knowing about appropriate topics and relevant details, not only about formal conventions. This view is not held by, for example, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 302), who take *business letter* as one example of a genre, *memo* another, and *email message* a third. In the same vein, Louhiala-Salminen (1995, 1997, 1999a) argues that *business*

fax is a genre recognized and used in the business discourse community. In other words, if a business community member decides to write a fax to a business partner, the name invokes certain expectations as to the purpose, form, content, etc., of the text. Simultaneously, Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 166) admits that depending on the level of generalization, business fax can also be regarded as an overarching umbrella term containing more specific subgenres, such as inquiry, order, etc. Mulholland (1999) in her treatment of *the email genre* does not question the level of abstraction and does not specifically discuss any subgenres. Mulholland's (1999: 81) comment about the objective of her study suggests that all messages delivered via the email system represent one email genre and the particular workplace in which they occur only serves as an example as the following citation indicates: "This study has attempted to describe and account for e-mail as *a distinct genre* in the evolutionary stage it has reached in one particular institution, and in one set of communications, those which manage the preparation committee meetings" (author's emphasis).

It may be suggested that the membership in a relevant discourse community and the contextual information available for the insider determines the usefulness of a name. In other words, using names such as *business letter*, *memo*, or *fax* among the insiders of a business discourse community is likely to disclose enough of the shared expectations in relation to content, form, purposes, etc. of the communicative events for the names to be useful for the users of the genre. By the same token, outsiders to the community may feel that such names are too general and do not reveal sufficient detail about the generic features and purposes. In previous times, it was mostly business people who were familiar with business letters and faxes, and the outsiders to the community did not need them, or use them, and thus they were not aware of the shared knowledge and genre rules among the insiders of the business community. Now, however, the situation with the new communication media is different as they are increasingly used not only for work but also for pleasure. It may be suggested that

most business practitioners have shared expectations about the communicative events effected by email. However, the expectations of an appropriate genre exemplar to meet the needs of a specific situation may still be different; a request such as *Send me an email about this* can evoke different conventions in different organizations (for 'organizational voice' see Rogers 2003, also 11.1).

Confusion in genre names. – Although naming is inherent in social recognition of a phenomenon, there seem to be genre names without any referents, genres without explicit names, and genres with conflicting names. Swales (1990: 56) takes an example of a genre name without any genres attached to it: *haiku sessions* at an IATEFL¹⁵ conference. He does not recognize this genre in spite of his long and extensive experience of the conferences in the English-teaching world. In his opinion, this suggests that there must also be genres without names and he also gives an example from his own discourse community. This finding of *genres anonymous* is supported by Nickerson (2000: 106, 154, 181), who identified seven genres of organizational communication in the texts of eleven British subsidiary companies operating in the Netherlands. These included three types of reports and four types of letters. Similarly, she identified a set of four similar organizational genres in email communication. None of the identified genres had special genre names used by the relevant discourse community. Moreover, Yates & Orlikowski (2002: 18) report on the reluctance of users of certain electronic team room technology to label the purpose and content of their messages, which can be interpreted as a reluctance to categorize or name the messages. On the other hand, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 315) maintain in their discussion of the evolution of the memo genre that the term *memorandum* or *memo* rather than business letter to designate internal correspondence was one of

15 IATEFL stands for International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language.

the last features to emerge and signal the recognition of a new genre (see 2.3.7). Thus, it may well be that the time is not yet ripe for naming the genres in email identified by Nickerson.

In addition to some genre names existing without concrete referents and others existing without names, also genres with conflicting names exist. Nickerson (2000: 88) found that documents similar in terms of conventional layout were referred to by different names in different companies. She gives an example of a report in one company sharing the same layout as a memo in another company. Furthermore, Barbara et al. (1996) report that different businesses may use different names, such as bids and reports, for what appear to be texts in the same genre.

Such findings of inconclusive nature give support to Swales's (1990) skepticism about the discourse community's own views of genre names; he raises doubts about the insiders' views and suggests that typically further validation of genre names is needed. In the same vein, it can be suggested that the name that is used to refer to a genre is irrelevant as long as the conception of the genre is shared among its users, the discourse community members. In other words, social recognition of a genre may be realized when discourse community members use a general name, such as fax or email, which is sufficient in its context of use for the other members to recognize the genre. The names may, however, become confusing when members of different discourse communities using different names for the same genre collaborate or when researchers make comparisons between texts that they assume represent the same genre only because they have the same name.

In the present study, both Stora Enso employees and focus group members were asked to name the messages presented to them simply to find out how email messages are referred to and consequently if the prospective genres have names. The naming practice may also be seen as evidence of stability or instability of the phenomenon in the corporate context.

2.3.5 FORM OF GENRES

Traditionally, genres were defined on the basis of their form, their observable physical layout. In modern genre approaches, form is only one of the defining features. For example, in Berkenkotter & Huckin's (1995) sociocognitive approach to genre, form and content together represent one of the five principles.¹⁶ To refer back to Swales's (1990: 52) definition of genre, communicative purpose is a privileged criterion whereas "other properties, such as form, structure and audience expectations operate to identify the extent to which an exemplar is prototypical of a particular genre".

Drawing on Giddens's (1984) notion of social rules that are used by individuals to produce and reproduce social action, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 302) use genre rules, which entail that genres are enacted through rules that associate appropriate elements of the text's form and substance (or content) with certain recurrent situations (for discussion of content, see 2.3.6). Form is used to refer to the observable aspects of communication, such as structural features, medium, and language (Yates & Orlikowski 1992: 301; also 2002: 14–15). The structural features include text-formatting devices such as lists. The medium obviously refers to the channel of communication such as pen and paper, face-to-face, email, etc. Finally, language refers to the level of formality and specialized vocabulary. To take an example of the genre rules for the business letter, which is used in recurrent situations requiring documented communication with partners outside the organization, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 302) explain how the rules specify that the form contains an inside address, salutation, complimentary close, and relatively formal and polite language. Nickerson (2000: 35–46) elaborates Yates & Orlikowski's (1992) genre rules to allow for the contextualized linguistic analysis of genre textualizations in multinational organizations. Most of the

¹⁶ The other principles embrace genres as *dynamic* and *situated* forms that are properties of *discourse communities* and have a *duality of structure* (see Giddens 1984).

elaboration is focused on form (for discussion of content, see 2.3.6). The first aspect of form, structural features, is defined in terms of text conventions, i.e. “those aspects of form which conventionally contribute to the *physical layout* of the genre” (Nickerson 2000: 42, original italics). For example, in business letters used by the international business community between buyers and sellers it is appropriate to give a salutation at the beginning of the document (see e.g. Jenkins & Hinds 1987, Yli-Jokipii 1994). Louhiala-Salmi-nen (1999a: 158) has emphasized the relevance of the physical layout of the fax form to the writer in the generation of the fax genre. Nickerson (2000: 181) established a diversity of forms in use in her data, which included both hard copy and email messages. The most striking finding was that subsidiary companies used the layout of a traditional business letter in their regular exchange of information with the head office. As was mentioned above, the business letter is regarded as the genre for external communication and the memo as the genre for company-internal communication, especially in American business (see e.g. Bovée et al. 2003, Yates & Orlikowski 1992: 302). As Nickerson’s findings show, the division between the letter and the memo is not clear-cut in European business. Indeed, the existence of the concept of a memo in the sense American business uses it can be questioned in the European context.

The two other aspects of form in Yates & Orlikowski’s (1992; see also 2002) framework, communication medium and language, are discussed separately below. Following Nickerson (2000: 42), language is further classified into Code and Discourse since she argues that language in Yates & Orlikowski’s (1992) framework is limited in its focus on the level of formality and vocabulary, which may be appropriate in monolingual environments but does not provide sufficient details for a linguistic investigation of genres in multinational settings. The discussion about Code focuses on the use of English as a lingua franca in business, and in internal communication in particular. The discussion about Discourse is based on Bhatia’s (1993) three-level linguistic analysis. As

mentioned earlier, previous research related to two features of discourse, i.e. spoken vs. written language features in email communication and politeness in business messages, relevant in the present study are introduced separately in Chapter 3.

Below, communication medium is discussed first, then the focus is on the linguistic code used, and finally on the discourse features of business genres.

Communication medium. – Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 319) argue that the communication medium is theoretically different from the genre which is being transmitted but admit that there maybe some interaction between the two. In other words, media such as fax, email, and hard copy are theoretically different from genres such as business letter, job appraisal, etc. even though business letters are usually understood as being delivered as hard copy and email messages are used to respond to email messages. Nickerson (2000: 44) suggests that the medium conventionally associated with a recurrent situation within the international business community may be decisive in the choice of the medium in organizational communication. While letters were still the prominent medium used in international business some 20 years ago, in the 1990s business was carried on using fax and increasingly email as is shown by e.g. Connor (1999), Nikali (1998), Ziv (1996), and Louhiala-Salminen (1995, 1999b). The new millennium has witnessed the triumph of email; it has also become mobile with the launch of smart phones. In addition, integration of different streams of spoken and written messages (phone, email, fax, SMS text messages, etc.) into a single in-box, where all the stored data can be accessed through a chosen interface, has been spreading in European business (see e.g. Koistinen 2004, Alkio 2005, Helsingin Sanomat 2005). Thus, with the advances in communication technology, the documents needed in business are delivered via different media than previously. This entails, as Louhiala-Salminen (1997: 331) also points out, that the general purpose of the business letter genre could be shared with that of

the business fax or email message genres. In today's world, and especially in international business, communication for business purposes is increasingly carried on via email messages, the share of faxes is decreasing, and business letters are rare (see also Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta, 2005).

Louhiala-Salminen (1997, 1999a) further suggests that the medium does not leave the message untouched; when the writer decides to write a fax and starts to write it on a fax form, he/she will be aware of the generic constraints and the unmarked conventions that the recipient expects him/her to follow. Drawing on this, it can be suggested that when the writer faces an email template on the computer screen, the generic constraints to be followed will be different than if he/she faced a letter template in Microsoft Word.

Nickerson (2000: 45) admits that whilst the media available may be determined by the wider business context and/or the corporate context, the final selection may also depend on national culture. For example, Yli-Jokipii (1994) points out that Finns prefer the telephone in their initial contacts with potential buyers, whereas British business practitioners use written media in their first contacts. Gunnarsson (1997: 184) indicates that Swedish banks rely more on oral communication than their British counterparts. These two studies seem to suggest that Finnish and Swedish business people rely more on oral communication than their British colleagues.

In addition to spoken and written discourse being intertwined in business, as indicated by, for example Gunnarsson (1997) and Louhiala-Salminen (2002a), they can also replace each other. Gunnarsson's (1997: 163–164) analysis of the role of spoken discourse in the creation of written documents in a local government office shows that some of the documents could have been replaced by spoken discourse. Although Gunnarsson is not discussing genres, this finding suggests that some written genres would be replaceable by spoken genres, and consequently, they could be delivered via different media.

In sum, consideration of medium as an aspect of the form of genre, in the North American New Rhetoric tradition in particular, implies that the media are situated in the social practices of the organization, and an attempt is made to understand the use in relation to the interplay between the media and the social practice. For this reason, the background information about the use of media by Finns and Swedes in Stora Enso provided by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) communication survey was of importance for the present study. Unavoidably, the messages delivered via new media would be influenced by pre-existing genres, which may be imported as such to the new medium or which may be modified (see 3.1). Totally new genres may also emerge encouraged by the opportunities offered by the new media (for more, see also 2.3.7). These phenomena are relevant in the present study which set out to compare its data both to previous email research focusing on linguistic features as well as to guidelines of effective written business communication.

Code. – Nickerson (2000: 45) argues that language as an aspect of form in Yates & Orlikowski's (1992) framework is limited in its focus as it is only concerned with the level of formality and vocabulary of one language. To make this aspect better suited for multinational companies in which a number of languages may be used, Nickerson (2000: 45) divides language into two: Code and Discourse. Code is used to refer to the choice of an appropriate language for the genre, e.g. English, Dutch, German, etc., which is necessary in multinational settings with speakers of different mother tongues working together. This conception of genre entails that the code is subordinate to genre; genres are the same and only the code changes. As the present study only focuses on messages using one code, lingua franca English, its nature in business contexts, in particular, is explored further. This study is not concerned with the nature of genres in other codes, such as Finnish and Swedish.

In settings where the participants do not share the same mother tongue, a choice needs to be made of the common language, *lingua franca*, to be used in communication. In business, the language in the majority of such settings seems to be English (see e.g. Vollstedt 2002: 103). For example, the official language of the majority of the engineering companies listed on the Helsinki Exchanges in 2002 was English (Nurmi 2002). English as the corporate or official language of a company does not mean that its use is imposed on the employees in all internal communication; rather, it means that English is used in most contacts between employees speaking different mother tongues. For example, Vollstedt (2002: 98) points out that as soon as members of a group do not feel comfortable or competent with the local language, English would be used. For this reason, in Siemens and Daimler-Benz English is being used increasingly in spite of the strong local languages of German and French. This practice suggests that the users have a very pragmatic view of the language choice.

It has been suggested that in *lingua franca* communication misunderstandings are more probable than in communication between native and non-native speakers (Lesznyák 2002: 163). The higher probability has been ascribed to the increase of potential interference sources and the difficulty of determining which norms of language and language use to apply in a given situation. This view has been questioned by Knapp (2002: 219), who argues that investigations into spoken *lingua franca* interactions are characterized by a high degree of cooperativeness and consensual style (see also Firth 1996; Meierkord 1998, 2000). He explains this by reference to the communication situations being investigated, such as routine business transactions and informal exchanges involving small talk. For example, Firth (1996) identifies three discourse strategies in English *lingua franca* business telephone conversations to cope with problems in understanding; the common denominator is that the interactants tolerate atypical language forms to a large degree.

Until recently, the English language has been studied as the property of its native speakers, which entails that non-native speakers of the language have been regarded as learners and their language use has been compared to the model provided by native speakers. However, being a learner is not a relevant identity for an adult who uses English fluently in his profession, as is pointed out by e.g. Mauranen (2003: 118-119). Firth (1996) also emphasizes the autonomous form of discourse realized in lingua franca English that should not be regarded as inferior to native English.

Research into English lingua franca (ELF)¹⁷ has focused on its features of use as means of communication and its possible differences from English as a native language. It has not been concerned with the nature of language itself. Survey studies of ELF use within companies have been conducted by Vollstedt (2002), who focused on 20 multinational companies, and Sutherland (1994), who examined the use of company-internal ELF between German and Japanese speakers. Vandermeeren (1999), on the other hand, reports on the use of ELF between companies based in different countries, that is, between business partners from Germany and France and those from Germany and the Netherlands.

Some recent studies of spoken ELF interactions in business have been conducted by e.g. Firth (1996), who focused on the pragmatic aspects of telephone conversations; Poncini (2002), who examined the discourse of an Italian company's meetings of its international distributors; Nikko (in press), who investigated the construction of meaning in company-internal business meetings with Finnish and Swedish participants; and Charles & Louhiala-Salminen (in press), who compared language use of Finnish and Swedish participants in ELF internal meetings. Outside the business context, spoken interactions have been investigated by e.g. Meierkord (2002, 2000, 1998), Lesznyák (2002), Knapp (2002), and House (2002).

17 The term ELF has been used by e.g. Lesznyák 2002, Knapp 2002, House 2002, and Mauranen 2003.

As mentioned above, studies whose objective is to describe or list the specific language features of ELF are scarce. Jenkins et al. (2001; also Seidlhofer & Jenkins 2001) describe a lingua franca core for Euro-English, which was found to be crucial for intelligibility. In addition, they have listed grammar mistakes that do not tend to cause disruptions in ELF communication. Such features comprise

- using the same form for all present tense verbs, as in *You look very sad* and *He look very sad*;
- not using a definite or indefinite article in front of nouns, as in *Our countries have signed agreement about this*;
- treating 'who' and 'which' as interchangeable relative pronouns, as in *a person which*;
- using only the verb stem in constructions such as *I look forward to see you tomorrow*; and
- using 'isn't it?' as a universal tag question, as in *You're very busy today, isn't it?* (p. 16).

In addition, Johnson & Bartlett (1999) have drawn up a more comprehensive list of features based on their observations of the speech of international business practitioners whose native tongue is not English. They do not call this language ELF but International Business English (IBE). They suggest that the English used between non-native speakers is used as a contact language in the same way as pidgin languages have been used for trade and business purposes and that such English seems to be developing in accordance with universals of language (see e.g. Holm 1988, as quoted in Johnson & Bartlett 1999). Johnson & Bartlett (1999: 9) advocate that "simplifications make the language more transparent and so aid communication between non-native speakers". The features listed in Table 1 consist of non-standard patterns that caused no miscommunication between the non-native speakers and that were common to business practitioners from different mother tongue backgrounds.

TABLE 1. Features of International Business English (Johnson & Bartlett 1999: 9).

Feature of IBE	Example
Simplified vocabulary	We'll call together (not each other) We're waiting for them to sell our products (not expect)
Non-count nouns lacking	I have a news We need equipments
Pre/Postpositions reduced	I'll pay the coffee. Have you listened the news?
Simplified question forms	Why you are here? You understand me?
Simplified tense/mood system	Tomorrow I go to London.
Passives avoided	(no example given)
Simplified sentence structure/ morphemes dropped	A technical driven company That represent only 10%
Conjoined not embedded sentences	That's one of our main topics and that's one of the reasons that you're here that we come together, we know about the project in the other countries and then we every month call together
Infinitives preferred to gerunds	It's not worth to do
Few relative clauses/simplified pronouns	My company which name is
<i>We have</i> instead of <i>there is</i>	We have a lot of traffic in Seoul
Resumptive pronouns (e.g. all the members they was in contact)	All the members they was in contact

Comparison of IBE with the features listed by Jenkins et al. (2001) implies some similarities such as simplified tense system, use of relative pronouns, and preference for infinitives rather than gerunds. Jenkins et al.'s (2001) lack of definite and indefinite

articles and the use of the same tag question are not taken up by Johnson & Bartlett (1999), whereas many other features are.

In their article combining the findings from Louhiala-Salminen (2002b), Charles & Louhiala-Salminen (in press), and Kankaanranta (2005, in press), Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005) use the term Business English Lingua Franca (BELF) to refer to English used as a 'neutral' and shared communication code for the function of conducting business. In this definition, both the role of the speakers and the domain of language usage are central. The speakers/writers of BELF are non-native members of the business discourse community and use English to do their work. Although the term may not be entirely successful because of its connotations with Business English as one specific type of English in the realm of English for Specific Purposes, it still conveys the idea of using ELF for business rather than for any other purposes. The present study adopts BELF and uses it for the English language used in the corpus for the reasons presented above and since IBE as a name does not convey the idea of English being used as a lingua franca.

Although genres may transcend language barriers and be the same independent of the code used, the present study only focused on the genres realized in English Lingua Franca, and more specifically Business English Lingua Franca. As only Johnson & Bartlett (1999) have focused on business discourse and as their classification is more extensive than that of Jenkins et al. (2001), it was chosen in the present study as the framework to investigate how well email messages fall into the categories describing spoken lingua franca business discourse.

Discourse features. – Discourse features of genres have been most explicitly on the research agenda in the ESP tradition, which reflects the researchers' interest in the language required of non-native speakers in academic and professional settings. The purpose has been to help the language learner to acquire the appropriate language of specific genres. The linguistic orientation becomes

evident in the definitions provided by the two leading genre theorists of the ESP tradition: genres are defined as having “patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style” (Swales 1990: 58) and being “highly structured and conventionalised with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of intent, positioning, form and functional value” (Bhatia 1993: 13). In Nickerson’s (2000: 46) view, genre analysis in the ESP tradition provides a method of contextualising the discourse of genres used within a specific community;¹⁸ for instance, Bhatia (1993: 22-36) describes a framework for performing a seven-step analysis of any unfamiliar genre by relating the specific language use to the social context in which it takes place

Within the framework, Bhatia (1993: 24–34) focuses on one of the seven steps, that of linguistic analysis with three different levels. He points out, however, that the analysis may concentrate on only one, or several, of the levels: analysis of lexico-grammatical features, text-patterning or textualization, and the structural organization of a text. The first level is concerned with a quantitative analysis of lexico-grammatical features that are identified as typified forms of communication in the particular text type or variety that the text represents. In this way, the analysis provides empirical evidence to confirm or disprove some intuitive impressions that are often made about the high or low frequency of certain features in various genres. However, the inquiry reveals little about what aspect of the genre the features textualize, or to what purpose. In other words, it is constrained by surface features and does not account for the way communicative purpose is accomplished in a particular genre. The second level, on the other hand, attempts to clarify the issue by probing the rationale behind the lexico-grammatical features by answering the question: Why

18 There have been extensive linguistic investigations of business discourse, such as Yli-Jokipii’s (1994) study of requests in business messages and Alatalo’s (2002; also forthcoming) study of interpersonal metadiscourse in problematic email messages. Neither of these two studies, however, used the genre approach; they focused on specific linguistic realizations in business discourse.

do the genre participants write the way they do? It thus attempts to explain the relationship of those forms to the context in which they are used by focusing on the textualizations of the genre. The analysis involves the identification of what constitutes conventional language use by a specialized community within a particular genre: "specifying the way members of a particular speech community assign restricted values to various aspects of language use (they may be features of lexis, syntax, or even discourse) when operating in a particular genre" (Bhatia 1993: 26). The third level of linguistic analysis views a genre as being organized in a series of discriminative structural elements, or moves, which distinguish one genre from another and which are necessary for genre recognition. Moves provide a typical structure for a genre. For example, Swales's (1990: 141) seminal CARS¹⁹ model for research article introductions consists of three moves: Establishing a territory, Establishing a niche, and Occupying a niche. In the same way as each genre has a communicative purpose that it tends to serve, each move also serves a typical communicative intention or function that contributes in some way to the overall communicative purpose of the genre. These intentions are realized by rhetorical strategies, which are the non-discriminative options, that is, they are "the allowable contributions available to an author for creative or innovative genre construction" (Bhatia 1993: 32). Taking Swales's (1990: 141) CARS model as an example, the Establishing a territory move can be realized by three steps, Claiming centrality, and/or Making topic generalization(s), and/or Reviewing items of previous research. The steps can naturally obtain various textual realizations. Below, Bhatia's (1993) linguistic analysis is illustrated with examples from business communication research applying it.

The first level of analysis, that of identifying typified language forms, is illustrated by three examples, which are further expanded to illustrate the second level of analysis, that of textualizations:

19 CARS stands for Create a Research Space (Swales 1990: 141).

Nickerson (2000), Louhiala-Salminen's (1999a), and Rogers & Swales (1990). Nickerson (2000: 171) presents quantitative findings of interpersonal discourse features in her email corpus representing one organizational genre used by both British English and Dutch speakers. Her findings show how the Brits use more questions, but less emphatics and amplifiers. Another example is offered by Louhiala-Salminen's (1999a: 146-147) quantitative analysis of the distribution of metadiscoursal²⁰ elements in business letters, faxes, and email messages. It shows that most of the metadiscourse was found in letters and the least in email messages. The letters contained most interpersonal elements, which show the writer's stance toward the reader and the propositional content. The faxes contained most textual elements, which make the preferred interpretation of the organization and structure of a text explicit. In the email messages the relationship between the interpersonal and textual elements was almost balanced. Finally, in their investigation of Dana Corporation's mission statement, Rogers & Swales (1990) found that, of the 44 references to the employees, the pronoun 'we' was used as a sentence-subject 33 times and the remaining references were expressions like 'Dana People' or 'the company'.

The second level of analysis focuses on the relationship between the lexico-grammatical features such as the ones presented above and their contribution in textualizing particular aspects of genres. Nickerson (2000: 175) explains that the fact that British writers used more questions than Dutch writers in the same in-house email genre reflects their relatively small corporate distance to the recipients, as the messages were intradepartmental. In

20 Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 123) defines metadiscourse as follows: "Metadiscourse refers to linguistic and other expressions in a discourse act that explicitly serve the textual or interpersonal functions of language. Metadiscoursal elements are, however, intertwined with expressions that serve the ideational function and thus form the propositional content. The metadiscoursal and propositional elements combined provide the reader (or listener) with the meaning of the message to be interpreted, none of the elements being automatically more significant than others in the interpretation process."

addition, she (2000: 171-173) ascribes differences in the use of emphatics and amplifiers to national culture. The fact that British-English speakers used less emphatics (words such as *of course, obviously*) and amplifiers (*very, a lot*) than Dutch speakers is explained by their desire to avoid high-risk strategies that invite the receiver to disagree.

Louhiala-Salminen's (1999a: 158-161) findings concerning the amount of metadiscourse in letters, faxes, and email messages entail that email messages were the most propositional of the three (because they had the least metadiscourse). Louhiala-Salminen suggests that this might lower the efficiency of email communications as the readability of the messages might be affected. However, the characteristic feature of email to append previous, related messages, and thus avoid unnecessary wordy references to earlier events, probably adds to the efficiency of communication, unless the chain is too long to be viewed at a glimpse. As all three message types contained high frequencies of interpersonal metadiscourse, the writer's voice was obvious. However, the qualitative analysis of the texts showed that its tone and loudness varied. In the email messages, where the amount of metadiscourse was the smallest, the writer's own voice was not so loud, but it sounded the most informal and personal.

After counting the references to sentence-subjects in the mission statements, Rogers & Swales (1990) investigated why the Dana Corporation had avoided the use of 'we' 11 times and used it 33 times, which clearly shows that the pronoun was typical for the genre of mission statements. The pronoun 'we' was not used, for example, when the text was somehow in conflict with the overall aim of fostering affiliation and identification to the company. Thus, instead of having "Our purpose is to earn money for our shareholders" the mission statement read "The purpose of the Dana Corporation is to earn money for the shareholders" (see also Swales & Rogers 1995: 232).

The three examples above show how the second level of analysis can contribute to the rationale of the genre. By searching

for the rationale behind the use of particular lexico-grammatical features, Bhatia's (1993) framework attempts to shed light on the question of what aspect of the genre is textualized in a particular context.

The third level of linguistic analysis in Bhatia's (1993) framework is concerned with moves as structural elements of genres that contribute in some way to the overall communicative purpose of the genre. Bhatia (1993) himself gives a number of examples of the genres used in professional settings to illustrate the cognitive structuring of a genre, such as sales promotion letters, job applications, and legislative provisions. These analyses, together with those focusing on business communication research and professional discourse (e.g. Louhiala-Salminen 1997, Akar 1998; Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999, Zhu 2000, Nickerson 2000, Upton & Connor 2001, Henry & Roseberry 2001, Pinto dos Santos 2002), identify the same move structure across the textualizations of individual genres, according to the genre's communicative purpose. For example, Nickerson (2000: 162-165) identified four moves contributing to the communicative purpose of exchanging information on the corporation's activities in one organizational email genre: Move I identifies the subject, Move IIA is used to exchange information, Move III identifies action and IIB justifies why the action identified in III is necessary.

Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999: 222; also Louhiala-Salminen 1997: 324) found 17 moves, which were used to achieve the communicative purposes of the seven subgenres of the business fax genre in operation in a Finnish and a Turkish company involved in international business.²¹ Thus, the fax genre in use was similar in the two companies based in different countries although the language of the messages was not the same: English was used in all 92 messages from the Turkish company but only

21 There are two more communicative purposes (Complaining and Confirming) in comparison to Louhiala-Salminen's (1997) findings; the reason for the discrepancy is explained by the different length of the collection period (five years for the Turkish company's messages and one week for those of the Finnish company).

in less than half of the Finnish company's 69 faxes; the rest were mostly in Finnish.

The same genre may also be structured differently in different cultures as is shown by a number of researchers. For instance, Akar (1998) shows that Turkish business people regularly place the move giving the reason for writing at a later stage in a message than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts. Zhu (2000) also shows how the same genre has a different move structure in two cultures, English and Chinese. Chinese sales letters hardly ever comprise the *Headline* move, whereas it is common in the English letters. But Chinese sales letters contain two moves of their own: the *Greeting* move of the type "How are you?" and the *Introductory* move, which can be seen as an important strategy for relationship building. In addition, Upton & Connor (2001) compared two moves (*Indicating desire for an interview* and *Expressing appreciation*) of the *Job Application Letter* genre from the point of view of politeness written by American, Finnish, and Belgian students. They found differences between the student groups in relation to the presence or absence of the two moves and in the way politeness was expressed: Americans tended to be formulaic, Belgians more individualistic, and Finns somewhere between the two.

The problematic nature of move analysis as an analytical method has been discussed by Bloor (1998: 60): identifying moves can be difficult and contentious. Even experienced readers fail to agree on the interpretation of moves (or where they begin and end) and certain texts – she talks about promotional ones – can have hidden moves. Swales (personal communication, 2001) has pointed out that the move boundaries are fluid. For instance, Henry & Roseberry (2001: 158–159) show that two analyses of the same genre with different samples may produce different results. Their definition of the *Promotion* move in the *Job Application Letter* genre combined two separate moves, which were used by Bhatia (1993), i.e. *Establishing credentials* and *Offering incentives*. In the same vein, the same linguistic realization was interpreted

differently in the two studies. Henry & Roseberry (2001) regard *I look forward to hearing from you* as the Ending politely move, whereas Bhatia maintains that it is the Soliciting response move.

The lack of attention to discourse features of business genres as suggested by e.g. Bhatia (1993) is no longer as distinct since a number of investigations (see e.g. Akar 1998; Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999; Louhiala-Salminen 1999a; Nickerson 2000; Pinto dos Santos 2002; Zhu 2000; Upton & Connor 2001; Henry & Roseberry 2001) have been published over the last few years. It seems that the interest in the linguistic features of genres, especially in the move structure, has been particularly popular among business communication researchers in the ESP tradition.

In sum: in spite of the problems in the identification and analysis of moves, the above studies show how move analysis can be used to find support for the communicative purpose of a genre. The two other levels of linguistic analysis, those of lexicogrammatical features and textualizations, also contribute to the understanding of the typified forms of communication and the construction of genre. This study made use of all the three levels of linguistic analysis to identify the salient discourse features of the prospective genres, on the one hand, and to describe the specific textualizations of the Salutation, Closing, Signature, and Requesting moves, on the other. The methods for the linguistic analysis were chosen to meet the research aims. The discourse features contributing to the spoken and written quality of the messages were explored on the basis of findings of previous research in business email communication (e.g. Nickerson 2000, Alatalo 2002) drawing on Chafe (1982) and Fairclough (1992a), and move analysis was used to analyze how the communicative purposes were realized in the text of the messages.

2.3.6 CONTENT OF GENRES

Content is considered a central criterion for genre identification by researchers in both ESP and North American New Rhetoric

traditions (see e.g. Swales 1990, Yates & Orlikowski 1992). Yates & Orlikowski (1992) use 'substance' to refer to social motives and topics being expressed in communication; the term can be seen to explain what content is appropriate to a particular purpose in a genre. Drawing on Giddens's (1984) notion of social rules that are used by individuals to produce and reproduce social action, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 302) use genre rules, which entail that genres are enacted through rules that associate appropriate elements of the text's substance or content (and form) with certain recurrent situations.

One method of analyzing content is Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) Competing Values Model. Since it has been successfully used in the study of business genres (e.g. Nickerson 2000, Rogers 2000), it was also used in the present study. It is introduced below.

Rogers & Hildebrandt's Competing Values Model. - Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) model, drawing on Yates & Orlikowski's (1992) definitions of substance and form, describes four general orientations of management messages and related linguistic features. It consists of four competing values, or contrasting message orientations, which are Transformational, Promotional, Informational, and Relational, mutually existing in management messages. Managers use these orientations in various degrees depending on what they want to accomplish. Although all messages have typically traces of all four orientations, one of them usually dominates. *Transformational* messages are intrinsically unconventional; their main purpose is to inspire, excite, and challenge the receiver to accept something new, for example, a mind-stretching vision. Typical examples would be an introduction of a new CEO and a mission statement. The message is characterized by unconventionality: if written, it may look unorthodox because of its physical layout; if oral, the delivery is enthusiastic with emphatic gestures. *Promotional* orientation is used when the communicator wants to persuade the receiver to buy a product, a service, or an idea. Sales presentations, job application

letters, and recommendations to the executive board are examples of this orientation. The promotional message is argument-centered including claims supported by evidence or emotional appeals. *Informational* orientation typically dominates when the communicator wants to guarantee that the message is clearly understood; examples of this orientation would be an explanation of a new policy, instructional manual, or technical briefing. The content is neutral and controlled; the language is characterized by precise words and standard constructions. Finally, *Relational* orientation is used to establish credibility, build rapport, and generate trust. Typical examples are thank-you notes, managers' pep talks at staff meetings, and letters of sympathy. The language contains more conversational than formal syntactical constructions, inclusive pronouns and familiar words.

As is discussed in 7.1, the means used to achieve the characteristics of involved (Chafe 1982) or conversational discourse used in email communication (see e.g. Collot & Belmore 1996; Baron 1998, 2000) are partly the same as those aiming at Relational orientation. For example, according to Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993: 128), Relational messages include honest self-revelation, which can be identified as the use of private verbs (e.g. *know, hope, understand*) and hedges (e.g. *I'm afraid that*) in Collot & Belmore (1996); the use of personal pronouns is discussed by both Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993) and Collot & Belmore (1996). In spite of the similarities, however, the inherent difference between the Relational orientation and involved conversational discourse is that the starting point in Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) categorization is that both spoken and written messages can manifest Relational orientation, whereas Chafe (1982) asserts that only spoken discourse can be involved.

Nickerson (2000: 42) uses Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) Competing Values Model to specify the substance and form of organizational genres in her email data and considers it especially useful when genres in different cultures are studied since "there is increasing evidence that what is considered to be an appropriate

orientation for a genre, may in fact vary across different cultures". She gives an example from Bhatia (1993), who shows how application letters in Asia are Informational rather than Promotional, which is typical for example in the United States (for a survey of cultural aspects in genre knowledge, see Huckin 1995/6).

Rogers (2000) has applied the Competing Values Model in the investigation of the organizational genre of CEO presentations in conjunction with earnings announcements delivered at the New York Society of Security Analysts to find out audience response to those presentations. The respondents in the study scoring the presentations with the model instrument were representative of individual investors attending the presentations. The CEO presentations proved to be highly informational and secondarily relational, which suggests that they address investors' information needs but need not explicitly promote the company.

In the present study Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) model was used as a starting point for the identification of the content of the prospective genre exemplars, but Suchan & Dulek's (1998) framework (see 2.1.1) was also used to further classify the Informational orientation of the messages into references to the four subsystems of *task*, *structure*, *control*, and *technology* in operation in the organizational environment. Although Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993) developed and applied their Competing Values Model to management messages, the present study used it to analyze the content of internal messages written by a number of staff members representing not only managers but also specialist and office staff. As the model describes the orientations of the messages at a rather high level of abstraction, the model was considered appropriate for the analysis of business messages written by non-managers.

2.3.7 DYNAMIC AND EVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL OF GENRES

Genres are dynamic constructs and develop to respond appropriately to new recurrent situations. What is viewed as recurrent may change because of a change in the social environment, and the result may be a change in the typified social action invoked in response to that situation. If the new type formed from old typifications proves useful for mastering the business at hand, it enters the stock of knowledge of the relevant community and its application becomes routine. In other words, as Miller argues (1984: 153), “a set of genres is an open class, with new members evolving, old ones decaying”.

Genres have become dynamically complex as a result of several factors, which include a tendency to mix ‘private intentions’ with socially recognized ‘communicative purposes’ (Bhatia 1993) and a need to respond to complex, novel, or changing socio-cultural contexts (Fairclough 1992a, 1992b, 1993). Miller (1984: 163) also states that “the number of genres in any society is indeterminate and depends upon the complexity and diversity of society”. The notion of genres as dynamic constructs has been reinforced by a number of researchers (e.g. Yates & Orlikowski 1992, 2002; Devitt 1993; Orlikowski & Yates 1994; Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995; Paltridge 1997; Bhatia 1997a; Trosborg 2000; Ramanathan & Kaplan 2000; Nickerson 2000; Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta, 2005). For example, Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995) argue in their sociocognitive approach to genre that for genres to be effective in their role of intellectual scaffolds, on which community-based knowledge is constructed, they must be flexible and dynamic, capable of modification according to the rhetorical exigences of the situation. However, at the same time, they must be stable enough to capture those aspects of situations that tend to recur. This tension between stability and change lies at the heart of genre use and genre knowledge.

Bhatia (1997a) discusses generic integrity versus propensity for innovation and suggests that these two features of genre theory

appear to be contradictory. One tends to view genre as a rhetorically situated, highly institutionalized textual event, having its own 'generic integrity' (Bhatia 1993: 145), whereas genres also incorporate a natural propensity for innovation and change, which is often exploited by the expert members of the community to create new forms in order to respond to familiar and not so familiar rhetorical contexts. This gives genres dynamic complexity, which of late is often attributed to the explosion of information technology.

Louhiala-Salminen's (e.g. 1995, 1996, 1999b) studies into written English business communication in the changing technological environment in Finland show a trend towards a new type of language use: a more informal, speech-like language and personalization of communication seem to result from the direct communication links between the sender and the receiver through fax and email. She suggests a correspondence between the medium used and the changes in written business communication. In 1992, business communication in English was mostly conducted using the fax machine in the Finnish business community (representing 54% of all business messages). The emergence of the medium seemed to have influenced the language of written business communication to the extent that Louhiala-Salminen (e.g. 1995) argues that a new genre, that of a business fax, had emerged to partly replace the business letter genre. Her findings support Fairclough's (1992a) theory of discourse and change: discursive practices and social context affect each other. In the business environment surveyed, the technological advances represent changes in the social context, which have changed discursive practices from 'formal' business correspondence to 'informal' message exchange. Fairclough (1993: 13) also argues that the changes taking place in societies are reflected in quintessentially hybrid texts, which "mix together discourses and genres in creative and often complex ways cutting across conventional boundaries within and between orders of discourse". Computer-mediated communications serve as an illuminating example. They lead to the emergence of new genres, which combine features of speech and writing, conversational discourse and public discourse.

From the business letter to the memo genre. – One of the examples most often cited in the evolution of genres is Yates & Orlikowski's (1992: 311–318) historical illustration of the evolution of the memo genre from the business letter genre in the United States. In the mid-nineteenth century business letters were typically exchanged with external individuals or firms to manage and document business at hand. In addition to this shared content, they were characterized by standard structural features (e.g. date, inside address, salutation, complimentary close) and distinctly polite language. Over 150 years ago, the communication medium associated with business letters was pen and paper. Typical business letters were illustrated in model letter books with the appropriate genre rules, and as business practitioners became instructed and socialized in these forms of business correspondence, they invoked the genre to conduct business with another party; the regular use of the genre in recurrent social situations served to reinforce its status as a social institution within firms. The genre rules of English business letters were imported to non-English environments with the help of these model letter books in which the model letters were kept unchanged but the exercises and instructions were translated, and some maybe added, into the native tongues of the non-English practitioners (see e.g. Afzelius 1914 for a Finnishized version of a British book).

In the late nineteenth century, due to a tremendous growth in firm size and changes in management ideology in the United States, a newly recognized recurrent situation within firms emerged through the need to document internal interactions on paper. To respond to this situation, the genre rules of the business letter genre, which was used with outsiders, were invoked. To ease storage of internal documents, vertical files were adopted, which occasioned changes in the form of the genre together with the new communication medium of typewriter. The fields of today's memo headings, i.e. *To*, *From*, *Subject* and *Date*, evolved to make the identification, storage, and retrieval of internal documents easy for the file clerk and the recipient of the document.

The new headings also eliminated salutations and complimentary closes, and gradually also other polite formulae were abandoned in favor of more direct expressions. Gradually these changes were adopted within organizations, and this pattern of communication became recognizable as a new genre of organizational communication. As was discussed above in 2.3.4, the adoption of the term *memorandum* or *memo* rather than *business letter* to refer to internal correspondence was one of the last features signaling recognition of a new genre. Thus, the memo genre emerged to meet the recurrent situations in company-internal communication while the business letter remained as a genre to be used only in interactions with outsiders.

From the memo genre to the email genre/genres. - The recent elaboration of the memo genre in electronic mail is also discussed by Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 316-318), who forecast the emergence of new computer-mediated genres of organizational communication. The elaboration began when the computer systems designers retained the conventional heading of the paper-based memo genre, an existing and familiar genre in the US business life, when moving into the new medium. The conventional memo form seems to make US users of email draw on the memo genre²² rules for some of their communication in this new medium. For example, some messages are used to document company-internal events for future reference. Moreover, the language of such messages often exhibits typical features of paper-based memos, which means that they may be classified as memos, elaborated within the email medium.

However, as Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 316-318) state, some email messages have qualities not typical of memos; for instance they may be sent to outsiders, which means that they are not only

22 Here, it must be remembered that Yates & Orlikowski refer to the US business community. In the Finnish business community, the memo genre with the headings *To*, *From*, *Date* and *Subject* has not been used for internal communication (Kortetjärvi-Nurmi et al. 2002; also Majapuro, personal communication, 2003). Similar headings can only be found in Cover notes attaching documents.

used for internal communication like memos. Salutations may also be used, which is not typical of the memo genre. Language may be more informal than is common in memos. In terms of substance or content, email is often used to convey messages that would not typically be handled through memos and that require no documentation (e.g. a one-word response to a question). Further, it is evident that in countries in which the memo has not been used in the same format as in the United States, such as Finland and Sweden for example, email users cannot draw on the memo genre rules because they are not familiar with them. Rather, their email messages resemble and invoke genres other than the memo, such as the business letter, voicemail message, or informal note, or they may display unique characteristics.

In 1992, Yates & Orlikowski stated that email technology, the possibility of rapid asynchronous, unobtrusive exchanges, *may encourage*²³ individuals to use it for messages that are ephemeral and too incomplete to stand alone, unlike the memo and the business letter, which are intended for future reference, and hence are more comprehensive. This would entail that (US) organizational members draw selectively on the memo genre rules in this new medium, sometimes maintaining them and sometimes elaborating them. In the same way as the business letter genre coexists with the memo genre, also the memo genre may coexist with any potential new genres that emerge in electronic mail.

The two cases presented by Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 318-319), i.e. the evolution of the memo genre and that of email because of the emergence of new media, show how existing genres will influence the use of the new medium (e.g. no salutations in email because users draw on memo genre rules, which is encouraged by the memo-like heading of email) and how the media will influence the use of genres (e.g. salutations in email because users invoke other genres, such as an informal note, in response to new recurrent situations).

23 Recent research in email communications (e.g. Baron 1998, 2000) supports this assumption.

The dynamism of the concept of genre is also reflected in the views of researchers about the genre status of email messages. Although some business communication researchers argue that email communication does not represent a genre or genres (Alatalo 1996, 2002; Gimenez 2000), others suggest that the future and maturation process will show its genre status (Gains 1999; Louhiala-Salminen 1999a). Now, Gimenez (2005) argues that email as a genre in its own right has evolved; he emphasizes its nature as a chain with a number of embedded messages. However, the leading genre researchers have considered the genre status of email message chains a problematic issue (Bhatia et al. 2002). Mulholland (1999), on the other hand, established the existence of one email genre in the internal communication of an Australian university, whereas Nickerson (2000) established four genres in the internal email communication of a Dutch-British company.

The four organizational email genres that Nickerson (2000) established were partly the same as the ones she had found in the hard copy versions in the same company. One of the genres was investigated in detail and some differences between the email genre and the paper genre were established. Consequently, Nickerson (2000: 181–182) argues that the electronic version of the genre has evolved to meet the recurrent situation in the new medium. The purpose of both genres was “to bring about the action necessary to further corporate activities within the participants’ established relationship” (Nickerson 2000: 181). They were also similar in their orientation: they were both Relational and Informational (see Rogers and Hildebrandt 1993). They were also similar in their use of English, in the situations in which the genres were used, in the participants involved, and in some aspects of discourse. The changes concerned the layout of the message and some discursive features. The email genre used the layout of a memo, whereas the paper genre used the layout of a letter.²⁴

24 This gives support to the fact that the memo genre is not necessarily in use in European companies for internal communication as discussed above in connection with Yates & Orlikowski’s (1992) account of the evolution of the memo genre from the business letter genre in the United States.

However, it must be pointed out here that all email messages use the layout of a memo because it is embedded in the system. Three discursal differences were also detected: First, an extra move (Exchanging information) was found in some email messages, even though mostly the move structure of the two genres was the same. Second, the email discourse revealed more references to individuals, specific corporate units, and a range of corporate activities. Third, in the email genre it was possible to identify evidence of constitutive intertextuality (see 2.1.2): features typical of spoken communication were incorporated into the written text.

Yates & Orlikowski (2002; also Orlikowski & Yates 1994) discuss how a community adapts to a change of communication medium, how existing genres are typically imported, how the members improvise around them, and how they gradually learn to take advantage of the new opportunities afforded by the medium. They suggest that a potential downside of drawing on genres habitually is the potential for missing opportunities for change. In other words, if old norms are habitually enacted when a new medium is used, it reinforces the status quo on such dimensions as purpose, content, participants, time, and place of communicative interaction. Only the form of communication is changed. Yates & Orlikowski (2002: 33) suggest that exploiting the opportunities offered by the new medium may help the users of such new media in their adjustment. This requires that assumptions that have previously been tacit were made explicit. In this way, misunderstandings may be avoided and experimentation that may lead to change in genre systems may be encouraged.

To conclude, the dynamic and evolutionary potential of genres is inherent in studies such as the present one, which investigate messages delivered via a fairly new medium of email and in the turbulent environment of global business. As the above discussion shows, new media influence the way genres are constructed, that is, what features are imported from existing genres and what features have developed to characterize new genres. The notion

of stability and instability in genre construction is thus essential. To approach the data from this angle, linguistic features of the email messages were compared to the findings of previous research of email communication as well as guidelines of effective written business communication. The genre users were also asked what media they would have used before email technology to deliver the messages presented to them to investigate what media email replaces in their opinion.

2.4 SUMMARY

As this chapter has shown, the notion of genre in applied linguistics draws on multiple sources, and it approaches communication from various angles in its pursuit to account for the features of professional communication in particular. The concepts of social constructionism and intertextuality are highly useful in complementing the theoretical framework since they contribute to contextualizing workplace texts in both the corporate context and the wider context of changing communication practices due to advancements in communication technologies. In business, in which writing inherently involves goals and action and is thus highly instrumental and contextualized, genre theory with its different foci meets the need of being able to account for the context and purposes of, the action accomplished by, and the linguistic analysis of textual products. A combination of seven key tenets of genre approaches was considered especially relevant for the present study in its attempt to investigate the nature of genres in Stora Enso's internal English email communication. On the one hand, the analysis relied heavily on the concept of genre in ESP; it acknowledged the primacy of communicative purpose and the importance of discourse community and genre names. On the other hand, the contribution of the North American New Rhetoricians came in the form of interest in genres as actions that respond to certain recurring situations and genres as dynamic

concepts that are also able to respond to new situations. The traditional criteria of form and content (or substance) recognized by both approaches, although with different emphasis, formed an integral part of the conception of genre in the present study.

Next, in Chapter 3, previous research into the hybrid nature of email communication and politeness in business messages are discussed separately since they do not fall under the notion of genre discussed in the present chapter. However, they are relevant for the methods chosen to analyze the discourse of the corpus. In Chapter 4, the data for the present study and the methods of analysis developed on the basis of the theoretical framework are discussed in more detail.

To conclude this chapter of the notion of genre in applied linguistics, a quotation from Bazerman (1997: 19) is in order:

Genres are not just forms. Genres are forms of life, ways of being. They are frames for social action. They are environments for learning. They are locations within which meaning is constructed. Genres shape the thoughts we form and communications by which we interact. Genres are the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guideposts we use to explore the unfamiliar.

In the present study, genres were used as lenses to investigate life in Stora Enso. They were investigated to find out how business is done in Stora Enso when language is used to accomplish it. Through genres, this study aimed to investigate social action and its different representations in the company's internal English email messages.

Finally, to take an example close at hand: the present study served as an example of an environment for learning for me, the researcher, and as a location within which meaning was being constructed. This study represents a specific genre in academia, and it was shaping my thoughts although it was far from being a familiar place to create intelligible communicative action. However, it still served as a guidepost or a compass to explore the nature of genres in company-internal email communication.

3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH INTO THE HYBRID NATURE OF EMAIL COMMUNICATION AND POLITENESS IN BUSINESS MESSAGES

Since previous research into the hybrid nature of email communication and politeness in business messages is relevant for the present study but does not fall under the notion of genre in applied linguistics, it is reviewed separately. First, research into email communication is considered from the linguistic point of view, that is, how email discourse seems to combine features that have traditionally been associated with either written or spoken language. Chapter 7 discusses spoken and written language features of the primary corpus. Second, politeness in business messages is in focus. After a brief introduction of Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, a number of studies investigating the phenomenon in written business discourse are reviewed. When some specific moves in the email messages are discussed in Chapters 9 and 10 (see also Chapter 8), the concept of politeness related to naming and requesting is brought up.

3.1 HYBRID NATURE OF EMAIL COMMUNICATION

There seems to be unanimous agreement today that email combines features that have traditionally been associated with either written or spoken language (see e.g. Ferrara et al. 1991; Uhlířová 1994; Maynor 1994; Collot & Belmore 1996; Sims 1996; Alatalo 1996, 2002; Rice 1997; Baron 1998, 2000; Gains 1999; Nickerson 2000; Gimenez 2000; Lan 2000; Crystal 2001; also Yates & Orlikowski 1992). On the one hand, email is a form of writing and can always generate a papertrail as it can be printed. In this

sense it is durable. On the other hand, email is ephemeral, like speaking, in the sense that messages can be eliminated by pressing the delete key (Baron 2000: 241). In contradicting Brown & Yule's (1983: 14) distinction between speech and writing "deriving from the fact that one is essentially transitory and the other is designed to be permanent," Yli-Jokipii (1994: 39) suggests a new term *disposable writing*.

The starting point for this literature review is Chafe's (1982: 55) discussion of one of the fundamental differences between speaking and writing: "speakers interact with their audiences, writers do not". Chafe (1982: 55) uses the notion of *involvement* to describe the relationship that the speaker typically has with his/her audience in contrast to *detachment*, which characterizes a writer's relationship to the reader. Involvement is characterized by three features. First, it entails that the communication partners share a considerable amount of knowledge about the environment of conversation since they are in the same place at the same time. Second, there is a possibility of immediate feedback: speakers can monitor the effect of their talk and listeners can signal their understanding or they can ask for clarification. Third, speakers are typically experientially involved in their talk, which is reflected, for instance, in frequent references to themselves and their own mental processes, and in the use of emphatic particles.²⁵

Interestingly, modern communication media seems to encourage involvement, as is pointed out by Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999) in their investigation of fax communication in international business. Drawing on Fairclough (1992a), Akar & Louhiala-Salminen (1999: 218) base their discussion on the notion of *constitutive intertextuality*, which refers to the transfer of oral language features into the written mode, and use Chafe's (1982) concept of involvement to investigate it further.

25 Although Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993: 128; see also 2.3.6 for details) characterize Relational messages partly by using similar labels; for example, *honest self revelation* could refer to *experiential involvement* used by Chafe (1982), they explicitly establish that the Relational orientation can be a feature of both spoken and written discourse.

This section reviews literature related to the linguistic features of email; other aspects relating to its use in the social context of organizations (e.g. Sproull & Kiesler 1986, Lengel & Daft 1988, Markus 1994, Sullivan 1995, Ziv 1996, Sims 1996, Ku 1996, El-Sinnawy & Markus 1998) are discussed in Chapter 4 (see 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4) and views of its genre status (e.g. Yates & Orlikowski 1992, 2002; Louhiala-Salminen 1999a, Mulholland 1999; Gains 1999; Nickerson 2000; Gimenez 2005) were introduced in Chapter 2. All through the review the focus is on the investigations of spoken discourse features manifest in the messages; studies of business email messages are preceded by studies of a more general nature.

Baron (2000: 252–253) compares email to other contact languages, such as lingua francas and pidgins: linguistic characteristics of speech and writing are brought into contact to yield this new hybrid. She considers email a moving target rather than a stable system and explains this by means of three factors: enormous evolution of technology from an awkward system to a sophisticated one, growth and diversification in usership, and partial maturation of the usage in that the users have become more comfortable with the medium (Baron 1998: 144–5). In her analysis of the major social and linguistic properties of email in comparison with speech and writing, she suggests an overall linguistic profile of email as depicted in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Overall linguistic profile of email proposed by Baron (1998: 151–155).

Linguistic component	Evidenced by e.g.	Email most like
Social dynamics	Physical proximity, degree of personal disclosure, response time	Predominantly writing
Format	Durability, editing option	Mixed speech and writing
Grammar	Pronoun use, contractions, adverbial subordinate clauses	Lexicon: predominantly speech Syntax: mixed writing and speech
Style	Level of formality, forms of address, humor	Predominantly speech

As is seen in Table 2, no clear-cut distinctions can be found in the linguistic components between the spoken and written modes. This is also found in individual users' attitudes toward email: some perceive it as a form of writing, while others consider it as speech delivered by other means. The same writer can write informal messages to friends and colleagues but become very formal in his 'official' email messages. This seemingly schizophrenic character of email reflects its hybrid nature: individual users can choose to emphasize one contributing strand over another (Baron 1998: 161-164). Baron (2000: 242; see also Crystal 2001: 128) suggests that two distinct styles of email will emerge: one is unedited and informal and the other is edited, formal, and comparable to the styles that already exist in speech and writing.

Crystal (2001: 48, 238) argues against Baron's view of email as a hybrid of speech and writing or a result of contact between two long-standing mediums; it is neither 'spoken writing' nor 'written speech'. Instead, he regards the language of email as something genuinely different in kind consisting of 'speech + writing + electronically mediated properties'. Thus, he suggests that a fourth medium, i.e. computer-mediated language called *Netspeak*, be added to the three mediums of spoken language, written language, and sign language. Crystal's concept of *Netspeak* contains the language of the Web, email, chat groups, and virtual worlds. Today, it could be argued that text messaging should also be included in this category since it is electronically mediated. Crystal (2001: 241) predicts that *Netspeak* can become the community's linguistic norm, which would mean that one day communication via computer mediation is more frequent than face-to-face interaction.

One of the most comprehensive investigations of the nature of electronic communication has been carried out by Collot & Belmore (1996) applying Biber's (1988) classification of written and spoken texts, which does not assume a simple dichotomy between speech and writing but a continuum model of their relationship. Collot & Belmore (1996) identified situational features

that appeared to have a significant impact on the linguistic manifestations of electronic language. For example, the fact that the participants had common interests and a great deal of shared knowledge was likely to account for the high degree of involvement (measured by the presence of e.g. first- and second-person pronouns, contractions, and hedges) in electronic language. In other words, if the sender was personally involved, the message resembled more speech than writing; this finding is in agreement with Chafe's (1982: 55) claim of the involved quality of spoken language. Collot & Belmore (1996: 21) conclude that "electronic language displays some of the linguistic features which have been associated with certain forms of written language, and others which are more usually associated with spoken language".

Interestingly, some investigations present evidence for the huge advances of email technology in the past few years. Maynor (1994), in her description of the language of electronic mail, *written speech*, reports on some items that are not so prevalent anymore as the usage has matured (see e.g. Baron 1998: 165). For example, the use of capitals to 'scream' and the use of email icons (smileys, emoticons) are discussed with a myriad of examples. But, she also covers a number of features that are widely employed today, making the language of electronic mail resemble speech, such as simplified spellings, punctuation as written equivalents of paralinguistic clues, omission of pronoun subjects and articles. Maynor (1994: 53) also raises an interesting question about the future: With more users can e-style influence traditional writing?

A frequently cited paper by Ferrara, Brunner and Whittemore (1991) examines the syntactic and stylistic features of what they call Interactive Written Discourse (IWD) as used in business. Ferrara et al. (1991: 8) suggest that IWD's norms of use are in the process of becoming conventionalized even though it displays features of both spoken and written language. The features of spoken language exhibited were omissions of pronoun subjects, articles, finite forms of the verb *be* and contractions, informal spellings (*nite* for *night*), and clippings (*info* for *information*). The

features of written language exhibited by IWD were elaboration and expansion: it shows frequent use of relative clauses, adverbial clauses, and subordination (Ferrara et al. 1991: 18-19). According to Ferrara et al., the fact that manuals for computer etiquette were not readily available in the early 1990s suggests that norms of usage were acquired from other users. By 2005, the maturation process has advanced, however, as all major business communication textbooks contain chapters on email usage (see e.g. Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003; also Munter et al. 2003.).

Findings from the studies of the linguistic features of business email messages have produced similar results about the hybrid nature of the messages as those of a more general studies reviewed above. Uhlířová (1994: 280) investigated the textual properties of some 150 email messages, including business messages, written by both native and nonnative speakers of English, such as Czech, French, Spanish, German, Hungarian and Polish, to show the effects of the computer as a medium upon the message. She concludes that some emails resemble traditional letters, e.g. in their greeting formulas, but on the whole the messages clearly manifest a number of features which are not typical of written texts, claiming that email messages bring clear evidence of speech and writing as blurring categories.

Rice's (1997: 6) findings based on 200 corporate email messages suggest that the convenience and rapidity of the electronic medium encourage a style that incorporates both formal and informal discourse elements but the writers still preferred conversational syntax, as evidenced by simple sentences, brief paragraphs, and active verbs. In addition, writers were often unable to find a balance between formal and informal discourse and used an inconsistent selection of words and phrases that signaled everything from detachment to involvement, from formality to informality. These instances suggest that there was confusion over the appropriate mix of formal and informal stylistic elements.

Both Gains (1999) and Gimenez (2000) investigated business email messages on the basis of different kind of data: Gains's messages had a permanent legal status whereas Gimenez's messages represented exchange in an established business relationship, which would affect the extent to which informal language could be used (see also Charles 1996, 1994 for the difference in formality between new and established business relationships). In Gains's (1999: 85, 99) study consisting of both commercial and academic email messages, the commercial emails followed the conventions of standard written business English and the general style could be described as "semi-formal tone of co-operative business colleagues", whereas academic emails represented a semi-formal to very informal conversational form of communication mimicking a form of conversation, albeit conducted in extended time and with an absent interlocutor. Gimenez (2000: 237-251) compared email messages with letters from the same company, and the analysis suggests that electronically mediated communication was affecting written business communication to some extent, showing a tendency towards a more flexible register.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the studies are, first, that the degree of formality or informality used in an email message depends on the relationship between the sender and the recipient and, second, that the nature of information conveyed affects the language used; confidential, serious information is conveyed in a more formal, cohesively written way.

In analyzing company-internal email communication including also non-native speakers, Nickerson (2000) investigated the way in which interpersonal strategies were manifested in the genre exchanging information and Alatalo (2002) studied interpersonal metadiscourse in repair work interaction. Nickerson (2000: 168-169) identified the following involved/interpersonal features: private verbs, such as *think* and *know*; first and second person pronouns; contractions and abbreviations; hedges; emphatics; and block capitals and exclamations. However, she

emphasizes the fact that these features were characteristic of one of the genres only and suggests that some other genres are likely to manifest features typical of written communication. Both investigations draw on Collot & Belmore (1996) and thus ultimately Biber's (1988) classification. Both researchers found ample evidence for what seems to suggest the existence of features of spoken language in the electronic medium. In addition, Louhiala-Salminen (2002a) found that conversational style was prevalent in the internal email messages in a multinational corporation. On the basis of Finnish business email messages, Alatalo (1996: 51-52) further concluded that 50% of them contained variants of spoken language. The choice between the spoken and the written register depended on the topic, the social distance between interlocutors, and the frequency of contacts.

On the basis of the above discussion, it is clear that email messages represent a hybrid and manifest features traditionally associated with both spoken and written language. Since the equipment has a keyboard and messages need to be written, the juxtaposition with the features of spoken language has gained precedence in the investigations. The present study follows suit and focuses on features identified as contributing to the involved spoken nature of discourse in email drawing on previous research into business email messages (Nickerson 2000, Alatalo 2002, Louhiala-Salminen 1999a) in Chapter 7. Written language features of the corpus are presented from one angle only: the use of traditional business letter discourse, once the prevalent standard in business correspondence but nowadays considered outdated in modern business communication textbooks (see Locker 1998, Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003). The two perspectives of linguistic analysis combined with the views of the writers and recipients of the messages and the focus group were used to shed light on the lexico-grammatical features of the corpus and the rationale behind their use.

3.2 POLITENESS IN BUSINESS MESSAGES

Politeness can be regarded as a social value in human interaction, including business, and its universal principles are reflected in language use. Although all societies show these principles at work, what counts as polite may differ from group to group (Gumperz 1987: xiii).

Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is based on the notion of *face*, as derived from Goffman (1967 as quoted in Brown & Levinson 1987: 61-62). Face is the public self-image, which is mutually granted in a communicative event. The components of face are defined as negative face, the want of every member of society to be unimpeded by others, and as positive face, the want of every member to be accepted and to 'belong'. Brown & Levinson (1987: 74) argue that three factors affect the degree to which an act can threaten one's positive or negative face: (1) social distance, familiarity, between the speaker and the addressee; (2) relative power of the speaker and the addressee; and (3) ranking of the imposition in a particular culture. The greater the seriousness of the face-threatening act (FTA), the more likely an individual will be to use politeness strategies to minimize the threat to the addressee, in particular if the individual has less power than the addressee, or if their social distance is great.

According to Brown & Levinson (1987; also Leech 1983), requests, for example, represent FTAs as they run contrary to the negative face wants of the addressee. Any rational individual will seek to avoid these FTAs, or will employ certain strategies to minimize the threat. As Brown & Levinson (1987) developed the strategies to apply in everyday human interaction, it can be expected that all of them will not work in contexts in which individuals' professional roles and organizational considerations are in the foreground. Therefore, it is probable that some of the strategies are used less frequently than others in, for example, business contexts. This may be especially prominent in internal communication within one company because all the participants

are on an equal footing in the sense that they all work for the same goal, the success of the company. Thus, their social distance is smaller although the relative power of the participants may be determined on the basis of hierarchy, expertise, or similar (see Suchan & Dulek 1998). The ranking of impositions within a company is affected by the job descriptions of the participants; for an outsider an imposition may seem heavy but if it is part of a staff member's job description to do it or if the staff member has a legitimate right to presuppose it done, then requests involving the imposition will be handled as routine. In those situations, by definition, the requests would not require mitigation, which would be in order if the situations were not routine or organizationally determined.

There are five strategies for doing FTAs, according to Brown & Levinson (1987: 68-71). Strategy 5 entails not doing the FTA at all. In business, however, if somebody needs to have something done, it is unlikely that he/she just drops the issue because of the FTA involved in it. This is likely to entail problems to the entire organization, as some corporate activities would not be taken care of.

In the same vein, Strategy 4, going off-record with the FTA, would run contrary to any company's goals. For any goal-oriented organization with pervasive efficiency requirements, it is important to know who is responsible for what, and thus vaguely and ambiguously worded FTAs are likely to require too much time and effort to be conducive to the company's business in the long run.

The remaining three strategies seem applicable in the business context of internal communication: going baldly on record (Strategy 1); or going on record with redressive action, by using either positive (Strategy 2) or negative politeness strategies (Strategy 3) (Brown & Levinson 1987: 69). Doing an act baldly involves doing it in the most direct and unambiguous way possible, for example, by using the imperative form, such as *Do it!* In these situations, it is agreed that urgency or efficiency is

more important than face redress, or that the threat to the addressee's face is small, as in everyday routine situations, or that the addresser is superior in power to the addressee. Redressive action, in contrast, refers to attempts to counteract the potential face damage of the FTA by doing it in such a way that indicates that no such face threat is intended. This action can take two forms: either positive or negative politeness. (Brown & Levinson 1987: 94-101.)

According to Brown & Levinson (1987: 101-128), positive politeness is directed toward the positive face of the addressee, in other words his want to have a good image and to be liked. Positive-politeness utterances are used to imply, for example, common ground, familiarity, cooperation, or sharing of wants. Claiming common ground with the addressee, for example, entails that the speaker indicates that he belongs to the same group of people who share specific goals and values. One of the strategies to achieve this is to use in-group identity markers, such as specific address forms or names. To show that the speaker and the addressee are cooperators, on the other hand, can be accomplished by including both participants in the activity, for example by using an inclusive *we*, as in *Let's do this*.

Negative politeness, in contrast, is oriented toward the negative face of the addressee, that is, his want to have his freedom of action unhindered. It is specific and focused on the particular imposition that an FTA, such as a request, effects. The strategies used to give the addressee a face-saving line of escape include, for example, hedging, apologizing, and impersonalization, as in *I've got a small question, sorry to ask you but, and it's necessary to do this*. (Brown & Levinson 1987: 129-210.)

Brown & Levinson (1987: 93-94) make a general comment about the five politeness strategies: the more *effort* the addressers expend in their face-maintaining linguistic behavior, the more they communicate their desire to save the addressee's face (original emphasis). For example, the addresser may use several means of face redress simultaneously, that is, he/she may hedge, apologize,

and use impersonalization for negative politeness. Conversely, it may be argued that the less effort the addressers expend in their face-maintaining behavior, the more pervasive the efficiency requirements of the situation or the more routine the FTAs. This notion may be expanded to today's business in which efficiency requirements seem to be pervasive; in internal communication, in particular, the needs of the organization need to be weighed against the needs of the individual, which has conventionally been focused on in politeness literature. Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003) and Rogers et al. (2004) view politeness from the perspective of an organization and an individual employee (see 3.2.3).

Naming practices in organizations are closely related to both positive and negative politeness. For example, Morand (1996: 426) investigates naming in American companies in the light of Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness theory since it is considered a salient interpersonal event. The selection of an address form with title (Mr., Mrs., Ms) and surname shows negative politeness, a ritual of avoidance or deference, whereas an address with the first name comprises a positive ritual which signals a bond and interpersonal closeness. Reciprocal first-naming is thus seen to foster more egalitarian and collegial interpersonal relations, and, according to Morand (1996: 433-434), it seems to have been gaining in popularity in the (American) corporate world.²⁶ This phenomenon of democratization is also discussed by Fairclough (1992a) in connection with his theory of discourse and change: discursive practices and social context affect each other. More formal discursive practices have been changed by the social context, by the technologization of communication media, which in turn causes changes in the social context. For example, Louhiala-Salminen's (1995) survey of the use of English among Finnish business professionals lends support for Fairclough's (1992a) arguments. It showed that there was a distinctive trend towards a more

²⁶ More egalitarian address forms have also been found of late in companies based in such hierarchic cultures as Korean (Jung, personal communication, 2005).

informal, speech-like language, personalization of communication, and democratization (see also Kuronen 2004 for changes in insurance terms and conditions). This change from traditional formal business correspondence to more informal message exchange has increased the use of first names, for example, in the salutations of fax messages, replacing titles and surnames which were traditionally employed in those of business letter discourse.

Although Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory has been criticized for having a Western bias (for a summary of the discussion, see e.g. Trosborg 1995), this point is not of relevance in the present study involving speakers from two culturally interrelated Western countries.

To complement Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory Leech's (1983: 107-110) Cost-Benefit scale and Optionality scale are also used as reference points in the present study. An imposition can be placed on the Cost-Benefit scale based on what the requester assumes to be its cost or benefit to the requestee. Following this, an imperative form may be evaluated as polite if the imposition is somehow beneficial to the requestee; for example, *Have another sandwich* is more polite than another request in which the imposition places a heavier burden on the requestee, e.g. *Peel these potatoes*. The Optionality scale also has a bearing on the degree of tact appropriate to a given situation. Illocutions are ordered according to the amount of choice which speaker allows to hearer; the more choice is allowed the more polite the expression is considered to be. In other words, the need for optionality will be the greater, the greater the cost of an imposition to addressee.

Politeness theory has been applied to written English business communication in general (e.g. Hagge & Kostelnick 1989, Shelby & Reinsch 1995, Pilegaard 1997) and requesting in business messages in particular (e.g. Yli-Jokipii 1994, Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris 1996, Sipilä 1997, Paarlahti 1998, Akar 1998). Research in requesting in internal business email messages has also gained some attention (e.g. Kankaanranta 2001, Alatalo 2002). In addition, some researchers have integrated approaches from

genre theory with politeness theory in their investigations (e.g. Akar 1998, Kong 1998, Brouwers 1998, Upton & Connor 2001). Politeness between superiors and subordinates in company-internal communication is the focus of Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003). Of course, business requesting has also been investigated in other languages than English, such as German (Neumann 1997; Lainio 2000, forthcoming) and Korean (Jung 2002). Peltonen (forthcoming) compares directives in Swedish Swedish and Finnish Swedish in a company's intranet pages.

The present brief review touches upon three types of investigations relevant for the study of the Requesting move (see Chapter 10) which is concerned with non-native language users' email requests in internal communication. First, studies comparing native and non-native business writers' usage are introduced, especially those having Finnish writers for the lack research into Swedish writers' usage. Second, studies on business requests on email are reviewed, and third, politeness in company-internal communication between superiors and subordinates is taken up.

3.2.1 COMPARISONS BETWEEN NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE BUSINESS WRITERS' POLITENESS

Some researchers (e.g. Maier 1992, Yli-Jokipii 1994, Sipilä 1997, Akar 1998, Paarlahti 1998, Kong 1998, Upton & Connor 2001,) have indicated that use by native English writers of politeness strategies in business messages is different from that of non-native writers.

In her investigation of politeness strategies in letters written by American and Japanese writers, Maier (1992) found that non-native writers used less formal and more direct language than native speakers. Maier's conclusion was that business writing by non-native speakers might be perceived unfavorably by native readers. This observation may be extended to any differences observed in established business communication practices. For example, Shelby (1998: 392) states: "The greater the perceived discrepancy between the reader's expectations and reality the

lower the perceived quality of a text; conversely, quality is seen as highest when the reader's expectations are met." Thus, if Finnish and Swedish writers use requests differently from each other, the recipient may perceive the message in a way not originally intended by the writer.

Sipilä (1997) studied both external and internal business faxes and email messages by Americans and Finns writing in English and used a framework developed by Yli-Jokipii (1994) in her study of mother-tongue requests in external business letters by Finnish and (American and British) English buyers and sellers. Yli-Jokipii (1994; see also Kuronen 1984; Lainio, forthcoming) found that Finnish business writers favor negative politeness strategies and do not use, for instance, the imperative, or indicate who should perform the action. Native English writers are more direct, and Americans even more direct than their British counterparts. Sipilä's (1997) findings show that Finnish writers seem to issue their English requests in much the same way as American writers. For example, in the distribution of the structural realizations of requests, that is, imperative, interrogative, modal-initial, and declarative, there were no major differences in internal messages. Imperative, interrogative, and modal-initial accounted for over 60% of the requests made. The discrepancy between Yli-Jokipii's (1994) and Sipilä's (1997) studies can be due to the communication channel, letters vs. faxes and email messages, and to the nature of communication, that is, external versus internal communication.

Akar (1998) investigated requesting in English and Turkish internal memos, written by Turkish speakers. She suggests that transference from the mother tongue may not be very strong on how requests are realized. For example, in internal English memos the imperative was used in 34% of all requests, whereas in internal Turkish memos the percentage was only two.

Using elicited data, Paarlahti (1998) compared use of politeness strategies between Finnish learners of English and native speakers of American English. She found that Finnish speakers used more direct strategies when expressing criticism,

but employed more indirect strategies when making requests, thus confirming Yli-Jokipii's (1994) findings. Even though Paarlahti's (1998) investigation shows clearly how Finnish learners not familiar with the business world make requests in an imaginary business situation, and even though it may even give indication of some cultural traits, the result cannot be generalized to the Finnish business community in a corporate environment.

The genre approach has been applied, for example, to a study of native and non-native writers by Upton & Connor (2001), who compared job application letters by American, Finnish, and Flemish business students and their requests; and Kong (1998), who focused on business request letters written by native English and non-native Chinese speakers.

Kong (1998) found differences between Chinese and English business request letters; the data consisted of Chinese messages written by Chinese speakers and English messages written by native English speakers and by Chinese non-native speakers. Swales's (1990) move structure analysis revealed that in spite of the same communicative purpose, the letters differed in their rhetorical structure. In the Chinese letters, a deference face system was predominant, including placing the justification before the request and avoiding FTA moves, while in native English letters, a solidarity face system was employed, with features such as introduction of the request before the justification, and frequent employment of FTA moves. When Chinese speakers wrote in English, there was interference from the Chinese request letter genre.

Upton & Connor (2001) analyzed the politeness strategies used in two moves of the job application letter, that is, Indicating desire of an interview, or requesting an interview, and Giving thanks for consideration, among American, Finnish, and Flemish writers. They operationalized politeness to allow for computer-generated counts of linguistic features related to the concept. In this way they were able to quantify their analysis and make comparisons more easily between the three writer groups. Their findings

indicate differences in the type of positive and negative strategies used: Americans relied heavily on genre specific formulaic expressions (e.g. *Thank you for your consideration*), while Belgians showed more individualism. Finns fell between the two.

The above studies seem to suggest that there may be mother tongue transference in requests expressed in English although Finnish business professionals in their company-internal fax and email communication seem to make requests in much the same way as American business professionals do (Sipilä 1997). In their external communication, however, more indirect strategies dominate (Yli-Jokipii 1994; also Paarlahti 1998). Sipilä's (1997) findings may also be influenced by the medium, as politeness in email tends to favor shorter forms than in hard-copy documents (Mulholland 1999).

3.2.2 (BUSINESS) REQUESTS ON EMAIL

In email, requesting has been shown to be a frequent function (see e.g. Sullivan 1995, Ziv 1996, Gains 1999). In Nickerson's (1999a, see also 2000) data of 200 email messages collected from a Dutch-British multinational company, the most prevalent action was exchanging information, entailing that in the initiation of an exchange requesting was a central function. Even though email communication has attracted a great deal of research interest in the past few years (see e.g. Murray 1991; Ferrara et al. 1991; Markus 1994; Herring 1996, 2004; Baron 1998, 2000; Gimenez 2000, 2005), there seem to be only a few studies which have either concentrated on (business) requests on email (Chang & Hsu 1998, Kankaanranta 2001) or touched upon them (Mulholland 1999, Nickerson 2000, Alatalo 2002).

Chang & Hsu (1998) investigated differences in request emails, not representing business discourse, written in English by Chinese learners of English and native American English speakers. Politeness in messages by Chinese writers was mainly realized through information sequencing: the request appeared late in the

message and thus the recipient had time to be prepared for it (cf. Kong 1998). The linguistic form of the request was mostly direct. In American writers' messages, in contrast, the request appeared early in the text but the linguistic form was worded more indirectly. Since the ways to express politeness are different, some confusion may be due when Chinese learners read and interpret requests by American writers, and vice versa. These findings are thus comparable to those of Maier (1992), Yli-Jokipii (1994), Sipilä (1997), Paarlahti (1998), and Akar (1998).

In her discussion of politeness in email Mulholland (1999) concludes that email users seem to avoid longer phrases to show politeness (such as *We would be grateful if you could*) and prefer linguistic realizations such as *Please do this*, possibly for reasons of brevity. Her native-speaker respondents, who were employed at an Australian university, also said that they were conscious of uncertainty in politeness conventions but were not clear if it was technologically driven or personally designed. This individuality of email texts, according to Mulholland (1999: 74), is further enhanced since training in best practices is often lacking - in contrast to the training most people receive for business letter writing. Nickerson (2000: 175) confirms Mulholland's observation that writers incorporate politeness strategies into their communication despite the preference for minimalism in email. The most commonly used realization of request in her data was *Please* together with the imperative.

As is pointed out by Mulholland (1999), brevity may be one of the reasons for short politeness markers. Another may be the involved, informal, and conversational style often invoked in email and discussed by, for instance, Munter et al. (2003), Alatalo (2002), Crystal (2001), Nickerson (2000), Baron (1998, 2000), Gimenez (2000), Rice (1997), and Collot & Belmore (1996).

3.2.3 POLITENESS IN COMPANY-INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Investigations into politeness in company-internal communication include Kankaanranta (2001) and Alatalo (2002) focusing on email requests, Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003) reconceptualizing politeness in subordinate-to-superior reporting, and Rogers et al. (2004) suggesting a decision-making framework associating textual alternatives with four expectations of subordinate reporting. Kankaanranta (2001) found that the majority of the requests in company-internal email messages written by Finnish and Swedish writers in English were realized using the imperative and interrogative and Alatalo (2002: 265) found that requests by both native and non-native writers were more indirect in the messages in which repair work was done than in messages whose primary communicative purpose was requesting.

Even though Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003) and Rogers et al. (2004) do not directly address requesting, they approach politeness from a new angle particularly suited for the present study on internal communication, and therefore deserve to be introduced. Particularly interesting is Rogers & Lee-Wong's (2003) study based on 1,592 Asian and American MBA students' responses to two workplace scenarios involving a subordinate commenting on the superior's work and on authentic email communication between a supervisor and six international project teams. Drawing on the analysis of politeness strategies used in the subordinates' messages, Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003) develop a framework involving three relational needs emphasized in politeness literature, that is, deference, non-imposition, and solidarity which are juxtaposed with three organizational needs involving expectations for personal performance such as confidence, direction, and individuality. The framework suggests that subordinate reporting involves, for example, displaying appropriate deference to the superior but, at the same time, displaying a sufficient level of personal confidence, especially in the areas of the subordinate's expertise. According to the framework,

successful reporting depends on the subordinate's ability to negotiate the dynamic interplay between the relational and organizational needs. This investigation contributes to the understanding of politeness in organizational contexts, where the well-being of the organization must be measured against an individual's face needs. Rogers et al. (2004) also show cultural differences in this respect: Asian MBA students pay more attention to relational needs and less to organizational needs; the reverse is true of American students. In other words, the Asian students used negative politeness strategies when criticizing their superiors while the American students exhibited more direct criticism exhibiting confidence and individuality.

To summarize, the studies discussed above suggest that in comparison to native speakers non-native speakers of English often present some differences in the way requests and politeness are realized in business contexts. Thus, it seems that when writing English business texts, traces of the writer's mother tongue will likely remain in the text as is pointed out by Connor (1996: 135-143; see also Sajavaara 1999 for transference in second language acquisition) but not necessarily (see Akar 1998). By the same token, email technology seems to exercise a shortening effect on the language used (Mulholland 1999). In addition, the nature of internal communication seems to challenge the traditional relational needs with an introduction of organizational considerations that need to be negotiated in the realization of an FTA. This may entail that when organizational needs are considered more important, the traditional relational needs lose force and the linguistic realizations of FTAs become less mitigated.

For studies like the present one, the above considerations about politeness in messages related to non-native speakers of English, the medium of email, and company-internal communication are relevant. The characteristics of email and internal communication were shared by all the messages in the corpus but the writers represented two non-native groups: Finns and Swedes.

From the viewpoint of the writers, the conclusion that non-native speakers may exhibit features of their mother tongue in their English texts could be expanded to include characteristic cultural traits such as 'Finnish directness' or 'Swedish discussion-orientation' as suggested by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey respondents. To investigate these notions, Finnish and Swedish writers' requests were compared in terms of their directness and the nature of their impositions.

4 DATA AND METHODS

The present study is a qualitative case study using a variety of data and methods in meeting its aims specified in 1.1. Some simple quantitative analysis is also used to illustrate specific characteristics of the corpus.

According to Maykut & Morehouse (1994: 43-44), qualitative research is exploratory and descriptive in the sense that it aims at discovering what can be learned about the phenomenon of interest; in this study the phenomenon to be studied is internal English email communication by non-native speakers of the language. What is considered important has not been predetermined in the research design, which entails that neither the data nor the methods were considered given in the early stages of the study; certain leads have emerged during the process of the study.

Of course, there were initial areas of interest such as possible differences in the level of politeness in email requests between Finnish and Swedish corporate writers working for the same company, which also produced a pilot study on the topic (see Kankaanranta 2001). However, the broadening of the inquiry became necessary to account for different kinds of requests in different types of messages. A thorough examination of the patterns in the data resulted in the building up of relatively homogenous categories to ease the analysis of requests. What emerged from that endeavor, however, was a shift of the focus of the inquiry from politeness in email requests to the nature of email genres in general. It also led to the use of ethnographic data and methods to account for the practitioners' views of their communication.

Since the data analysis has been inductive and ongoing, it has also contributed to the evolution of more specific questions and aims such as the one related to the significance of certain moves (e.g. Salutation) in the data (see 1.1). In addition, the initial area of research interest, i.e. politeness in email requests, has remained in the design, and during the process it has also been

further motivated by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey in the same company, in which both the Finnish and Swedish respondents reported on differences in each other's communication styles. In spite of some comparison between messages written by Finns and Swedes respectively, in contrast to Louhiala-Salminen's work, this study is not a contrastive or intercultural analysis of language use.

This section discusses the data and methodology in view of the theoretical framework presented in Chapters 2 and 3.

4.1 DATA

Reflecting the aims and the theoretical framework of the present study a variety of data was used. Specifically, the data comprised a sample of email messages collected from eight Stora Enso employees in 2000-2001, hereafter referred to as *informants*, two questionnaires²⁷ administered to the informants, an interview with one of them, and a focus group survey²⁸ among international business practitioners. In addition, information about the company and its employees was obtained from literary sources (e.g. <http://www.storaenso.com>, Louhiala-Salminen 2002b). Also, business communication textbooks were consulted for the latest conventions of English language use (Locker 1998, Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003). The choice of the three books was guided by practical reasons. First, Kitty Locker's book *Business and Administrative Communication* was chosen since the author is a well-known business communication teacher and researcher and a recipient of the Outstanding Researcher Award of the Association for Business Communication²⁹ in 1992. Second, Bovée et al. (2003) was written by experienced business communication textbook authors, and in 2003 when it was chosen (and used) as data, it had just come out.

27 See Appendices 2 and 3.

28 See Appendix 4.

29 See <http://www.businesscommunication.org/>.

Finally, Munter (2003), written by a renowned business communication teacher, is set reading at the Helsinki School of Economics, the leading business school in Finland.

In what follows, the informants and the email corpus collected from them are introduced before the presentation of the other data sources.

4.1.1 EMAIL MESSAGES

The eight informants submitted both their incoming and outgoing email boxes for the research including not only internal English messages but also those written in Finnish, Swedish, or any other language, and those addressed to outsiders. This pool of messages was divided into two: the primary corpus consisting of 282 internal English messages and the secondary corpus consisting of the rest of the messages.

Of the eight informants five were Finns and three were Swedes; Finns contributed messages over seven weeks and Swedes over six weeks. Three Finns and two Swedes submitted their messages collected over a week, two Finns submitted their messages collected over two weeks, and one Swedish informant submitted messages twice collected at different times (once over a week in 2000 and another time over three weeks in 2001). Because of the different lengths of the collection periods, the distribution of the messages written by Finns and Swedes in the primary corpus was practically the same. Some mailboxes were delivered electronically and others in hard copy. Four of the informants said that they submitted 100% of the messages in their mailbox; two of them submitted 75%-100%, and two submitted only 50-75% for reasons of confidentiality.³⁰ Table 3 introduces some background data on the eight informants.³¹

30 See Appendix 1 for details of the length and description of the collection period.

31 For reasons of confidentiality, all names are pseudonyms.

TABLE 3. Pseudonym, mother tongue, sex, age, position, corporate or local function, and the country of location of the informants.

Pseudonym	Mother tongue F(innish)/ S(wedish)	Sex	Age	Position	Corporate or local function F(inland)/ S(weden)/ G(ermany)
HENRIK	S	M	mid 40s	Vice President (VP)	Corporate S
KAUKO	F	M	mid 40s	Technical Manager	Local F
ERJA	F	F	late 20s	Project Manager	Corporate F
HANNU	F	M	30s	Development Manager	Corporate F
BERIT	S	F	50s	Communication specialist	Corporate S
SEPPO	F	M	mid 30s	Communication specialist	Corporate G
LEENA	F	F	30s	Secretary/Assistant to VP	Corporate F
MONICA	S	F	mid 20s	Secretary/Assistant to local mill manager	Local S

As Table 3 shows, there was an even number of male and female informants and their ages ranged from the mid-twenties to the fifties. The informants also represented different organizational positions: Vice President, managerial, specialist and office staff. Most of the informants worked at the corporate level, for instance, in the headquarters, and two represented local level functions, that is, local paper mill personnel. The informants thus represented different ages, sexes, organizational positions, and both local and corporate functions; in this way, the sample reflected email communication by different kinds of employees. It was believed that such a diverse group of informants would contribute to the diversity of their communication partners and thus increase the variability of the sample.

The *primary data* for the analysis consisted of 282 internal English messages written by 103 Finnish and Swedish corporate employees; they were addressed to other, mostly Finnish and

Swedish, corporate employees.³² As mentioned above, the corpus was collected from the entire message pool found in the mailboxes of the eight informants. One third of the messages were written by the eight informants, and the rest represented the informants' Finnish and Swedish communication partners or other Finns and Swedes whose messages were found in the message chains. The fact that the chains are created by the *Reply* and *Forwarding* functions of the email system by adding the latest contribution to the previous transmission entails that the informants did not necessarily know all the people whose messages they found in the them. The length of the chains varied. Some were short consisting of only two messages, while others were long consisting of as many as ten messages. Also varied were the number of participants involved in any one chain. For example, the number of participants could be only two, but a larger number of people were also involved in the chains, such individuals for whom the content of the message had some particular importance.

Although the same message might appear more than once in the data because of the Reply and Forwarding functions, only one sample was included in the primary corpus. However, to illustrate the versatility of the medium, the different 'editions' of the message were also accounted for (see e.g. 5.4, 6.1.2, 8.4).

32 The mailboxes of the informants were dominated by messages written by Finns and Swedes. Of the internal English messages, less than 10% were written by people with other nationalities. These messages were eliminated from the primary corpus, and only the ones written by Finns and Swedes were included. The great majority of the recipients of the messages selected for the primary corpus were also Finns and Swedes, although other nationalities, such as Portuguese, Chinese, Dutch, and German, were also represented. Native English speakers featured as single recipients of the messages seven times, i.e. 2.5% of the messages were addressed to them. The great majority of the messages thus represented non-native English communication. In most cases the mother tongue of the recipients (and writers) was confirmed by asking the informants themselves. When the informant did not know, it had to be determined on the basis of the language they used in their messages to Finnish versus Swedish recipients, i.e. if Finnish was used between two persons, the mother tongue was identified as Finnish, and if Swedish was used, the mother tongue was identified as Swedish.

Table 4 presents the number of Finnish and Swedish writers and the number of the messages written by them as well as the distribution between men and women.

TABLE 4 . Distribution of messages and writers according to the mother tongue and sex.

	In total	Messages		In total	Writers	
		By men	By women		Male	Female
Finnish	138	68	70	52	22	30
Swedish	144	72	72	51	27	24
Total	282	140	142	103	49	54

As Table 4 shows, the corpus was relatively well balanced in terms of the number of messages written by the Finns and the Swedes, and by male and female writers. In addition, the number of the Finnish and Swedish writers was practically the same (52 and 51 respectively). However, some gender bias could be detected in the corpus as the female writers outnumbered the males. As the difference was rather small and the number of the messages written by men and women was still practically the same, no attempt to balance the corpus in this respect was made. Related to this, it should be noted that for this study the messages written by men and women were not distinguished because it was not relevant for the investigation. The distribution of the messages between the men and the women in Table 4 is presented only to show that the corpus was balanced in this respect.

The messages in the primary corpus were numbered consecutively from 1 to 282 in the following way: 1-114 (Henrik 2001), 115-144 (Henrik 2000), 145-169 (Seppo), 170-190 (Leena), 191-213 (Erja), 214-227 (Hannu), 228-245 (Monica), 246-257 (Kauko), and 258-282 (Berit). The mother tongue of the writer was indicated by letters F(innish) and S(wedish). Thus, message S198 comes from Erja's mailbox and was written by a Swede and message F268 comes from Berit's mailbox and was written by a Finn.

The *secondary corpus* for the investigation provided the immediate context for the primary corpus. It consisted of all non-primary email messages found in the informants' mailboxes. It contained internal messages written in Finnish and Swedish and internal messages written in English (or other languages) by speakers of other languages than Finnish and Swedish, and external messages written primarily in English, Finnish, and Swedish. The secondary corpus was used, for example, to describe the chaining of messages.

Since some of the messages in the secondary corpus are referenced a few times in this study, the messages have their own numbering system incorporating the mailbox owner and the language in and the number of the relevant message. The mailbox owners were indicated by using abbreviations consisting of the first two letters of their names; thus, *he* stands for Henrik, *se* for Seppo, etc. The language of the message was indicated with a lower case *f*, *s*, or *e* standing for Finnish, Swedish, and English. Thus, a message labeled *hes128/6* comes from Henrik's mailbox and was written in Swedish.

4.1.2 DATA OTHER THAN EMAIL

The data for the study other than email comprised two email questionnaires to the informants, an interview with one of them, a focus group survey involving international business practitioners, and some literary sources. The two email questionnaires to the informants, (a)³³ and (b)³⁴, provided information about

- the typicality of the collection period and the informants' communication partners such as their organizational position and mother tongue (Questionnaire a)

33 See Appendix 2.

34 See Appendix 3.

- the informants' views of the messages they had written and/or received in terms of their communicative purposes, the action these messages triggered, the names of the messages, typicality of the language used in the messages, and the alternative media that could have been used to deliver them (Questionnaire b)

All eight informants returned Questionnaire (a), but Questionnaire (b), which was administered in late 2002, was only returned by five informants: one of the informants had resigned, another was on maternity leave at the time, and a third one did not return the questionnaire in spite of reminders. The messages presented to the five informants were either written or received by them, but the number of messages presented to each informant varied. In total, the informants gave their views of 16 messages.

The interview with one of the informants (Erja) was carried out to obtain background information about the use of email in the company. On the one hand, the topics dealt with in the interview centered on Erja's observations about email use and English email messages in general and on the other hand, they focused on her own use of email, her communication partners, and the content of her messages.

The focus group survey was used to investigate the perceptions of nine international business practitioners about three internal email messages. In total, the comments on 27 messages were thus collected. The questions that the focus group members answered were basically the same as those presented to the informants in Questionnaire (b). In addition, the focus group members were asked if there was anything unfamiliar, surprising, or not typical in the messages. The focus group members represented one third of the students enrolled in an intensive pre-MBA (Master of Business Administration) program at the University of Michigan in summer 2002 to prepare them for MBA studies at the Business

School.³⁵ They were all non-native speakers of English whose mother tongues were Japanese (3), Chinese (3), Korean (2), and Portuguese (1), and they were all managers using both email and English for work purposes. Most of them were in their early thirties and their employers were mostly private corporations, but also a state-owned company, a small software start-up, and one of the major stock exchanges in the world were represented. The business experience of the members ranged from four to ten years.

Literary sources used as data in the present study included Stora Enso's web pages, Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b)³⁶ survey of communication and language use carried out in Stora Enso (and Nordea), and three modern business communication textbooks, which were consulted for the latest conventions of language use for business purposes (Locker 1998, Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003). Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey provides background information about the corporate and social context of writing in Stora Enso. The survey was targeted at Finnish and Swedish office employees and focused on communication practices, use of media and languages, and Finnish and Swedish respondents' beliefs and attitudes about their own and each other's communication styles.

Different data discussed above was used to meet the aims of the study as follows:

35 The selection process for the school is characterized as highly competitive and it emphasizes the applicant's demonstrated and potential abilities as a student, manager, and leader. More than 95% of accepted students also have two or more years of work experience. (<http://www.bus.umich.edu/Admissions/Mba/>.)

36 The questionnaire was addressed to 520 Stora Enso employees. The response rate was only 33% but Louhiala-Salminen (2002b: 9) explains it: "Although the Stora Enso response rate of 33% cannot be regarded as fully satisfactory, the rates were, however, accepted for the purposes of this study, since the aim was to look for general trends among the views of the employees, not for exact information on the distribution of the population's views."

TABLE 5. Data used to meet the aims of the study.

Aim No	Focus	Data used
1	Organizational context of genres	Email corpus (primary + secondary) Questionnaires (a) and (b) to informants Interview with one informant Focus group survey Stora Enso web pages Communication survey in Stora Enso (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b)
2	Communicative purpose of and action in genres	Email corpus (primary + secondary) Questionnaire (b) to informants Focus group survey
3	Discourse features of genres	Email corpus (primary + secondary) Questionnaire (b) to informants Interview with one informant Focus group survey Business communication textbooks
4	Salutations, Closings, Signatures	Email corpus (114 primary messages from Henrik) Questionnaire (a) to informants Interview with one informant
5	Requests	Email corpus (114 primary messages from Henrik) Questionnaire (b) to informants Interview with one informant Communication survey in Stora Enso (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b)

As shown in Table 5, a minimum of three data sources was used to meet each aim of the study. Although messages from the primary corpus were used in meeting each of the five aims, the whole corpus of 282 messages was not used all through the study. While it was used to meet the first three aims relating to the nature of genres in general, the corpus to meet the last two aims focusing on individual moves only used 114 primary messages as its data, i.e. Henrik's mailbox collected over three weeks.

4.2 METHODS

The methods which were used in the analysis of the data and which emerged from the theoretical frameworks and review of literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3 are discussed after the description of the data collection methods.

4.1.3 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Since the present study was concerned with authentic workplace communication, the methods of data collection reflected this feature and the qualitative nature of the inquiry. Following Maykut & Morehouse 1994: 45, who emphasize the importance of data collection in the natural setting inherent for qualitative research, the email corpus was collected with the help of an insider in the company, i.e. a contact person. Background data about the corpus was collected from the mailbox owners (i.e. the informants), and one of them was also interviewed.

The contact person in Stora Enso assisted in the collection of the email data by suggesting people who might be willing to submit their email boxes for research purposes, and they were then subsequently contacted. Although the data collection cannot be characterized as systematic, but voluntary, it is not unusual in business communication research since access to authentic data from day-to-day corporate operations continues to be difficult.

A purposive sample, as emphasized in qualitative research by Maykut & Morehouse (1994: 45), to the effect that each participant will expand the variability of the sample, was targeted in this study, and for this reason some mailboxes had to be rejected because the boxes were biased in one way or another. For example, one owner only submitted messages she had received from others, and another those written by herself.

Although the primary corpus was not large, this drawback was attenuated by three factors: first, the data was collected from practitioners on all corporate levels; second, it comprised

practically the same number of messages written by Finns and Swedes; and third, a variety of methods was used to analyze it (see 4.2.2). In other words, since this study aimed at the depth of the analysis rather than the scope, the sample was considered sufficient.

The questionnaires providing information about the background of the informants and their views on some of the messages were limited in their ability to shed light on the context in which the messages were produced and used. However, the brevity of the questionnaires was due to a considered decision rather than an oversight. The present researcher did not feel comfortable in burdening the informants with lengthy questionnaires since the compilation and collection of the emails messages for the research was already a time-consuming task for them. For the same reason, only one interview was arranged to gain background information about email use in the company.

The selection of the focus group members was not conducted using a systematic method since the participation was voluntary for the students enrolled in a pre-MBA program at the University of Michigan; the nine members represented one third of the students. Although their number was small, it was attenuated by the fact that each member gave their views on three messages, which meant that in effect there were 27 views of the messages by the nine members. Since the rationale for the use of a focus group was to compare their views with those of Finnish and Swedish non-native business practitioners, who gave their views of 16 messages, the data was considered sufficient.

4.2.2 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

In the study, genre analysis was used to investigate email messages in their context of production and use. The methodology allows for a detailed linguistic analysis of genre exemplars, while it simultaneously accounts for the social purposes in the corporate environment in which the messages are embedded by drawing

on the users' own views and also the overall context affecting genre use (see Miller 1984, Swales 1990, Fairclough 1992a, Yates & Orlikowski 1992, Bhatia 1993). In the study of discourse, genre approaches are versatile as they provide the researcher with a tool kit including the methodology and the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2.

The way in which the corpus-based textual analysis was combined with triangulated data provided by questionnaires, an interview, the communication survey (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b), and other literary data about the company (www.storaenso.com) aimed at a Geertzian thick analysis (Geertz 1973; for a summary of the methods favored in different branches of genre study, see Yunick 1997: 325 and Hyon 1996: 696). In other words, this study aimed at an analysis of language use grounded in the knowledge of the relevant social purposes within which the texts were embedded rather than a surface-level formal analysis of the text in the messages.

As discussed in Chapter 2, genre approaches have been applied successfully to the study of goal-oriented communication as social action in business settings (Bhatia 1993, Akar 1998, Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999, Rogers 2000). They have also been applied in investigations of internal email messages with a focus on native-speaker discourse (Yates & Orlikowski 1992, 2000; Orlikowski & Yates 1994) but also on those having both native and non-native participants (see e.g. Nickerson 2000, Louhiala-Salminen 1999b for similar research settings).

The genre analysis in the present study was performed by drawing on Bhatia's (1993: 22-36) framework for the study of unfamiliar genres. It accounts for both the discourse and context of the genres. The linguistic analysis of the primary corpus focused on the discourse on three separate levels: first, on the lexicogrammatical features and their frequency; second, on the rationale behind such features; and third, on the cognitive structure of the prospective genres by focusing on the moves in them. The specific frameworks and models used to investigate the discourse on these

three levels can be found from Table 6. For example, in addition to the analysis of the moves, the analysis of discourse was performed by comparing it to features of Involvement (Chafe 1982) and to recommended usage in business communication textbooks (Locker 1998, Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003).

The methods and models used in the analysis of data are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Methods/models focusing on text and context used to meet the aims of the study.

Aim No	Focus	Methods/models focusing on text	Methods/models focusing on context
1	Organizational context of genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairclough's (1992a) manifest intertextuality • Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) Competing Values Model • Johnson & Bartlett's (1999) concept of International Business English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework • Questionnaires (a) and (b) • Interview with one informant • Focus group survey
2	Communicative purpose and action of genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire (b) • Focus group survey
3	Discourse features of genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhatia's linguistic analysis • Fairclough's (1992a) manifest intertextuality • Fairclough's (1992a) constitutive intertextuality • Involvement (Chafe 1982) • Comparison to business communication textbooks (Locker 1998, Bovée et al, 2003, Munter 2003) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire (b) • Interview with one informant • Focus group survey
4	Salutations, Closing, Signatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire (a) • Interview with one informant
5	Requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire (b) • Interview with one informant

While the explanation of the linguistic analysis is detailed in Bhatia's (1993) framework, that of the analysis of context remains on a more general level. Bhatia (1993) maintains that it involves knowledge of the discourse community, their conventions, goals, practices, and beliefs as well as the situational and institutional contexts, but he does not specify the tools to perform the analysis. To situate the email messages in their organizational context, the present study used ethnographic methods such as questionnaires to the informants, an interview with one of them, and a focus group of business practitioners. In addition, a number of frameworks and models were used to analyze the corpus in the corporate context such as Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework, focusing on the context, and Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) Competing Values Model, Fairclough's (1992a) notion of intertextuality, and Johnson & Bartlett's (1999) concept of International Business English, focusing on the text.

Finally, triangulation was employed to illustrate the phenomenon researched from different perspectives. In this way triangulation contributed to the trustworthiness of the study since the consistency of outcomes could be put to test (see e.g. Patton 2002: 247–251). For instance, data triangulation was used to meet all five aims of the study. Three data sources, for example, were used to meet aim 2, to identify the communicative purposes of and action in the messages: the email corpus, Questionnaire (b) to the informants, and the focus group survey (see Table 5 in 4.1.2). In the questionnaire, two questions were used to shed light on the purpose and action: one asking about the purpose specifically and another asking about the reaction to the message, i.e. what the informant did/would have done on receipt of the message.

In addition to data triangulation, a second evaluator, another genre analyst, provided independent analysis about the purposes and moves of some messages. Thus, the communicative purposes were identified by two genre analysts (the author and one other)

and the identification of the moves was performed by means of linguistic analysis by the same two analysts.

Further, the identification of the features contributing to the spoken and/or written quality of the messages (see 7.1 and 7.2) was performed by means of linguistic analysis, on the one hand, and by asking the informants to comment, on the other. In this way, the outcomes from the linguistic analysis could be tested against the informants' choices of telephone, fax, internal mail, etc. representing the traditional spoken and written media. Looking at these data from independent vantage points was intended to enhance the credibility of the outcomes and thus reduce the "skepticism that greets singular methods, lone researchers, and single-perspective interpretations" (Patton 2002: 556). Still, there is no denying of the fact that the qualitative researcher is a lonely instrument of data analysis and is forced to rely on his/her own interpretation skills in the particular context. No matter how good those skills may be, they are not omnipotent: when something is in clear light, something else is left in shadow.

5 SHARED CONTEXTUAL FEATURES OF INTERNAL ENGLISH EMAIL MESSAGES

This chapter discusses the shared contextual features of the internal email corpus and contributes to the first aim of the study. It places Stora Enso's internal email communication and email messages into a wider operational context to explore the world in which the textual products were produced and used. The discussion is based on the email corpus, the two questionnaires administered to the informants, an interview with one of them, the focus group survey, Stora Enso's web pages, and Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) language and communication survey in the company.

The chapter is divided into five sections and a summary. The first section positions the email messages of the primary corpus as a form of internal written communication into the corporate context with the help of Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework introduced in 2.1.1. Second, email communication is discussed from the point of view of the Stora Enso discourse community (see Swales 1990) using it for intercommunication among its members. Third, the chapter discusses the content of the messages, drawing on Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993) and Suchan & Dulek (1998), from the viewpoint of how the content contributes to the running of the company and ultimately to operationalizing its mission (see also Fairclough 1992a). Fourth, the chapter deals with the communication medium and its effects on the layout and delivery of the messages. As the physical layout is not determined by the system alone, the discussion of the writer's choices continues later in 8.2, when the framing moves are presented, and in Chapter 7 which focuses on the medium's likely effects on linguistic choices. Fifth, the present chapter deals with the code of the messages,

that is, lingua franca English or, more specifically, Business English Lingua Franca (BELF). First, the nature of BELF is in focus in the light of research into International Business English (IBE) used as the lingua franca in oral business situations (Johnson & Bartlett 1999), and second, the use of the mother tongues of the writers, i.e. Finnish and Swedish, in the otherwise English messages. The final section of the chapter summarizes the findings and presents support for the existence of one email genre.

5.1 CORPORATE CONTEXT OF E-WRITING IN STORA ENSO

As was discussed in 2.1.1, Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework consists of three elements interacting with each other: a company's core statements of mission, vision, and goals define why the company exists and what it hopes to do; the four connecting subsystems of *task*, *structure*, *control*, and *technology* support and realize the core statements and are superimposed over traditional job roles; and the external environment surrounds the overall organizational system consisting of the core statements and the subsystems (see Figure 1 in 2.1.1).

The email corpus of the present study was examined as produced and used by the Stora Enso discourse community and as against the forces at play in the organizational system itself and in its surrounding environment. This was accomplished by concentrating on three issues: first, the company's core statements; second, the interaction of the organizational subsystems with various job roles; and third, the influence of the environmental factors on this organizational system. In this way, an introduction to the organizational interactions that shaped the nature of e-writing in the company is complemented by the investigation of the individual email messages (see Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). Below, the framework introduced by Suchan & Dulek (1998) is

applied to Stora Enso's corporate context to the extent it is possible in light of the information available.

5.1.1 CORE STATEMENTS OF MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Stora Enso's existence as a business enterprise is based on, and guided by, its core statements. Since the company does not give a statement of goals at all but introduces its values instead, this study regarded the three statements of mission, vision, and values as the company's core statements. The mission statement expresses the reason for the company's existence, the vision statement describes its future goals and aspirations, and the value statement specifies its way of doing business. By definition, the operations of the company are based on these core statements, and in this way they represent the 'core' of the company.

Stora Enso defines its mission, vision, and values as follows:

Mission

We promote communication and well-being of people by turning renewable fibre into paper, packaging and processed wood products.

Vision

We will be the leading forest products company in the world.

- We take the lead in developing the industry.
- Customers choose us for the value we create for them.
- We attract investors for the value we create.
- Our employees are proud to work with us.
- We are an attractive partner for our suppliers.

Values

- Customer focus – We are the customers' first choice.
- Performance – We deliver results.
- Responsibility – We comply with principles of sustainable development.
- Emphasis on people – Motivated people create success.
- Focus on future – We take the first step.
(http://www.storaenso.com/CDAvgn/main/0,,1_-1925-1007-,00.html)

In spite of the fairly high level of abstraction of the statements, the 'core' of the company could be identified. The mission tells the readers that Stora Enso is on the market to supply paper and related products. The vision describes the company's goals: as one of the leading forest companies in the world, Stora Enso aims to take the lead by creating value for both the customer and the investor with the help of motivated personnel and committed suppliers. The values of the company are the least transparent and give the reader a great deal of scope in the interpretation.

As the statements stand in the center of the company's operations, all the activities by Stora Enso staff members should ultimately serve them. To simplify, every business email message exchanged by the staff members can be regarded as contributing to the achievement of the mission and vision in the spirit of the value statement. As the corpus of the study only consisted of internal messages, it entails, by definition, that the messages were not used to directly operationalize the mission and vision, that is, to sell the company's products. Rather, the internal messages were used to make the selling possible.

5.1.2 ORGANIZATIONAL SUBSYSTEMS

The core statements of the company are supported by, and realized through, the four internal subsystems of task, structure, control, and technology existing in the organization. According to Suchan & Dulek (1998), the four subsystems are superimposed over the job roles of Executive, Manager, Staff, and Specialist (see Figure 1 in 2.1.1) and written communication in the company is influenced by them in a number of ways. The corporate knowledge needed to fulfill the job role of the Executive is broad while the Specialist's expertise is of focused, narrow nature and goes deep.

The tasks of the executive or managerial jobs require adaptation to new and unexpected situations, whereas those occupying either staff or specialist jobs have more predictable requirements involving particular steps or procedures. In other

words, some jobs involve higher uncertainty than others (Suchan & Dulek 1998). The informants of the study represented all four job roles:³⁷ Henrik was a Vice President representing an executive level job, Kauko a technical manager at a local mill, Erja held a project manager's position in the headquarters; Hannu was a development manager responsible for IT related issues in the headquarters; Berit and Seppo were communication specialists; and Leena and Monica were secretaries/assistants having staff positions (see Table 3 in 4.1.1). Hence, the job roles of the informants suggested that high uncertainty jobs were represented by four informants, Henrik, Kauko, Erja, and Hannu, and low uncertainty jobs by another four informants, Berit, Seppo, Leena, and Monica. Similarly, it could be argued that the corporate knowledge required of the first four informants was broader than that required of the rest of them.

The interaction between the job role and the subsystem of task was investigated by looking into the subject lines of each informant's messages in the primary corpus. The assumption was that the messages of the employees holding high and low uncertainty jobs would exhibit variety. In other words, the more varied the subject lines of the messages the more varied the job, and the wider the corporate knowledge needed. Thus, the executive and the managers would handle a wider variety of subjects in their messages than the specialists or the staff members. The messages written and received by the informants during five days³⁸ were selected, and the messages as well as the number of different subject lines in them were counted. The results are presented in Table 7.

37 The job roles were determined on the basis of the informants' job titles in the company.

38 Henrik, Hannu, and Seppo submitted messages over more than five working days for the present study but only the messages sent and received over that period were selected for this inquiry.

TABLE 7. The relationship between the informants' job roles and the variety of the subject lines in their messages.

Job role	Informant	No of messages	No of messages with different subject lines	% of messages with different subject lines
Executive	Henrik	34	30	88%
Manager	Kauko	12	11	92%
Manager	Erja	20	12	60%
Manager	Hannu	7	4	57%
Specialist	Berit	19	3	16%
Specialist	Seppo	12	8	67%
Staff	Leena	21	10	47%
Staff	Monica	12	9	75%

As Table 7 shows, the findings do not seem to support the idea of the job role having an effect on the variety of tasks and the breadth of corporate knowledge. Although clearly over half of the messages of the higher uncertainty level jobs, i.e. those of Henrik, Kauko, Erja, and Hannu had different subject lines and consequently seemed to support the idea of broad corporate knowledge, the subject lines of the messages of the staff members and one of the specialists also exhibited variation. Only Berit's subject lines were centered around a couple of topics, which was expected from a specialist's messages.

When, however, the subject lines were viewed from a higher level of abstraction, the general picture changed. For example, all of Seppo's subject lines centered around communication-related topics, which was where his expertise lied. Further, although Leena's messages had different subject lines, they centered around meeting arrangements and a specific survey, and Monica's messages also dealt with meetings and travel arrangements of her superiors. The subject lines in Henrik's and Kauko's messages were different from those of Erja and Hannu in spite of the fact that Kauko, Erja, and Hannu held managerial level jobs. It seemed that the corporate knowledge required of Henrik and Kauko was broader than that required of Erja and Hannu, whose job descriptions, on the basis of the subject lines, resembled those of

the specialists, i.e. the messages centered around a few topics. In spite of the same job title (manager), different amounts of corporate knowledge seemed to be involved in the managerial job in a local mill (Kauko) and those in the headquarters with defined areas of responsibility such as 'projects' (Erja) and 'development' (Hannu).

Although the subject line did not necessarily say much about the nature of the task itself, it still gave an indication of the knowledge and expertise needed in the job and also of the focus of the tasks involved. It may thus be concluded that in their email messages the executive and local managerial staff confronted a wide variety of subjects and were expected to handle related tasks reflecting the unpredictable nature of their jobs, whereas the *scope* of the subjects and related tasks handled by the managers on the corporate level, specialists, and staff were more limited reflecting the more predictable nature of their tasks. The nature of tasks is further explored in Chapter 6 where the focus is on the purposes of the messages. It must be remembered, though, that the above inquiry only related to the internal messages written in English and cannot thus be generalized to cover all the internal messages in the informants' mailboxes.

Through the interaction between the job roles and Subsystem # 2, organizational structure, corporate employees coordinate tasks to operationalize the core statements of the company (Suchan & Dulek 1998). It can be suggested that the different hierarchical levels of the organization are reflected, to an extent, in the types of messages dominant in the informants' mailboxes. It must be pointed out, however, that only some features of the organizational structure were detected through the email questionnaires to the informants, where they identified their frequent communication partners as superiors, subordinates, or colleagues (see Appendix 2). It was not possible to ascertain the organizational ties of all the writers and recipients because many of the messages were embedded in chains and neither the sender nor the recipient of the message was the informant.

The messages of Henrik and Kauko, in particular, representing the executive and managerial level jobs, had higher percentages of certain types of messages than other informants. The three following types dominated in Henrik's and Kauko's messages: their incoming mailbox consisted of message exchanges with customers that their subordinates or team members had forwarded to them for information and/or for comments. They also received clearly more attachments than the other informants, including agendas, minutes, visit reports, regular updates about the unit's performance, etc. Their outgoing mailbox, on the other hand, had a number of messages in which they assigned and delegated tasks to their team members. The types of messages showed that they managed and coordinated tasks to make the achievement of the core statements possible. None of these message types could be found in such high numbers in the messages of the communication specialists or secretary/assistants. Neither could they be found in Erja's or Hannu's mailboxes although their job title, manager, would thus suggest. This seems to support the findings related to the tasks they handled discussed above. Finally, a dominant feature in the whole corpus independent of the job role of the writer or the recipient of the message was the use of first names in the salutations and signatures. The naming practices seemed to contribute to an egalitarian organization structure in which overt signs to indicate the hierarchical level of the writer/recipient were rare (for more, see Chapter 9).

Subsystem # 3, control, which is closely linked with organizational structure, ascertains that corporate employees can perform their tasks and that they get rewarded (Suchan & Dulek 1998). On the basis of the available information, the subsystem of control remained somewhat vague although references to its existence could be found from, for instance, messages focusing on the budget, which is one of the control mechanisms determining a business unit's operations.

The interaction of subsystem # 4, technology, with the job roles was limited to the use of email technology in the present

study. As Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 20) survey indicated, email accounted for almost 25% of the time spent on various communication media/situations in the company; no major differences between the job roles of her respondents surfaced. The email technology in Stora Enso is ubiquitous; it connects all office personnel amounting to 27,000 of the total of 44,000 employees, which means that they can all get in touch with their colleagues in the company without effort: only the name of the recipient is needed for the *To* field in the email template. On the basis of the corpus, email is also a rather reliable medium since only twice problems related to the email system arose; in both cases the delivery of an attachment failed and the sender had to resend the document.³⁹ The longest distribution list in the corpus contained 280 names; however, it is likely that some messages had an even wider audience since there was no information about the number of recipients in the alias addresses. To reach such a number of recipients via other communication media would be a time-consuming task: for example, if the message was sent by mail or fax, a considerable amount of time would have to be spent on activities such as copying, typing addresses on envelopes, delivering the letters to the post-office, or punching in fax addresses, etc. If the message was delivered by phone, even more time would have to be spent, and the phone call would also have to be made at different times to meet the business hours in different European countries not to mention the variety of time zones in the world. Even contacts with colleagues across the Gulf of Bothnia would suffer although Finland and Sweden are neighboring countries. In the modern business world, it seems impossible to spend that amount of time and effort only on delivering one business message. It can thus be argued that the influence of email on Stora Enso's operations is significant. Without email, Erja might not have been as frequently in touch with her Swedish colleague;

39 The two messages are presented as examples (143) and (144) in 8.3.2.

Berit, and Seppo could not have answered questions in their area of their expertise as easily and swiftly; and Henrik would not have been able to run his Finnish-Swedish team in a similar way.

Interestingly, it may be argued that email has increased, maybe even enabled, deeper cooperation between specialist and managerial level employees across borders. Traditionally, they have not traveled extensively to meet their colleagues in other countries, which, in contrast, has always been part of the executives' work. This phenomenon could also be observed from the corpus: the Vice President's, to some extent also the managers', messages contained a number of references to meetings with team members, superiors, and other managerial staff in other locations, and the messages of the two secretaries were used to negotiate travel arrangements for their superiors. Messages of this type were not typical of specialists' communication.

Although nothing conclusive can be said about the ability of a lean medium such as email to communicate other than routine tasks, which is the claim of the media richness theory (e.g. Lengel & Daft 1988), it is still evident that its frequent use by the executive level staff, Henrik in particular, holding a high uncertainty job suggests otherwise. It can be argued that other factors than the alleged leanness or richness of the medium itself have an influence on the choice of media. One such factor may be other contacts between the communication partners via richer media. In the present study, for example, the informants had met the majority of their regular communication partners, which meant that they knew each other both socially and professionally. For Henrik, who had also met all the members of his Finnish-Swedish team, email was compatible to his job tasks, i.e. managing and coordinating a particular team. Indeed, as discussed above, managing this particular task would have been difficult without the technology which guaranteed easy contacts between Finland and Sweden. One of the managerial level employees, Erja, who was interviewed about email usage in the company, emphasized the fact that the office had become 'quiet' as email seemed to have

assumed some functions of the telephone. Furthermore, it may be suggested that the Scandinavian business discourse community considers email an appropriate medium to manage a wide variety of business-related tasks. For example, with the extensive use of broadband technology, practically all Finnish companies make use of email for their communication, and this seems to be the situation in other Scandinavian countries as well (see Nurmela et al. 2002).

Finally, in the multilingual/multicultural work environment of Stora Enso email technology enabled a smooth interplay between the corporate language of English and the mother tongues of Finnish and Swedish of the writers in the corpus. For example, messages written in English were referred to, discussed, and reacted to in either Finnish or Swedish. Example (1)⁴⁰ consists of five messages: in (a) Henrik together with some other Vice Presidents receives a message in English assigning some tasks to the recipients; in (b) Henrik assigns the tasks to one of his team members, Monica, in Swedish; in (c) she agrees to do them; in (d) Henrik asks her to do one more task; and in (e) she sends an English message to the writer of (a). All the text of the messages has been included apart from the salutations and closings.

- (1)
- (a) Juha Toivonen to Henrik et al.: Pls find attached a file, which was made in X. Check the figures and the final meeting to fix the table will on 15.9. in X. The other sheet is PE-demand. Contribution margins are not yet updated. Pls ask your controllers to update the se figures and send updated files to me latest by 10.9. (F125)

40 All text samples are authentic in the sense that no corrections to the language have been made. However, all names, dates, etc. have been changed for reasons of confidentiality.

- (b) Henrik to Monica: Kan du kolla siffrorna och bekräfta ok till Toivonen senast 10.9. Kan du åka på motet 15.9? (hes15/1)⁴¹
- (c) Monica to Henrik: Jag kan åka på motet den 15.9. och ska se till att de ekonomisk siffrorna blir uppdaterade. (hes17/2)⁴²
- (d) Henrik to Monica: Meddelar du Finland att du kommer? (hes1771)⁴³
- (e) Monica to Juha, I will represent Bu/BA UR in the meeting in
cc Henrik: X on September 15th. (S129)

The messages in example (1) illustrate how the original English message sent to Henrik is discussed in Swedish between him and his Swedish team member, and how she sends the reply to the request posed in (a).⁴⁴ As message (a) was forwarded together with (b) to Monica, no explanation about the content was needed as Monica could check it herself (for more, see 5.4 and 8.4).

5.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The four environmental factors of time constraints, corporate power, metaphoric/denotative language use, and public/private discourse change as if on a scale depending on which job role level the communication occurs (see Figure 1 in 2.1.1). Thus *time*

41 In English: *Can you check the figures and confirm ok to Toivonen on 10 Sept. at the latest. Can you go to the meeting on 15 Sept.?*

42 In English: *I can go the meeting on 15 Sept. and make sure that the figures are updated.*

43 In English: *Will you let Finland know that you're coming?*

44 Interestingly, Josephson (2000: 3; see also Gunnarsson 2001) expresses concern about such situations in which the work is done in Swedish but people are led in English, and argues that English becomes a more powerful language: language barriers become social barriers. However, the fact cannot be ignored that in corporations with multilingual work force, with e.g. Finnish and Swedish employees, English can be considered a neutral language in comparison to a situation in which one of the national languages is chosen as a corporate language (Säntti 2001; Tienari & Vaara 2001; Björkman et al. 2003; Piekkari et al. 2005; Charles & Louhiala-Salminen, in press).

constraints should be higher at the executive/managerial level, i.e. for people like Henrik, Kauko, Hannu, and Erja and lower for staff and specialist jobs.

According to Suchan & Dulek (1998: 100), the *time* constraint is of particular influence on document generation. In other words, because of high uncertainty tasks and busy schedules, executives and managers are more likely to delegate and review writing tasks rather than write much themselves. There were four examples of writing task delegation in the primary corpus. Once a Vice President asked a managerial level employee to send a memo of their discussion to the manager's superior (see example 70 in 8.3.1). On three occasions a secretary sent a message on her superior's behalf using phrases such as *on behalf of* (F93) in front of the superior's name (see examples 14–15 in 9.2.1). In addition to these four examples, there was one example of Henrik assigning a reviewing task to one of his team members; messages of this type did not appear in the mailboxes of the other informants. Example (2) is a message from a chain dealing with an English draft for a memo Henrik had received from one of his Finnish team members; the team member asked Henrik to check the memo. Henrik did not do the job himself but asked one of his Swedish team members to do it. Below, example (2) shows this Swedish message with which he forwarded the English draft to Monica, the Swedish team member.

(2) Monica
Tycker du att detta är ok? Tillägg?
Kind Regards,
Henrik (hes 168/2)⁴⁵

After Monica had checked the memo and added a piece of information, she sent it back to Henrik, who then sent a message to the writer of the original (see example 10a-d in 5.2 for the whole

45 In English: *Do you think this is OK? Any additions?*

chain). Henrik thus only ‘managed’ the situation and did not get involved in the writing, or even reviewing, of the memo.

The second environmental factor, *corporate power*, also changes depending on the job role. On the executive level, power is often derived from position, whereas on the specialist level it is based on perceived expertise and content knowledge (Suchan & Dulek 1998). For example, Henrik’s ‘power’ to delegate tasks to his team was taken for granted since he was the team leader. In the same vein, Seppo’s power to pose nearly twenty detailed questions about a business issue was not questioned since he was the communication specialist responsible for writing about the issue for a large audience. If, however, another person occupying another job role had done the same, the situation would have automatically changed and would have required adjustment through, for instance, more politeness. In other words, when people were performing their legitimate tasks within their job roles, they were free to exercise their corporate power within those boundaries since the situations could be considered routine (see Chapter 10 for the textualizations of requests).

The third factor contains the scale between *metaphoric and denotative language use*. Suchan & Dulek (1998) argue that executives tend to favor symbolic language while specialists focus on explicit facts. As the executives or managers did not write messages about strategy or policy issues in which symbolic language and figures of speech could have been more prevalent but used the medium to run everyday business and lead their staff, the messages in the corpus could be defined as unambiguous and highly informational. More metaphoric texts might have been found in attachments. As a matter of fact, only a couple of times was a single expression defined as somewhat metaphoric or, rather, idiomatic with the rest of the message being strictly denotative. Examples (3)–(5) illustrate the usage (in italics):

- (3) Hello all,
have just been thinking old days when doing master plan for ancient CN10 (*wet dream* in Xplace that time)
One idea that could create more tonnage for DLC is the laminated displays and corrugated things, where we are very strong in Royal Xland (Dybo, Bergholm). In my opinion we could check the real total price picture DLC 185 gm2 vs. recycled coated. . .
(more text follows)
regards
Kari at home forest office (F51)
- (4) Hello friends,
a briefing about the present contract situation concerning Xcompany might be needed. The situation today is as follows:
We have come to an agreement with TJH Xcompany about a contract which has an aim to move all the possible production of their grades globally into LN8 and LN9 with increased prices. Their CEO has accepted the contract proposal, but it's still subject to THF Group Chairman approval which we should get on the 17.2. only. (Of course there is a risk, but let's not think about it now, we have a job to do!) . . . (more text follows)
This is a golden opportunity! The end users will be the final decision makers, but why should they resist good quality? *So we have the ball.*
Best regards,
Pekka (F92)
- (5) Hello Peter,
First, thanks for your understanding of the market situation. As I mentioned you earlier I will fly today with Mike to Xland and Tuesday – Wednesday visit his customer and so I believe to get more information of the market. I fully agree with you it might be better to *hold on our horses* before we get more information of the market.
Best regards,
Matti (F69)

Examples (3)–(5) were written by managerial level employees: (5) shows the message in its entirety, (3) and (4) represent excerpts. Example (3) was addressed to three men, which makes the *wet dream* sound somewhat humorous, especially combined with the

signature indicating the base of the writer in an unusual way. In example (4) the idiomatic expression *having the ball* is further emphasized with the *golden opportunity* and the rhetorical question preceding it. Indeed, the vivid language supports the Promotional orientation of the message (see 4.3). In (5) Matti is responding to Peter's message about the feasibility of an unusually favorable offer to the customer in Xland. In the preceding message Peter had expressed some doubt about the possibility to win the custom with a low price and had closed his message with the phrase *In other words are we damned even if we go for this price decrease?* (S67). The denotative meaning of Matti's metaphoric *holding [on] horses* reflects the same doubtful attitude. The examples show that since these were the only examples coming even close to being metaphoric, overall the language use in the email messages was highly denotative, concrete, and factual (for more, see 5.3). This type of denotative language use might have also resulted from the fact that English was used as a shared code, a lingua franca, between the participants; it was a foreign language and maybe the writers did not master metaphoric or symbolic language use in English in spite of the fact that their proficiency seemed to be quite high.

The fourth factor, *public-private*, is closely connected to metaphoric and denotative communication. Staff and specialist communication has a limited audience while managerial and executive communication is more public (Suchan & Dulek 1998). The corpus seems to confirm Suchan & Dulek's (1998: 101) notion of public discourse being typical of executive and managerial communication and private discourse of specialist and staff communication. The lowest percentages for the messages to one recipient were found in the Vice President's (Henrik) and the local manager's (Kauko) mailboxes, 24% and 8% respectively. The highest percentages of messages to one recipient, in contrast, were recorded by one of the specialists, Berit, with 60%, and the secretary to the Vice President, Leena, with 85%. Interestingly, the secretary to the local manager, Monica, only had 33% of her email exchange

between two people (cf. 85% for Leena). This may be explained by her extended job description at a local mill since she was also the 'information officer' of the location, which meant that she forwarded press releases and appointment news to the staff at the mill, thus reaching large audiences.

To summarize, it seems that the organizational position and job description had an influence on the number of people that the employee was in touch with. For example, when Henrik, the Vice President, received messages from his superior or his colleagues, the distribution lists were often long; similarly, when he was touch with his own staff, he sent messages to multiple recipients although there were those to single recipients as well. If, on the other hand, the specialist staff was answering questions related to their expertise, sorting out non-delivery of telephone directories, etc., there was no need to increase the information overload by copying in more recipients. Nickerson's (2000: 148; see also Louhiala-Salminen 1999a: 113) study on internal email communication seems to confirm the findings of the present study in the sense that only 5% of her managerial email messages were sent to single recipients, whereas the equivalent figure was almost 40%⁴⁶ in the present study having subjects from all four job roles.⁴⁷

The discussion in this section has recognized the complex interactions in the corporate environment that shape the nature of on-the-job e-writing in Stora Enso. The influences of the corporate environment on writing in each corporate job role were varied. As the corpus of the present study contained messages from the representatives of all the four job roles, the messages written and received by them reflected the various forces and interactions at

46 In addition, 18% of the messages were addressed to one recipient (with the salutation to one person) but had one or more people copied in. If this 18% is added to the figure of 40%, the percentage indicating the share of messages to single recipients will rise to 58%.

47 However, although Nickerson collected her data from managerial staff, it is unlikely that the messages these managers received all originate from other managers, which suggests that her data also included messages from representatives of other job roles.

play in the corporate environment. Thus, the present sample of messages provided a glimpse into the way Stora Enso operationalizes its mission and vision into the everyday activities of its employees through their textual products.

5.2 STORA ENSO DISCOURSE COMMUNITY

The writers and recipients of the messages in the corpus represented the discourse community of Stora Enso, its Finnish and Swedish members in particular. In accordance with social constructionism, Swales (1990: 24–27) emphasizes the notion of discourse community as a group of people using particular genres to further their aims. The Stora Enso discourse community used to be two different communities until 1998 when the Swedish Stora and Finnish Enso merged. Within Stora Enso's corporate context today, the social context for genre use is created by its discourse community members sharing the common corporate goals and mechanisms of intercommunication, such as email, as discussed in 5.1. Communication among Stora Enso discourse community members in-house in the early 2000s was extensive: it accounted for 80% of daily communication; the rest was attributed to external communication with outsiders such as suppliers and customers (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b: 15).⁴⁸ The 80/20 relationship was also reflected in the incoming and outgoing mailboxes of the informants since internal email messages accounted for 83% and external for 17% of all the email messages respectively (see Appendix 1).

Despite the fact that the present study was concerned with the email messages as produced and used by the Stora Enso discourse community, by its Finnish and Swedish members in particular, this umbrella community also contained other discourse

48 Alatalo's (1996: 51) findings based on Finnish email corpus from a subsidiary of a large metals group were practically the same. The percentage of internal messages was 79.7%.

communities such as teams, work units, and divisions. Swales's (1998: 204) concept of *place discourse community* (PDC) could be expanded to incorporate communities, not from the same physical location, but from different locations, even countries, but still working together intensively as teams towards the same goals. One of the informants, Henrik, was a leader of such a team consisting of members from both Finland and Sweden. His team could be called a *virtual discourse community*. However, in spite of this virtuality of the team, all the members had also met each other and thus knew each other both socially and professionally. Indeed, the email questionnaire (see Appendix 2) administered to the informants showed that many of the writers and recipients of the email exchanges had met face-to-face.

This section discusses some features of the Stora Enso discourse community reflecting both the shared and unshared conceptions and practices among its members in terms of email communication. The focus is on Finnish and Swedish discourse community members as all the writers and most of the recipients of the messages were either Finns or Swedes (see 4.1.1). First, Finnish and Swedish writers' conceptions of themselves and of each other as communicators are presented. Second, the use of written vs. spoken media by the discourse community members is taken up. Third, the collaboration and interaction of the discourse community members is discussed from the point of view of shared (tacit) knowledge, intertextuality, and concrete collaboration in writing the email messages of the corpus.⁴⁹

First, Finnish and Swedish members of the Stora Enso discourse community had rather unanimous conceptions about their own and each other's communication styles as indicated by

49 Some of these features could also be discussed from the point of view of the four social constructive processes affecting writing (Rubin 1998; see also 2.1.1), i.e. construction of mental background for writing, assignment of social value to writing, collaboration in the production of writing, and creation of social contexts through writing, but the notion of discourse community was considered better suited for the theoretical framework of the present study.

Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 47–54) survey in the company. Finnish communication was characterized as factual and direct and Swedish communication as consensus-driven, discussion-oriented, and extensive by both the Finnish and Swedish respondents. When the respondents described their own communication, they often expressed their conceptions in positive terms, whereas the words used to describe the other nationality's communication practices often had negative connotations. Thus, although the respondents seemed to talk about the same phenomenon and agree on the typical features of communication (e.g. the tendency of Finns to go straight to the point and of Swedes to discuss issues thoroughly), they used different terminology to describe it. For example, the Swedish discussion-orientation was described as *open, dialogic, and discussive*⁵⁰ by the Swedish respondents but as *idle talk, verbosity, and shilly-shallying*⁵¹ by the Finns. The respondents' descriptions of the Finnish and Swedish communication styles seem to reflect, and be influenced by, the stereotypical conceptions of the two nationalities (see e.g. Ekwall & Karlsson 1999, Karlsson 2005). However, Louhiala-Salminen (2002b) points out that the characterizations may better apply in face-to-face meetings than in written communication. This view received support from the Finnish informant (Erja) who was interviewed about email usage in Stora Enso. She said that she would not be able to distinguish between Swedish and Finnish writers' messages although she felt that the Swedes might be more indirect than the Finns.

In spite of the experienced differences in the communication styles, it can be argued that, in time, with close contacts with the other nationality, conceptions of this type will weaken as the corporate employees become more used to each other, especially when they work in close cooperation with each other. In other words, the more mature the merger grows the less pronounced

50 Original Swedish: *öppen, dialog, diskuterande*.

51 Original Finnish: *jaarittelu, monisanaisuus, jahkaileminen*.

the experienced differences between Finns and Swedes would become. Indeed, in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 45) survey, the respondents identified most closely with their immediate work unit, and the other professional identification targets of division, Stora Enso as a group, and nationality were less significant. This unification process would also entail that the company's own new shared culture would gradually emerge (see e.g. Gertsen & Söderberg 1998, Holden 2001).

The second feature relates to a practice in the discourse community, which was not fully shared by the members. Namely, the use of written vs. spoken media by the Stora Enso discourse community manifested differences between Finnish and Swedish speakers, as indicated in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 20) survey. On an average, written activities (email, fax, reports) accounted for 35% (23%, 3%, and 9% respectively) of the time spent on various communication situations/media. However, Finns spent more time on email (29%) and Swedes on meetings (29%), and Finns spent clearly less of their time in meetings (20%) and Swedes with email (16%). This suggests that the conventions about *when* to use email were somewhat different: Finnish speakers considered the email technology, and writing, appropriate for a wider specter of communication events than their Swedish counterparts. Thus the best fit between the communication needs and the capabilities offered by technology was understood differently by Finnish and Swedish employees (see e.g. Ziv 1996, El-Shinnawy & Markus 1998).

Although it seems that the Finns and Swedes did not fully share the situations when to use email, they still agreed on the media that email had replaced. To the question about the alternative media choice to deliver a particular message before email technology, the informants replied in much the same way (see Table 17 in Chapter 7, also Appendix 3). Since no differences between Finns and Swedes were found, it can only be suggested that overall the contexts considered appropriate for writing have

increased since email was considered an appropriate option for the telephone.

The third feature of the discourse community is the collaboration and close interaction between the members as reflected in the messages: in what was expressed, what was not expressed, and what was expressed in collaboration. In the present corpus references to other communicative events were expressed either explicitly or implicitly in practically every message. In examples (6)–(7) this intertextuality is explicit through references to meetings, minutes, and files.

- (6) Thank you for the good meeting and minutes (S83)
- (7) Here is still an addition to the file, which we worked out in the last meeting (F8)

On the basis of the data it can be claimed that spoken and written communication in the company were intertwined as examples (6)–(7) show: there has been a meeting resulting in the minutes for which the email message thanks, and a file has been worked out at a meeting and the email message delivers an addition to that file (for more on intertextuality, see 2.1.2, 5.3, 8.3.1). In addition to these explicit references to other texts, intertextuality was also expressed implicitly by carrying old messages with the latest contribution and continuing the discussion where the previous message had left it. Thus, every accompanying message could be regarded as creating or shaping interaction between the discourse community members in the social context. The context was shared, and unnecessary information, such that could be found in the accompanying message, was not expressed again. The shared (tacit) knowledge eased (written) communication among the members since everything did not need to be explicitly expressed and explained. For example, the writers took it for granted that certain specific lexis and abbreviations were familiar to the recipients; they were not explained and the recipients did not question their use. Most of them remained opaque to the present researcher although some understanding of their meaning could

be gained. Such expressions included e.g. RN5, CN 5, and LN8⁵² in example (8) below:

- (8) Subject: VB: RN5 vs Xhall
Hej Niilo,
As you can see XX (Customer's name) is now getting info from the market about the new product quality from CN 5. Do you have any comments to Philipp's mail? I have all the time told them that the investment is of course aimed at increasing product-quality to at least the LN8 level, but we should wait see the actual outturn before discussing any real consequences for XX compared to their competitors. . . (continues) (S11)

In addition, the informants' replies to the question of what they did/would have done on receipt of some of the messages either written and/or received by them showed that the messages contained shared knowledge (see Chapter 6, also Appendix 3). For example, a subject (i.e. *Subject* in the email template) such as *order inflow*, which was found in a textless, empty message (F107, also F21) with an attachment name in Finnish (*uusiviikkorap.xls*⁵³) was considered sufficient by the Swedish recipient; he knew exactly what to do on receipt of the message. He wrote: "(I would) open it and read it from the screen", which implies that the recipient was not planning to keep the attachment but delete it (see Table 12 in 6.1.2). How the writers relied on the shared knowledge created in the previous messages or by the previous messages accompanying the latest contribution is discussed in terms of different message types (see 6.1 and 8.2.1) and references to previous contacts (see 8.2.3).

Collaboration in the production of writing in the discourse community was also found in the corpus. Email message exchanges themselves call for collaboration as they can be seen as instances of written conversation where turns are taken, topics

52 For reasons of confidentiality, the original abbreviations were disguised.

53 In English: *new weekly report* (the word 'report' appears in an abbreviated form)

shifted, and coherence maintained in much the same way as in spoken conversation (e.g. see Murray 1991 for conversational analysis of electronic messages). Collective writing also involves concretely creating a text together; in the corpus there was only one message which contained a memo of a meeting signed (and obviously also written) by two persons.⁵⁴ However, there were a few texts that were in the process of being written, in other words on which comments were requested. Below, example (9) illustrates a message in which one of the informants, Erja, is commenting on an advertisement in her message to a Swedish colleague.

(9) Subject: Comments/Crowe!!

Hello,

Here comments from the image add's texts

The IT revolution. . . .

- take away one sentence: join the revolution
- last sentence: Visti our web site.

They say . . .

- take away: . . . and attracting top talents, like you, to our company (no connection to other text and we have no places open)
- end: . . . Sounds like a future you'd like to be part of? Visit our web site.

- * I have not yet received english text for brochure, have you?
- * Not possible to comment Finnish version because the English one is not ready. Do you like the Swedish one?

Erja (F204)

As the example shows, the collaboration is on a very concrete level focusing on sentence-level changes in the text in focus although at the end of the message the writer also asks the recipient's opinion about another text. In this case, no attachments

54 It is likely, though, that such texts were typically sent as attachments and not as incorporated in the email message itself.

followed, which means that both the writer and the recipient must have been in the possession of the advertisement in focus.

Email technology has eased this type of collaboration tremendously, in particular, when the text under discussion is in the electronic form; it can be delivered as an attachment and the comments can be written on the document or the text may be revised without commenting. The process is also fast and can involve a number of people. Example (10a-d) involving four messages illustrates one such case:

- (10)
- (a) Hi Henrik,
Here is the draft. Please check it: . . . (minutes of a meeting with a customer follows)
Best regards,
Matti (F4)
- (b) Monica,
Tycker du att detta är ok? Tillägg?
Kind Regards,
Henrik (hes162/2)⁵⁵
- (c) Jag la bara till förslag v 13.
Monica (hes162/3)⁵⁶
- (d) Matti
Monica has added proposed visit week 13.
Pls send out with copy to me and Monica.
Thanks
Kind Regards
Henrik (S10)

The messages in example (10) involve Henrik, the Vice President, and two of his team members, Matti and Monica. On the basis of the minutes (not included in the example) all of them attended the meeting with the customer. In example (a), Matti requests

55 In English: *Do you think this is OK? Any additions?*

56 In English: *I only added a proposal about a meeting for week 13.*

comments on the minutes he has written, and in (b) Henrik forwards the message to Monica. In (c) Monica gives her comments, and in (d) Henrik forwards them to Matti. The process took half a working day.

In sum: since communication between Stora Enso discourse community members was so extensive at the time this study was made, accounting for 80% of all communication, it may be suggested that it would have had a unifying effect on the conventions of email usage and on the messages themselves (see Baron 1998: 160). In the early 2000s, some differences between Finnish and Swedish users were still prevalent: Finns used email more than Swedes who preferred meetings. Thus, at the time the social conventions as to when to use email were not the same although both the Finnish and Swedish discourse community members seemed to agree on the alternative media email had replaced. The preferred media may be partly attributed to the experienced differences in the communication styles of the two nationalities: meetings seem to match better with the alleged discussion-orientation of the Swedes than with directness, which was used to characterize Finnish communication. Directness and economical language use, on the other hand, seem to conform with the modern guidelines for business email communication (Munter et al. 2003).

5.3 INFORMATIONAL AND RELATIONAL CONTENT

The content, or substance, of the internal email messages is described from the viewpoint of the orientations they exhibit, that is, Informational, Relational, Promotional, and Transformational (see 2.3.6, also Rogers & Hildebrandt 1993); the focus is on the Informational (providing information) and Relational (building rapport) orientations since they clearly dominated in the corpus. Only one message could be characterized as predominantly Promotional (see example 4 in 5.1.3), and none of the messages

could be described as Transformational. Although the content of a clear majority of the messages was characterized as both Informational and Relational, 7% of the 282 messages (n=20) only manifested the Informational orientation. Four of them were press releases or appointment news delivered for information, and 16 represented textless messages attaching documents or forwarding old messages for the recipient's information. In contrast, in none of the messages did the Relational content manifest itself alone.

A majority of the email messages could thus be described as factually accurate while simultaneously building rapport. Below, example (11) illustrates how the Informational and Relational orientations manifested in the corpus:

- (11) Satu,
1) The secretary at SE X International in Ycity is Britt-Louise Hagmark.
2) Kalle Ahonen has his office in Ycity.
Regards
Monica (S189)

Example (11) is a highly informational message; the language is precise and neutral. However, it also incorporates the Relational orientation through the use of salutation, complimentary close, and signature. This was characteristic of the corpus; the salutation typically contained the first name of the recipient and the message was also signed with a first name (for details, see 8.2.2 and Chapter 9). The combination of the two orientations entails that example (11) does not only provide information, but also pays attention to the recipient.

The Informational content of the messages, by definition, provided information related to the running of the company. It was of two types: it created intertextuality with other, either preceding or following, communicative events in the company (see also 5.2) and it provided (new) information, which was related to at least one of the four subsystems identified by Suchan & Dulek (1998; see also 2.1.1) and discussed in 5.1.2.

Manifest intertextuality (see Fairclough 1992a) with other communicative events, both written and spoken, was common in the messages. Information was provided and exchanged about them, as the examples below show:

- (12) I discussed today with Hans e.g. my job and its contents (F209)
- (13) I would like to thank you for the reports you sent us. (F31)
- (14) As agreed on the phone, I send you some questions. (F146)
- (15) please find enclosed a memo of the telephone conference held on 2.2.2001 (F72)
- (16) I will ring you later today to discuss. (S76)
- (17) As decided at the last meeting, please also mail me ideas of X articles (S281)

As examples (12)–(17) indicate, other communicative events precede, follow, maybe overlap, and co-exist with the events effected via email. In other words, intertextuality was manifest in the messages, which means that through references to other texts, both written and spoken, corporate knowledge and expertise were generated and maintained in discussion, elaboration, and revision. And, all through the discussion, corporate employees were present, either as originators of those prior texts or as readers, commentators, or revisers of the new ones.

In addition to the intertextual references, the Informational content of the messages also consisted of references to the four subsystems of task, structure, technology, and control as identified by Suchan & Dulek (1998), but their frequency was dependent of the job role of the informant, i.e. Executive, Manager, Specialist, and Staff. For example, the content of the Vice President's messages (representing the Executive level) consisted of references to e.g. sales activities, including negotiations, visits to customers, deliveries, order inflows, and commission rates, representing corporate tasks; structure was represented by, for instance, information on summer holidays, employee exchange, closing of a unit; technology included, for instance, capacity of production machinery; and control included items, such as renewed score

calculation, calculation rules for bonus targets, and budget. In contrast, in the messages of the two secretaries/assistants or the communication specialists references to the control system were non-existent and references to corporate tasks dominated. Since the corpus contained messages from informants representing all the four job roles, the Informational content of the messages showed variety in the references to the four subsystems through which the company's mission, vision, and values were realized.

The uniqueness of the content of the messages and the shared knowledge required of the Stora Enso discourse community members to be able to act accordingly seemed to be supported by some comments from the focus group members consisting of international business people (see Appendix 4). Even though the messages chosen for their evaluation were carefully screened to represent as explicit messages as possible without any corporate-bound lexis for example, they still aroused comments such as "a little bit weird," or "not a typical email message". For example, the message about the labor contract situation in Sweden at a time of collective bargaining (Message C in Appendix 4 and example 10 in 6.4), which represents the subsystem of control since it has an effect on wages, was not a typical email message in the opinion of most focus group members.

The Relational content of the messages built rapport and contributed to amicable social relations in the company. In the corpus, it was typically reflected in the salutations and closings, in which first names were frequently used. In none of the messages did Relational content manifest itself alone, however, which is in disagreement with Sproull & Kiesler (1986), whose subjects received a number of non-work messages from their colleagues; the phenomenon may have been due to the novelty of the medium in the late 1980s as no such messages could be found in this corpus collected in the early 2000s.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Of course, the informants were allowed to remove such personal messages from their mailboxes, but in the mailbox that I received in its entirety, no such messages were detected.

Example (18a-c) below represents an exceptional exchange of messages. It can be characterized as an exchange with the heaviest input of Relational orientation (marked with italics) found in the corpus.

(18)

(a) *Hello Seppo,*

How is life in Dusseldorf? I hope you had a nice Christmas and a good start of the new year.

Today I spoke to Mikko Heinonen in XTeam about the coverage from Ymagazine of the program there. We also spoke a bit about our thought of how to merge the picture of what is happening in R with the situation in O. During our talk we came to think about a previous member of XTeam now working as production manager for one of the two x machines in R (*I think* no. 2). His name is Thomas Steuer and *I think* he could give *you* a good perspective of the activities in R compared with other units. In Xteam he worked in Ucity, Bcity, Kcity, Rcity and Ncity.

I hope this contact can be of use for you. If you want me to introduce you, just give me a call!

All the best and Guten Rutch!

// Sven (S153)

(b) *Hi Sven,*

Just came back from Finland yesterday. Thanks for your idea regarding the R interviews!! I will check the issue with R... Hopefully everything is fine there in Stockholm, tell my regards also to Helena, you have now an IT-guru in family.

mfg,

Seppo (F156)

(c) *Hi Seppo,*

Things are just fine in Stockholm. The nice snow we had at new year has all but disappeared, sadly enough. But instead we tend to see the sun every now and then. Helena, the IT-guru, sends her regards.

If there is anything I can assist you with about the X interviews, just get in touch!

Regards,

Sven (S157)

The Relational orientation in message (a) is dominating at the beginning of the message and can be attributed to the use of the salutation with the first name of the recipient and small talk about holidays. The Informational orientation takes over when the propositional content is introduced although the Relational orientation is still manifest through the use of personal pronouns, private verbs (*think, hope*), and familiar words (*a bit*) for example. Also, the writer offers his help by using a conversational construction, *just give me a call*, the effect of which is further emphasized through the exclamation mark. In examples (b) and (c) the Relational orientation dominates; the communicators are chatting about the weather and family affairs, both of which are typical topics for small talk between close friends. However, in both (b) and (c) traces of the Informational orientation can be found: the interview is still on the agenda.

The dominance of the Informational and Relational orientations in the corpus reflected two overall purposes of these internal messages, that is, the furtherance of corporate activities and the maintenance of social relations. Since neither Promotional nor Transformational orientations were dominant in the corpus, it suggests that they either are common in some other forums such as attachments delivered with the email messages, meetings, oral presentations or speeches, or then they are not typical of internal communication. Indeed, Rogers & Hildebrandt's (1993) examples of Promotional messages consist of messages of external communication such as sales presentations, new product announcements, and job application letters. Their examples representing internal communication, such as recommendations to an executive board or recommendation sections of a report, did not manifest in the corpus; the only promotional message (see example 4 in 5.1.3) in the corpus motivated a group of people (at least) some of whom were Executive and Managerial level staff to guarantee high quality for the reorganized production of a major customer's grades. In none of the messages did the Transformational orientation dominate although the written examples given by

Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993) represent internal communication, that is, a strategic plan or a mission statement. Again, it can only be suggested that these documents are not delivered by email.

5.4 EMAIL AS A MEDIUM

Email provides Stora Enso with an efficient forum for internal communication: as mentioned above (see 5.1.2), it connects all 27,000 office employees, who can get in touch with their colleagues by only adding the name of the recipient in the *To* field in the email template. The informant, Erja, who was interviewed about email usage in the company emphasized the fact that email is personal and easy to use: the user does not need to move anywhere from his computer terminal. In addition, business can be attended to at any time of the day without imposing on the recipients at odd hours since the technology is independent of time constraints. This phenomenon could be detected in the corpus by investigating the time of day when the messages were sent and how quickly replies to inquiries were delivered. The majority of the messages in the primary corpus were sent during regular business hours but there were also messages sent in the evening and a couple of times around eleven o'clock at night; the earliest time recorded was 5.21 in the morning. The time span between two messages could be as short as 4 minutes (see example 21 below) but could be extended to over a week. Quite a few queries received replies in less than an hour.

Since email technology has been discussed in 5.1.2 from the point of view of its role as one of the subsystems in the organization and in 5.2 as a means of intercommunication among the discourse community members, this section views the email corpus from two perspectives related to the technology itself. First, it describes the features related to the physical layout of the messages partly predetermined by the system and partly through intervention by individual users; second, it considers two specific functions

provided by the system: the automatic reply function and the chaining function.

The email template predetermines the layout of the message, which always contains the standard memo header.⁵⁸ The template also dictates the information the writer/sender needs to fill in before a message can be sent. As the information for the *Sender* and *Date* fields is provided automatically by the system, only the *To* and *Subject* fields need to be filled in. The *To* field cannot be left empty whereas the *Subject* field can (see also 8.2 for Framing moves). In the corpus, if another message was forwarded, the system placed an abbreviation such as *FW* (forwarded)⁵⁹ in front of the *Subject*; similarly, if the reply function was used, the system placed *RE* (reply)⁶⁰ in front of the *Subject*. The language of the template varied and thus an English message could have, for example, a Swedish (example 20 below) or a German template (example 17 in 8.2.1). The Finnish language template featured only once in an external message of the secondary corpus.

The system made it easy to distinguish between an internal and an external sender even if the recipient did not know the sender's name. When the message came from within the company, only the sender's name appeared in the *From field*; when the sender was from outside the organization, his/her whole email address, also indicating his/her organization, appeared in the field. The email template did not indicate the job title, position, or department of the sender in the Mail Index, but it could, of course, be added to the signature.

The technology also enabled the use of a preprogrammed signature, which could be added to the message. In the company, this option was used by the representatives of all the four job roles of Executive, Manager, Specialist, and Staff. Below, one example is given in (19).

58 See 2.3.7 for the historical evolution of the template.

59 The Swedish version: *VB* (vidarebefordrat).

60 The Swedish version: *SV* (svar).

(19) Kind Regards,
Henrik Årskog

tel int+46 1234567
fax int+46 2345678
email.henrik.arskog@storaenso.com_(S1)

Example (19) illustrates the preprogrammed signatures of the corpus: *Kind regards* was the most common alternative for a closing, the writer typically gave his/her full name with contact information. Only a couple of times were deviating practices be found such as the use of first name instead of full name (see example 2 in 9.1.1). All preprogrammed signatures in both the primary and secondary corpus were in English, and they all appeared in the same form in spite of the fact that the email system would have allowed a choice of different versions.

The email system also enables other functions that increase efficiency: a message labeled *High Priority* indicates its relative importance in the Mail Index. The label was most frequently employed when the message contained requests for quick reactions or responses: for example, a project plan was required the following day, deliveries had to be confirmed to a customer, a visitor's flight was rescheduled and caused changes to the recipients' program, video conference was to be held in three days, etc. In addition, once a message was labeled *High Priority* since the writer had not received a reply to his inquiry in seven days and once a meeting room reservation six weeks ahead had the label.

Two functional features of the email system, i.e. the automatic reply function and the function that enables the chaining of messages made work easier for the corporate employees. Automatic reply function can be seen to take over the functions of a switchboard operator or a personal assistant, when the person sought is not available. The function can be set on to reply automatically to any message sent to the mailbox when the owner of the box is absent from the office and not able to read his

incoming mail. The incoming messages are stored into the person's mailbox and the reply message contains the Subject of the original message as if to remind the sender which one of his messages the recipient, as example (20) below shows, has not read:

(20) Från: Monica Svensson
Skickat: den 17 januari 2001 23:13:10
Till: Henrik Årskog
Ämne: Frånvaro, autosvar: Studies on Xskin

Thank you for your mail.
I'm out of the office - back again 01-01-19. If urgent please contact Per Lundström +46 765432 or Mia Sundström +46 345678.
Kind regards
Monica (S33)

Example (20) shows the message Henrik received from Monica in reply to his message on Studies on Xskin. The Swedish words *Frånvaro, autosvar* (in English *Auto Reply Message*) in the Swedish language template in front of *Ämne (Subject)* inform Henrik explicitly that the message has reached its destination but that Monica has not yet seen it. Although only three automatic reply messages were found in the primary corpus, they were considered important from the point of view of the recipient. On receipt of an automatic reply, the recipient knew that the message had not reached the person intended, only his/her mailbox.

The second function enabled by the system is exceptional in comparison to other communication media: the email technology allows for chaining of messages in which the latest contribution is simply added to the previous one. The messages can be chained via two different functions: the Reply and Forwarding functions. With the help of the Reply function, a message can be replied to directly, and the Forwarding function enables 'redelivery' of a message received to a new recipient. In the corpus, special labels in front of the Subject line in the template were automatically added, i.e. *RE* for Reply and *FW* for Forwarding. The chains were of different lengths; some only contained two messages and others

contained several (up to ten). Similarly, some chains only contained two participants, but others involved a number of people: recipients of earlier messages were left out while new ones joined in.

One original message could continue its existence in different chains (for more, see also 6.1.2). If it was sent to multiple recipients, the subsequent responses and thus the exchanges would be different. In addition, the recipient of the original message could forward it to new recipients for information or comments, and thus the status of the message would become subordinate to the messages forwarding it; the original message would thus change into an appended one. This feature is of particular value in a multilingual working environment since messages in different languages may be combined as examples (21)–(22) show (see also example (1) in 5.1.2). Both chains were generated by the same original message written in English and they come from Henrik’s mailbox; they contain all the messages listed in an alphabetical order from the oldest to the latest. Example (21) consists of six messages (A)–(F) and example (22) of five messages (A)–(e). Both chains are presented with the senders and the recipients, and the time of sending. In addition, either ENG or SWE are used to indicate the language of the message and either RE or FW to indicate which function was used to deliver the message.

- (21) Message (A) ENG From Mikko to Jan and 3 others, 16 Jan 2001, 12:23 (F31)
- Message (B) SWE/FW, From Jan to Anders, 12:57 (hes128/2)
- Message (C) SWE/RE, From Anders to Jan, 13:01 (hes128/3)
- Message (D) SWE/FW, From Jan to Maria, 13:17 (hes128/4)
- Message (E) SWE/RE, From Maria to Jan and copy to Henrik, 14:36 (hes128/5)
- Message (F) SWE/RE, From Henrik to Maria, 23:12 (hes128/6)

As can be seen from example (21), the chain was initiated by Mikko with message (A), which contained a request to Jan. Jan did not reply to Mikko but forwarded message (A) to Anders together with message (B), in which he asked Anders’s opinion about the

request. Thus message (A) became an appended message and in that sense its status changed. In message (C) Anders replied that Maria's or Henrik's opinion would be needed before a decision could be made. In message (D) Jan asked for Maria's opinion, who in (E) replied that the request could not be met; Henrik was copied in. In (F) Henrik informed Maria that her denial of the request had been correct and said that he was going to contact Esko about the matter.

Message (E) provided Jan with the information he needed to be able to give his reply to Mikko's request presented in the original message (A); the time spent on consultation took around one and a half hours. Consequently, message (E) takes us back from this detour of consultation, and starts another chain of messages depicted below in example (22).

- (22) Message (A) ENG From Mikko to Jan and three others, 16 Jan 2001, 12:23 (F31)
-> Example (21A-E), 12:57-14.36
- Message (b) ENG/RE, From Jan to Mikko, 14:49 (S41)
- Message (c) ENG/FW, From Jan to Anders and Maria, 14:51 (S42)
- Message (d) SWE/FW, From Maria to Henrik, 17 Jan, 16:34 (hes115/4)
- Message (e) ENG From Henrik to Esko, 18 Jan, 17:05 (S52)

Jan first replied to Mikko's request in message (b). Because of the consultation, Jan forwarded message (b) with a textless message (c) to Anders and Maria. Maria, on her part, forwarded (A)-(c) to Henrik with only the words *För info*⁶¹ in message (d). The final message (e) in the chain was sent from Henrik to Esko, and it only contained the words *For info*. Thus, as Henrik told Maria in (21F), now also Esko received information about the matter.

61 In English: *For info*.

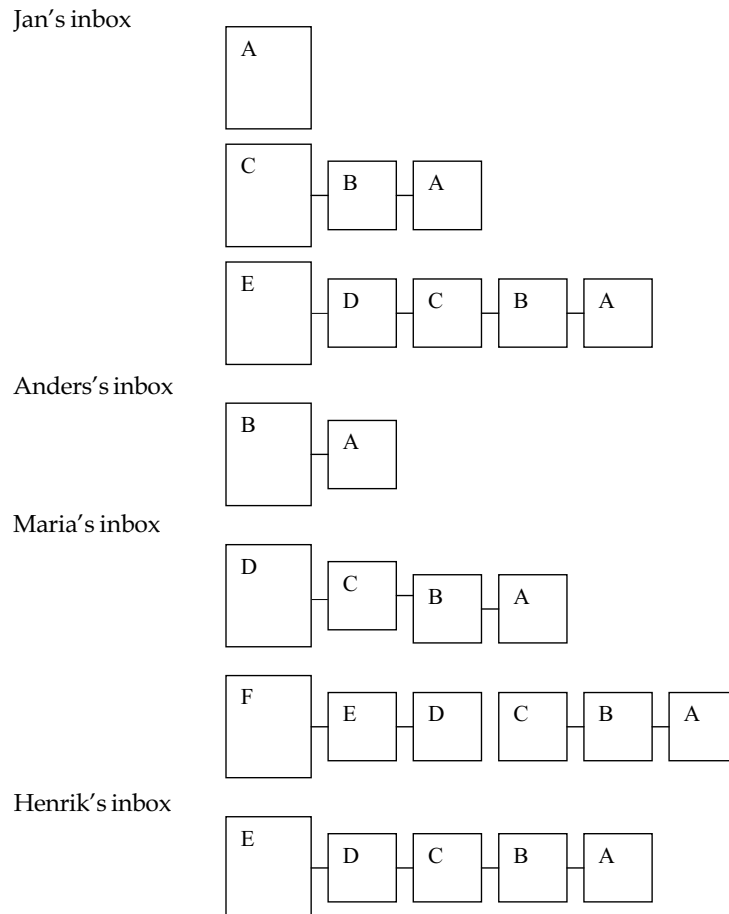


FIGURE 2. Inboxes of the four participants of the message exchange of example (21).

Figure 2 shows the inboxes of the four participants of the message chain depicted in example (21); only the three recipients of a copy of message (A) were left out. For each participant the case looks different: only Maria has all the messages in one chain in her incoming mailbox and since Henrik sent message (F), he has the same chain in his outgoing mailbox. At this point, it is worth noticing that Mikko, who sent message (A) to Jan, only has Jan's

reply (22b) in his mailbox. He might not even know that his original message was forwarded to a number of people and that they discussed it before he received an answer to his question.

Examples (21) and (22) show how versatile a medium email technology is. First of all, it is quick, as the times indicate. In a few minutes people were consulted and information was exchanged; in less than three hours the whole matter was settled, that is, Mikko had received his reply. Second, a number of people can be involved in the discussion, and the gatekeeper of the information is quickly found (in this case Maria). Also, depending on who is involved in a particular exchange, the language of the message may change. For example, in (21) only message (A) was written in English and all the others in the mother tongue of the people involved, i.e. Swedish, whereas in (22) message (d) was written in Swedish and all the others in English. Third, everybody concerned gets information about the decision and the matter can be closed. In addition, the message exchanges can be either deleted or printed; a paper trail is always an option with email. Inevitably, the chaining function also adds up to the number of messages in the recipients' mailboxes and can thus increase information overload; but it also makes it easy to get an overview of an issue or a situation. Finally, however, it must be remembered that examples (21)–(22) only give us the message chains from Henrik's mailbox; there may be other chains linked to the same issue: for example, Mikko may have negotiated with colleagues before sending message (A) to Jan (for 'message communities', see Figure 3 in 6.1.2).

Example (23) below shows how messages obtain new audiences when they are chained. The chain in focus contained three messages (see also examples 61–62 in 10.3.1). The first message was an agenda for an XYZ Code meeting addressed to six recipients with one copied in, and it also contained an attachment of the given codes. One of the recipients was addressed by name at the end of the message like this:

- (23) ...Minni
*can you please book a meeting room
*forward this message to relevant F, P & P -people (S46)

The second message in the chain, forwarding the first one, was Minni's message to the P&P people in another division, six in total, including the writer of the first message, another recipient of the first message, and two new recipients copied in. She explained the XYZ Code system in detail (apparently it was not yet known in this division) and referred to the meeting to be held about the topic. The third message, forwarding the first two, was written by Päivi, one of the recipients of Minni's message. The recipients of this message numbered eleven, and one of them was Henrik. None of the earlier recipients or writers were included in the distribution list. Päivi asked the recipients to check the list of the codes and comment on how they were planning to use them. She did not refer to the meeting at all. The chain shows how messages travel in the organization reaching wider audiences: the writer of the first message could not know who was going to read her message in the end. In this case, the writer expected her message to get a wider audience, but this, of course, is not always the case.

To conclude, in comparison with other communication media such as fax and telephone in common use today, email can be regarded as the most versatile one allowing for exchange of information in a few minutes and with a large number of people simultaneously. Every message can be printed, stored electronically, or deleted depending on the mailbox owner's needs. In message chains, the previous messages also provide the context for the later contributions thus saving time, as references do not have to be provided in writing. This type of embeddedness in email message chains was one of the reasons that made the leading genre researchers (Bhatia et al. 2002) regard genre analysis of the chains as a problematic issue.

5.5 BUSINESS ENGLISH LINGUA FRANCA AS A CODE

The English used in the majority of the messages in the corpus was defined as Business English Lingua Franca (BELF) because it was used between non-native speakers of the language in the business domain (see 2.3.5; Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005). All the writers were either Finns or Swedes, and 97.5% of the recipients were also non-native speakers, mostly Finns and Swedes. The exceptions included the seven messages (2.5%) whose recipients were native speakers of English and those in which English was used between speakers of the same mother tongue (see examples 24–26c below). Drawing on Nickerson (2000: 45), *code* is used to refer to the appropriate language for a genre in a multinational corporation in contrast to *discourse*, which is used to refer to the discourse features of the genre⁶² (for discussion on discourse features of the corpus, see Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10).

Before having a closer look at the BELF in the messages, the distribution of English messages of all internal messages in the informants' mailboxes is presented in Table 8.

62 In Yates & Orlikowski's (1992: 302) framework, *language* was used to cover "linguistic characteristics such as formality and the specialized vocabulary of technical or legal jargon". To investigate genres in multinational corporations, Nickerson (2000) divides language into code and discourse to be able to account for the use of other languages than the mother tongue.

TABLE 8. Distribution of English messages of all internal messages in informants' mailboxes.

Informant	Position	English messages/ internal messages %	Collection period description, % for research
Henrik 00 ⁶³	Vice President	63%	-busy 100%
Henrik 01 ¹	Vice President	60%	usual 100%
Kauko	Manager, Technical (local mill)	17%	usual 90-100%
Erja	Project Manager	74%	usual 100%
Hannu	Development Manager	40%	-busy 100%
Berit	Communication specialist	37%	usual 75-100%
Seppo	Communication specialist	90%	-busy 50-75%
Leena	Secretary/ Assistant to Vice President	64%	-busy 50%
Monica	Secretary/ Assistant to local manager	13%	usual 100%

usual = as busy as usual
-busy = not as busy as usual

In the incoming and outgoing mailboxes of the informants the distribution of English messages varied from 13% to 90% of all internal messages (for more details, see Appendix 5). The lowest distributions were held by Kauko and Monica who both represented local level functions in the company, whereas all the other informants with higher frequencies represented corporate level functions. In the mailboxes of four informants, the code used was predominantly English and, in the other four mailboxes, the

63 Distribution were calculated separately for Henrik's two sets of messages collected at different times: 00 refers to June 2000 and 01 to January 2001.

mother tongue of the informant dominated. For example, in Henrik's mailbox around 60% of the internal messages were in English. In Erja's, Seppo's, and Leena's mailboxes the share of English was even higher, i.e. 74%, 90%, and 64% respectively. However, Seppo and Leena described the week not to have been as busy as usual (-busy), and Seppo further specified that the number of English messages was less than usual (see Appendix 1). Since both Seppo and Leena submitted around 50%–75% of their messages for investigation, the figures may not reflect the actual state of affairs very well.

Another half of the informants sent and received fewer messages in English than in their mother tongue, for instance 13% of Monica's messages were in English; 17% of Kauko's, 37% of Berit's, and 40% of Hannu's messages were written in English. For Monica and Kauko the collection period represented a normal week while for Berit and Hannu it was not as busy as usual. Hannu further said that during normal weeks he gets more messages from abroad, which seems to suggest that the share of English messages is then higher than during the collection period.

Languages other than English, Finnish, and Swedish were rarely used in the secondary email corpus. For example, none of the eight informants wrote messages in languages other than English and their mother tongue.⁶⁴ In the primary corpus, only a few times some individual words such as greetings were written in Swedish, Finnish, German, or French in the otherwise English text (for details, see 5.5.2). This division between using either English or the mother tongue means that messages written in the other shared language among the writers, Swedish, were non-existent. This corpus confirms the findings in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 23–24) survey; both present a homogeneous picture of the language use in the company: either the mother tongue or English was used.

64 The informants were not asked to specify their language skills.

The use of English seemed to be influenced by at least two factors. First, the organizational position on either the corporate or local level in the company seemed to play a role. And second, the organizational position together with the job description of the informant seemed to be influential. For example, Henrik occupying the highest organizational position of the informants and leading a team with both Finnish and Swedish speakers was a heavy user of English (60%), and Erja occupying a lower organizational position, that of a manager, in the headquarters used English even more (74%). However, it seemed that the local/corporate function was more decisive than the organizational position: for example, Kauko used English clearly less than the other managers and was the only one working in a local mill rather than in the headquarters, where the others work. For similar reasons, the mailboxes of the two secretaries/personal assistants looked different: Leena used English clearly more (64%), seemingly because her superior held a corporate level function as a Vice President, which forced English into her messages, while Monica used it less (13%), most likely due to the fact that her superior was a local mill manager. These findings are in agreement with Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 27) findings on written communication in-house, according to which individuals who used English extensively could be found on all organizational levels in the company. However, on the basis of the present data, it seemed that the placement of the employee in either corporate or local function had a major influence on the use of English.

The choice of the code used in internal communication in the company was determined by the target group and their language skills (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b: 28; see also Nickerson 2000: 151). This was confirmed by the email messages of this study: anytime there were recipients whose mother tongue was not that of the writer's, the message was in English. However, this meant that a Finn (or a Swede) received an English message from another Finn (or a Swede) if the list of recipients included non-Finnish (or non-Swedish) speakers. Interestingly, the mother tongue of the

communication partner might also remain a mystery. For example, one of the Swedish informants replied, when asked about the mother tongue of one of her communication partners: "No idea, she works in Brussels." English could thus be regarded as the standard choice in situations where the mother tongue of the recipient was not known.⁶⁵

Although the choice of the code was predominantly determined by the target group, the corpus contained four messages written by Henrik, one of the heavy users of English, which had been addressed to another Swedish speaker but written in English. Below, examples (24)–(25) illustrate three of the messages.

(24) For info. (S52, S134)

(25) For your info. (S132)

Examples (24)–(25) containing all the text in the messages were used to refer to appended messages written in English. The appended English message seemed to function like a trigger activating the use of the language in the particular situation. In addition, the fact could not be ignored that if two dots were added on top of letter *o* in *for* in example (24), the whole phrase would change languages, from English into Swedish. A similar situation arose when Henrik used English in his reaction to a Swedish message, as can be seen from example (26a–c), which presents a chain with an excerpt from an English message (a), a Swedish message (b) in its entirety, and the message written in English by Henrik (c).

⁶⁵ In spite of the fact that Finnish and Swedish names are different, the close history between Finland and Sweden has contributed to a wide variety of mother tongue/name combinations: monolingual Finns living in Finland may have Finnish or Swedish names, Swedes with Swedish names may be bilingual, Swedes with Finnish names may know only Swedish, etc.

(26)

- (a) PL is again asking for X suitable for milk and juice packaging. The line for gluing the blanks . . (continues) (F2)
- (b) Som du ser är PL ute och frågar efter X material för U linjer. Vi har inte tidigare levererat X material till någon förutom TU, jag antar vi håller fast vid den linjen? (hes169/2)
- (c) for sure!!!! (S3)

Henrik gives a short reaction (c) to a Swedish writer's Swedish message (b), which contains an inquiry about an appended English message (a). Henrik's English reaction (c) only contains two words and the experiential involvement and strong reaction is emphasized by the exclamation marks. It is easy to see how the writer first glanced through the short Swedish message, (b), and then read the English one, (a), which seems to have triggered his English reaction.

As was mentioned above, the writer of (c) used English frequently in his email communication: around 60% of his internal messages were in English. With the recipients of the messages depicted in examples (24)–(26), he used both Swedish and English, depending on the situation: if the list of recipients included only Swedish speakers, Swedish was used; if non-Swedish speakers were included, English was used. It seems that the writer's use of English in these very short messages was invoked by the immediate physical context: in both cases it was triggered by English messages in the same chain. As all the recipients of the above messages were used to using English with him (interchangeably with Swedish), the situation would not look strange. As a matter of fact, it might even be a sign of belonging or solidarity creating group cohesion.

In addition to these very brief English messages exchanged between speakers of the same mother tongue, there were two longer consecutive English messages written by Swedes and sent to a Swedish speaker in a Spanish unit with some Swedish speakers copied in (see 6.1.3, also examples 113–115 in 8.3.1). There

was no overt explanation for the choice of English but it seemed to be dependent on the situation. In the messages, employee exchange was being negotiated with a Spanish unit and it could be expected that the messages were forwarded within the unit: if written in Swedish, non-Swedish employees could not have access to the information in them. This example may reflect corporate politeness: the writers wanted to ascertain the availability of the information provided in the messages to non-Swedish speakers. A similar situation is described by Nickerson (2000: 151; 1998: 292; also Louhiala-Salminen 2002a: 218), who questions the notion of English as lingua franca as it was used between Dutch speakers in a Dutch-British company. She found that this was the case when messages were sent to another division, irrespective of the mother tongue of the writer or the recipient; it was a matter of corporate policy.

Although the code of the messages in the corpus was BELF, the messages also contained some elements in the writer's own mother tongue, in either Finnish or Swedish. For this reason, this section first focuses on the nature of BELF in the corpus and after that on the use of Finnish and Swedish in the otherwise English messages.

5.5.1 NATURE OF BELF IN THE MESSAGES

This section focuses on the nature of BELF with the help of Johnson & Bartlett's (1999) list of business discourse typical of non-native spoken interactions. Since English was a foreign language for all its users in the present study, Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey is first drawn upon to show how the respondents described their own English language skills and those of their communication partners.

Experienced and actual language problems. – Despite the status of English as the corporate language in Stora Enso, it is still a foreign language for both the Finnish and Swedish speakers. The

respondents in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 30-33) survey in Stora Enso considered language skills somewhat problematic. Approximately 50% of the respondents having regular contacts with the other nationality reported problems, which means that the other half did not have them or did not consider them worth reporting. Finns often stressed *inadequate language skills* and seemed to refer to their own or their colleagues' proficiency in English, as the following comments suggest: "Anything can happen with poor language skills" and "The message is not credibly delivered by those who have poor language skills".⁶⁶ Swedish comments were mostly concerned with foreign language use, but a large number of the respondents referred specifically to *the lack of language skills* among their Finnish counterparts. Two respondents made the following remarks: "Not many in Finland who know English" and "The general proficiency in English is lower in Finland than in Sweden. It is simply impossible to communicate with some persons".⁶⁷ Louhiala-Salminen (2002b: 151) suggests, however, that the examples of specific situations that the respondents and interviewees offered as problematic would seem to indicate that, in most cases, the problems had occurred in oral communication: on the telephone and in meetings where it was difficult to convey nuances or express opinions suddenly and assertively. In addition, the fact that Swedes so readily noticed mistakes in Finns' usage may be partly due to the fact that Finns' mistakes were likely to be different from those made by Swedish speakers themselves, which might go unnoticed. For example, Kankaanranta (2000) showed that when evaluating Finnish business students' English texts, Finnish business professionals did not recognize a mistake that is typical for Finns in English business communication, such

66 Original Finnish comment: *Heikolla kielitaidolla voi sattua kaikenlaista and Heikosti kieltä osaavat eivät saa viestiä uskottavasti perille.*

67 Original Swedish comments: *Inte många i Finland som behärskar engelskan and Allmänna kunskapsnivån i engelska språket är lägre i Finland än i Sverige. En del personer kan man helt enkelt inte kommunicera med.*

as using a capital *y* in *You* and *Your*, which, on the other hand, is a common practice with the equivalent pronouns of *Sinä* and *Te* in Finnish business communication. This might explain the strong voice of the Swedes in observing Finns' mistakes, but on the other hand, it would not explain why Finns themselves paid attention to their own mistakes. The Swedish respondents did not comment on their own use of English specifically. Interestingly, the Finnish informant (Erja) who was interviewed in the present study doubted that she would be able to distinguish between texts written in English by Finns and Swedes; she was specifically asked if, in her opinion, there were differences in the English used by Finns and Swedish (but see 10.3).

Although most messages in the corpus contained some linguistic problems, either typographical or grammatical errors, clumsy structures, etc. (for misspellings and the like in email, see e.g. Sims 1996), they did not seem to result in misunderstandings in spite of the fact that it has been suggested that in lingua franca communication misunderstandings are more probable than in native speaker – non-native speaker communication (Lesznyák 2002: 163; but Knapp 2002: 219). This finding was also supported in the interview with one of the informants (Erja); she felt that in spite of the language mistakes apparent in her incoming mail she did not have difficulties in understanding the messages.

Two Swedish email messages were found in the secondary corpus that suggested language problems, although other explanations might have been more likely or at least possible. In both cases, the original English message referred to was an appended message with an attachment. In the first one, Henrik approaches a colleague with the following message:

(27) Du har kanske redan fått detta från Per. Jag behöver en genomgång av detta och hur kommer detta att presenteras till dom anställda?⁶⁸ (hes156/3)

68 In English: *You may have received this from Per already. I need a going-through/explanation of this and how it is going to be presented to the employees.*

In example (27), comments are requested on the attachment dealing with the calculation rules for bonuses. The fact that Henrik would like to get an explanation may be due to an unfamiliar topic, and as he suggests, there seems to be something that may be difficult to present to the employees. On the other hand, the language in the English message offering a clarification of the calculation method presented in the attachment was full of specific terminology but contained hardly any grammatical mistakes. The success of the clarification in the English message would have been difficult to establish, as the attachment was not accessible.

In the second situation possibly suggesting linguistic problems, a newly appointed manager approached his secretary with the following message:

(28) Jag fattar inte något. Vad är detta?
/Sven⁶⁹ (mos40/2)

The writer of example (28) refers to an appended English message shown in example (29), which again refers to an attachment (i.e. the certificates):

(29) Colleagues,
pls. check the certificates concerning your mills, pages 6&7, and
inform Riitta Jaakkola as well as myself if any changes needed
Rgds
Ismo Kuokkanen (F231)

As the message (example 29) does not have any language problems apart from a couple of misspellings and an omission of an auxiliary verb, it can be suggested that the newly appointed manager was not familiar with the overall situation and felt puzzled because of that rather than because of any language problems as such. With the exception of these two cases, requests for clarification related to the content of earlier messages were non-existent in the corpus.

69 In English: *I don't understand anything. What's this?*

This suggests that either there were no other problematic messages or if there were, they might have been clarified through other contacts between the communication partners, for instance by telephone. The third explanation is related to the nature of lingua franca communication. Although Lesznyák (2002) asserts that misunderstandings in lingua franca communication are more probable than in native speaker – non-native speaker interactions, previous research (see e.g. Firth 1996, Knapp 2002) has also shown that lingua franca communication tolerates atypical language use. In present study this may be interpreted as follows: the use of BELF in the corporate-level discourse community, where the writers and recipients of the messages share the environment and its everyday practices, topics, and routines, does not cause overt misunderstandings because the interactants make special efforts to make sense of each other's texts.

Widdowson (1998: 4–5) argues that the interactants need a common frame of reference and enough shared knowledge to make sense of a text. He claims that only through context, shared knowledge, and communicative purpose does a text realize as pragmatically specific and take on significance as discourse. The same phenomenon is addressed in the cognitive approaches of second language acquisition research: content comprehension is also seen to contribute to linguistic comprehension (Bialystok 1988; see also Rauto 2003). Consequently, any deviations from the standard language (if English learned at school is considered as such) can be circumvented when the content (and the context) is familiar to the reader. As the messages of the corpus were exchanged in a shared corporate context with the content of the messages meeting the recipients' expectations in the sense that they focused on corporate issues (see 5.1 and 5.3), possible problems with language would be downplayed by the fact that the interactants were comfortable with the content and the context of the messages.

BELF in relation to IBE. – BELF in the corpus was investigated with the help of Johnson & Bartlett's (1999) list of features of

International Business English (IBE) to answer the question to what extent the email messages fell into the categories designed for the study of spoken English lingua franca business discourse. However, the present study recognizes the problem in Johnson & Bartlett's (1999) approach as it compared the language of non-native speakers to the standard set by native speakers and did not describe the lingua franca discourse in its own right.

All 282 messages were analyzed to see if they contained features identified by Johnson & Bartlett (1999: 9) as characteristic of spoken business discourse used by non-native speakers of English. The features are listed in Table 9, with examples from the corpus.

As can be seen in Table 9, Finnish and Swedish speakers hardly manifested the features of IBE in their written email communication. The number of occurrences was small and they were concentrated on a few features, that is, simplified vocabulary, pre/postpositions reduced, simplified question forms, simplified sentence structure with dropped morphemes, and the use of infinitives rather than gerunds. The identification of simplified vocabulary was not easy, and in the end only the verbs *to wait* and *to fill* (conditions) were included; *to wait* seemed to replace *to expect* and *to look forward to* and *to fill* seemed to replace *to meet*. Prepositions were dropped a few times as the examples show; no pattern was detected. Simplified question forms were defined as having the word order of a statement; only one was found. A simplified tense or mood system was manifest through the lack of the verb *to be* in the continuous present, the replacement of the continuous present with a simple present, the lack of the auxiliary verb in the future tense, and the omission of the third person *-s*. The omission of the third person *-s* could also represent a typo rather than a feature of IBE, but there seemed to be no way of differentiating between the two options. The morpheme *ly* was dropped only from the adverb *preliminarily* a few times; no other cases were found. Infinitives were used instead of gerunds a couple

of times. Very few relative clauses were present but not once were simplified relative pronouns used.

TABLE 9. Features of International Business English with examples from the corpus.

Feature of IBE	Example from corpus
Simplified vocabulary	. . . when strict conditions are not filled. (F128) I waite for your reply. . . (F148) Waiting for to see you in Stockholm! (F191)
Non-count nouns lacking (e.g. equipments)	-
Pre/Postpositions reduced	We will pay the lodging (S38) Do you have interests to take under discussions? (F43) We must start thinking how to organise . . . (F92) Stock will be dealt as direct sale . . . (F131) I know Birgitta will show, but I'm not sure about Kerstin. (S200)
Simplified question forms	What kind of new client contacts and material applications there are coming? (F151)
Simplified tense/mood system	He using few hundred tons . . . (F74) We also missing the lead time . . . (S138) I waite for your reply. . . (F148) I send his CV by post. (S198) The deal also include the reduction of 1 working day/year . . . (S36) LH is the one who know best . . . (S138)
Passives avoided	N/A
Simplified sentence structure/ morphemes dropped (e.g. that represent only 10%)	Preliminary it would now be OK . . . (S40)
Conjoined not embedded sentences	N/A
Infinitives preferred to gerunds	I'm looking forward to participate . . . (S192) I am waiting for to meet AK. (F199)
Few relative clauses/ simplified pronouns (e.g. my company which name is)	Yes (but no simplified pronouns)
<i>We have</i> instead of <i>there is</i>	N/A
Resumptive pronouns (e.g. all the members they was in contact)	N/A

As Table 9 shows, some features were lacking altogether from the email messages, for example non-count nouns with plural *-s* such as *equipments*. In addition, the identification of the features now marked as *not applicable* (N/A) was somewhat contentious because they related to usage rather than grammatical correctness, which was the criterion used in the other cases. For example, although passives were not frequently used, it was still impossible to say if they were avoided. Similarly, features of IBE such as conjoined rather than embedded sentences or using *we have* instead of *there is* does not necessarily represent deviant usage from that of NSs. Overall, what caused difficulties in the identification was that Johnson & Bartlett (1999) had not elaborated on their criteria, which might have resulted in inconsistencies as the categories were not (re)defined for the purposes of this study.

One prevalent characteristic of the corpus, which did not feature in Johnson & Bartlett (1999), maybe because it can be detected only in written discourse, could be taken as an example of BELF use, although it could also be regarded as transference from the mother tongue. This characteristic involves figures and numbers, which are frequent in business messages. The Finnish and Swedish writers used commas instead of full stops in decimal figures and full stops rather than commas when separating thousands, as the following examples show: 6,7% was used instead of 6.7% and 40.000 instead of 40,000. Although this usage may be considered confusing by the native speakers of English (see Rogers & Rymer 2001), it is not likely to cause confusion among the non-native language users sharing this feature, as was the case here with both Finnish and Swedish writers exhibiting this feature.

At least three reasons can be suggested for the lack of the features of IBE in the present corpus. First, the features may not be as prevalent in written discourse as they are in spontaneous speech since writers have more time to consider what to put down than speakers who need to act in the spur of the moment. Second, the proficiency of the Swedish and Finnish writers could be on a higher level than that of the business people that Johnson & Bartlett

(1999) observed, about whom no information was provided. Although there was no information available about the educational background of the writers, either, their job descriptions suggested advanced studies in their particular fields.⁷⁰ Third, the writers were used to using English in work-related situations as English was widely used both in Enso of Finland and Stora of Sweden even before the merger in 1998. After the merger, its use in written situations expanded from 21% to 26% for Finnish respondents and from 10% to 19% for Swedish respondents (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b: 25–26).

5.5.2 FINNISH AND SWEDISH IN THE BELF MESSAGES

In the corpus, co-existence of English and Finnish or Swedish in the same message was rare but it was more common than that of other languages; this was hardly surprising as other languages were used extremely seldom. As a matter of fact, the co-existence of the three languages was detected in the email technology itself: as mentioned above in 5.4, the language of the email template depended on the system from which the message had been sent. For example, if it came from a Swedish system, the template was in Swedish, but the message itself could be in any language. The language in two other texts generated by the system, but planned and written by the owner of the email account, that is, pre-programmed signatures and automatic reply messages, always appeared in English, also in the secondary corpus containing messages in other languages. Consequently, English signatures were found in Finnish and Swedish texts and both Finnish and English messages triggered automatic reply messages in English. Thus the code of the message had no effect on the code used in the preprogrammed signature or automatic reply messages. Even

⁷⁰ Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 12-13) survey also showed that 51% of the Swedish respondents and 37% of the Finnish ones had a university degree and only some 5% had basic comprehensive school education. This suggests that the language proficiency of the respondents representing office employees was fairly high.

though the majority of the English messages were monolingual, that is, they only used one language, there were some messages with either individual words or longer sections of text written in Finnish or Swedish present.⁷¹

When individual Swedish or Finnish words were incorporated in the English messages, they appeared in salutations and complimentary closes, comments to individuals, attachment names, and once in the *Subject* field of the email template. Examples (30) and (31) illustrate the usage with salutations and complimentary closes:

(30) Hej Elisabeth (F223)⁷²

(31) Med vänliga hälsningar (S38)⁷³

Salutations and complimentary closes in Swedish were employed by both Finnish and Swedish speakers, and the recipients also represented both mother tongues. In total, the corpus contained 12 salutations and 3 complimentary closes in Swedish used by three Finns and three Swedes.

Once a comment to one of the multiple recipients of a message was effected in Swedish. The message contained a long list of codes and after one of them, a Swedish comment in parentheses was added like this:

71 Co-existence of English and other languages excluding Finnish and Swedish was also found in the corpus: for example, a French salutation was used in an English message addressed to multiple recipients, *Bonjour Friends* (F151) (*Good morning/afternoon/day or hello*), and later on in the same message *Merci!* (*Thank you*) was used. The use of French was obviously due to the fact that the message informed about a French winner of a company-internal competition. German was also found in English messages: in a pre-close *All the best and Guten Rutsch!* (S153) (*Happy New Year!*) and in the closing of the subsequent reply message *mfg* (F156), an abbreviation of *Mit freundlichen Grüßen* (*With best/kind regards*), were used. The first message was written by a Swede and the reply by a Finn based in Germany; this context was likely to explicate the usage. In the secondary corpus, a German used the Finnish salutation *Terve* (see54) (*Hi/hello*) in an otherwise English message to a Finn and five times English words were found in otherwise Finnish or Swedish messages as in *No way att denna info går till LDM!!!* (hes128/6) or *Ohessa vuoden henkilöstö-file* (haf14).

72 In English: *Hi Elisabeth*.

73 In English: *Kind regards*.

(32) Lars, jag är osäker vad detta är (S138)⁷⁴

The comment was specifically addressed to a Swede, and it was irrelevant for the other recipients. Interestingly, this situation could be compared to the situations in English lingua franca meetings, where speakers of the same mother tongue may have brief exchanges in their mother tongue, for example to clarify some issues (see e.g. Poncini 2002; Nikko, in press).

Attachment names appear in either Finnish or Swedish a few times, as examples (33)–(35) show.

- (33) uusiviikkorap.xls (F21)
- (34) Sidplan1-2001.pdf (S154)
- (35) xyz.skrivelse.doc (S97)

The wording in examples (33)–(35) was clarified either in the *Subject* field or in the text. Example (33) was a regularly delivered document with the word *Order inflow* always appearing on the Subject line. Although the abbreviated Finnish phrase, *uusiviikkorap*, implies a weekly report, the attachment was only delivered every other week with a textless message. The attachment name in (34) appeared in its English translation, ‘page plan’, in the message itself. Example (35) accompanied a message with the text, *I tried to put some thoughts on paper* (S97), which reflects the somewhat vague nature of the Swedish word *skrivelse* equivalent to ‘a piece of written communication’ in English.

Once Finnish words appeared in the Subject line as follows:

(36) Subject: Sven Karlssonin sähköposti?

Hello Per,
Could you please tell me the e-mail address of Sven Karlsson,
the one who is a member of Stora Enso FSA Committee? . . . (con
tinues) (F184)

⁷⁴ In English: *Lars, I'm not sure what this is.*

Example (36) shows how the English translation of the subject line, *the e-mail address of Sven Karlsson*, opens the message itself. The use of Finnish words in the Subject line was unlikely to be intentional; rather, in an environment in which the mother tongue was used interchangeably with English all through the working day, it could be expected. In the same vein, at the time the writer of example (35) saved his document on the hard disk, he obviously did not think ahead that an English name would have been better for the future readers of the document written in English. Since the attachment names with either Finnish (example 33) or Swedish words (examples 34–35) represented either regularly delivered documents or they were translated into English in the message itself, it is suggested that this usage did not cause misunderstandings or confusion.

Longer sections of text in either Finnish or Swedish appeared in the English messages on two occasions. First, exactly the same text with a wide distribution list including both Finnish and Swedish speakers appeared in both Finnish and English; the message (F252) concerned the opening of a new intranet site. It may be that it was considered so important that the understanding was ensured by also using the mother tongue of the majority of the recipients. Second, a Swedish text was used as support for something expressed in the English message, as example (37) shows:

(37) Hello Pirjo,
From Xhall perspective we have looked at the Z Use code. Regarding the actual codes we did not have anything major to add. My personal opinion was that MP boxes is missing, but I don't know if it is needed.

We think that the Business Units would use the information, but it has to be a compulsory field in order entry if we shall have any use of the statistics. However, a risk is that some "other" code will be used to a fair extent. This can be highlighted by Olle Svenssons comment (in Swedish) for the KRC Business Area.

Vad gäller KRC ser koderna ok ut. Problemet blir att kunna fylla i informationen eftersom vi oftast inte vet vad Z use för produkten är när kunden beställer från oss. Samma råkartong kan användas till många olika Z use beroende på vilken RF-typ, barriär etc som används. (S87)⁷⁵

This usage presupposed proficiency in Swedish: the writer expected the recipients to be able to read and understand it. Example (37) suggests that the writer assumed that as Swedish is the other official language of Finland, the recipient would master the language to the extent required in the particular case. Similar usage with Finnish text excerpts was not found in the corpus, which can be explained by the fact that Finnish is not a shared language between the Finns and Swedes.

In addition to these two cases in which Finnish or Swedish appeared in an English email message, there was one situation in which an eight-page Swedish document (a proposal for cooperation with a major player in a related field of business) was attached to an English message. The English email message ended in the following words:

(38) Please revert with your comments. It is important to have your views on these matters and I would appreciate your guidens how to proceed. (The report is in Swedish. I hope that is O.K.) (S139)

In spite of the fact that Swedish was not incorporated in an otherwise English message but attached to it, the situation remains the same as with example (37). The business at hand could not be dealt with unless the recipient knew Swedish.

The English email messages written by Finns and Swedes could be characterized by a weak presence of either Finnish or Swedish elements, which seemed to be motivated by the

⁷⁵ In English: *When it comes to KRC, the codes look ok. The problem is to be able to fill in the information since we usually don't know what Z use for a product is when a customer places an order. The same boards can be used for many different Z use depending on what kind of RF type, barrier etc. are used.*

circumstances; a comment in Swedish to a Swedish-speaker, a Finnish subject line, or an attachment name in either language did not affect the business at hand. As Swedish is a shared language between Finns and Swedes, its use in salutations and complimentary closings, in particular, is understandable, as greetings and other formulaic utterances in a foreign language tend to be the first to be taken up. Connor (1999: 122; see also Louhiala-Salminen 2002a) points out that this type of usage is a goodwill gesture towards the other party and his/her native tongue. This explanation naturally applies to the Finnish speakers using Swedish, but Swedish speakers may use Swedish in an otherwise English text just for fun. Sutherland (1994: 7) reports on a similar usage in a Japanese subsidiary in Germany, where the English used as the lingua franca incorporated both Japanese and German vocabulary. The first expressions to be taken up tended to be fixed or formulaic, such as the Japanese honorific *-san*, and interjections and greetings. The longer Swedish texts found in the corpus presupposed knowledge of the language in contrast to the one Finnish translation of an English text in the same message, which was likely motivated by a large number of Finnish recipients. Certain situations, albeit rare, seemed to call for proficiency in Swedish, the other shared language of Finns and Swedes.

Neither Finnish nor Swedish corporate-bound lexis was used in the English email messages, in contrast to Nickerson (2000: 159), who found Dutch corporate-bound lexical items in otherwise English texts, and Connor (1999: 122), who found Norwegian and Estonian words in otherwise English business texts. While Nickerson's British and Dutch writers and recipients all worked for the same division in the same country (cf. also Sutherland 1994), the users of English in the present corpus were based in different countries, although some of them worked for the same division or in the same team. This geographical distance most likely contributed to the lack of mother tongue terminology in English texts, as the communication partners were unlikely to be

familiar with it in the same way as they would have been if they had worked in the same organization in the same country. In Nickerson's (2000) study, intra-divisional communication tolerated the use of Dutch lexicalizations of the organizing process, in particular, which were used even between two native English speakers. In Connor's (1999) study, the Norwegian and Estonian words in the otherwise English messages were mostly used for reasons of clarity or as a goodwill gesture; the words represented the merchandise in the transactions between the Finnish fish broker and his Norwegian and Estonian suppliers. Thus, although the writers and recipients did not share the same location, as in Nickerson's study, the non-English words could be seen as the focus of their communication. In the present study, this usage could be compared with the use of specific product names such as RN5, CN 5, LN8 (see example 8 in 5.2); when the product names were used, the participants knew exactly what kind of a product was on the agenda in the same way as the fish broker and his suppliers knew what kind of fish was being traded. Code switching seems to be more manifest in oral communication, such as meetings, in which communication partners are physically present and in which it is dictated by immediate circumstances (see e.g. Nikko, press; also Charles 2002).

5.6 SUMMARY – SUPPORT FOR ONE EMAIL GENRE

When the shared features of the corpus are viewed against the key tenets of genre approaches (see Chapter 2), bearing in mind that genres can be identified on different levels of abstraction, it can be argued that the messages collectively represent *one English email genre* in use in Stora Enso among Finnish and Swedish speakers. To begin with, the messages shared the all-encompassing communicative purposes of furthering corporate activities and maintaining social relations, reflecting their Informational and Relational orientation. In other words, the purposes characterized

the company's pursuit to meet the goals established in its core statements of mission, vision, and values. The core statements were supported by, and realized through, the organizational systems of task, structure, control and technology that featured in the employees' job roles and in the content of their communication. In this way, the purposes were transformed into typified social action taking place in recurrent situations that the employees met in their work in Stora Enso. The employees, as members of the Stora Enso discourse community, also possessed the knowledge of the communicative event and medium that would be appropriate to realize a particular action in a particular situation; on a general level, they made decisions about the suitability of the email genre as opposed to the fax genre, some spoken genres, etc. If the choice fell on email, the technology automatically defined the physical layout of the genre because of the email template. The communication partner's mother tongue, on the other hand, determined the code to be used.

To be more specific: the investigation of the messages in their shared corporate context with the help of Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework revealed a number of forces and interactions influencing them. The fact that the informants of the study represented all four corporate job roles contributed to the variability of the sample since the type and nature of the tasks they handled in their everyday work were different. Thus, the corpus contributed to the operationalization of Stora Enso's mission and vision into the everyday activities of its employees albeit with different emphases and foci.

The discourse community consisting of Stora Enso employees seemed to share the common objectives expressed in the company's mission and vision. The community was constructed every day at work in constant interaction, either concretely or virtually, as was evidenced by the high proportion of internal communication of all communicative events. The division into internal and external messages in the informants' mailboxes gave the same result as Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey in the company: 80% of

communication took place in-house. Shared knowledge between the members was apparent in the messages, and the close interaction between the community and on-the-job writing was reflected in the extensive use of intertextuality in the messages; other communicative events, both written and spoken, were referred to in most of the messages. Thus, the email messages in the corpus were not isolated incidents but tightly intertwined occurrences in the flow of information, which took place both in spoken and written forms, in the company's internal communication. The differences experienced by the Finnish and Swedish members in terms of communication styles or preferences in media use did not change this picture (see Louhiala-Salminen 2002b).

The content of the messages was characterized as both Informational and Relational, which meant that the furtherance of corporate activities was combined with the maintenance of social relations. Interestingly, in the majority of the messages both of these aims were combined; only a small proportion of the messages were purely informational and none of them were purely relational.

The medium used in delivering the messages provided the employees with an efficient forum for internal communication with qualities, such as chaining of messages and automatic reply function, which have never existed before. Via email, communication among the discourse community members was easy, fast, and personal.

Finally, the shared code of the messages, Business English Lingua Franca, BELF, used by Finnish and Swedish speakers did not exhibit many of the features identified as typical of non-native speaker oral business discourse by Johnson & Bartlett's (1999). Three reasons were suggested in 5.5.1, and one of them was that the English proficiency of the writers could be on a fairly high level, and consequently, their texts would not have manifested such features. This claim was supported by the fact that only two messages exhibited some communication problems, albeit not necessarily due to lacking language skills, in spite of the fact that

Swedish respondents in Louhiala-Salminen's (2000b) survey commented on the poor language skills of their Finnish colleagues.

BELF reflected the mother tongues of the writers in the sense that some Finnish and Swedish elements were imported into the messages. In particular, the use of Swedish words showed that it was the other shared code among the discourse community members. The general principle in the choice of the code for the communication was dependent on the target group. This meant that when the recipients had the same mother tongue as the writer, the shared language was used, be it Finnish or Swedish; but, when it was different, the code was English. This entailed that the same people communicated with each other in either their mother tongue or English, depending on the mother tongue of the co-recipients. In this situation, it was not surprising that sometimes a Swedish speaker sent short English messages to the speakers of the same mother tongue.

These findings supporting the existence of one English email genre in use in Stora Enso among Finnish and Swedish speakers seem to agree with Mulholland's (1999; also Yates & Orlikowski 1992) claim that email can be seen to represent one genre, although nothing can be said at this point about genre names contributing to the social recognition of the phenomenon, about the possible shared discourse features, or about the dynamic nature of genres. However, she suggests that there is one email genre that occurs in different evolutionary stages in different organizations dealing with one particular set of communications, such as preparing for internal meetings. Drawing on this, it could be said that the email genre identified in the present study covers communications on a more general level: English communications between Finnish and Swedish employees in the furtherance of corporate activities.

To simplify, seeing the messages as representative of one email genre relies predominantly on the notion of genre in North American New Rhetoric that emphasizes the importance of action in genre recognition (cf. Yates & Orlikowski 1992). As this study also makes use of key tenets from the ESP tradition, the focus is

next be shifted there. In accordance with its linguistic orientation, the communicative purposes of the messages together with related genre names are investigated next (see Chapter 6), after which the discourse characteristics related to the purposes are identified in the four subsequent chapters.

6 COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSES OF THE EMAIL MESSAGES

This chapter discusses the communicative purposes and accomplished action of the email messages in the primary corpus and thus contributes to the second aim of the study. In addition to the email corpus, the data comprises Questionnaire (b) to the informants, and the focus group survey. After this chapter, the focus is on the investigation of the discourse features connected with the purposes in accordance with Bhatia's (1993) linguistic analysis in the ESP tradition of genre study (see Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10).

As was discussed in 2.3.1, the primacy of communicative purpose (see Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993) as a genre criterion has been challenged by Askehave & Swales (2001), who specifically questioned its value in business communication research. However, the present study, in its recognition of the goal-oriented nature of business communication, maintains that the all-encompassing purpose of all (external) business messages is to achieve the goals of a buying-selling negotiation in spite of the fact that some individual messages may aim at getting rid of unwanted business partners. In the same vein, external business communication is served by the company's internal communication, whose all-encompassing purpose is to further corporate activities and maintain social relations so that the buying or selling is made possible.

Although the present investigation resembles Nickerson's (2000: 139–176; see also 1999a, 1998) research in its setup, i.e. both were interested in the genres of internal English email communication in a multinational company, they also differ in a number of ways. Nickerson's (2000: 154) corpus consisted of the messages written by British and Dutch managers and she was able to identify four different genres. The genres were identified

according to the criteria used in the genre approach in North American New Rhetoric, i.e. according to the situation, in which the genres were invoked, the action they accomplished, and the layout they used. After the identification, Nickerson (2000) focused on one of the genres and compared its textualizations in the 200 messages collected from one British and one Dutch manager. The primary criterion of genre identification in the present study, on the other hand, came from the ESP tradition although the action accomplished was also used. The situations in which the prospective genres were invoked were not taken up specifically since the writers represented different job roles and they numbered 103, but the discourse features of all the prospective genres identified were analyzed to see if they supported the initial classification. Thus, it may be said that the present investigation occurred on a higher level of generality, following Bhatia (1997a; see also Yates & Orlikowski 1992: 304): the data was not restricted by the job roles of the subjects or the specific genre under investigation.⁷⁶

This chapter first discusses the identification and classification of the 282 internal English email messages in accordance with their communicative purpose, which is used as the main criterion in the identification and complemented by the action accomplished by the messages. The identification of the prospective genres⁷⁷ is followed by the distribution of the message types in the informants' mailboxes and the names given to the three message types by the informants. Fourth, the chapter discusses the perceptions of the

76 Some other differences between the investigations include, for example, the base and mother tongue of the staff members from whom the data was collected. Nickerson's (2000) subjects were based in the Netherlands, while those in the present study were from Finland, Sweden, and Germany (although they were either Finns or Swedes). Further, while Nickerson's (2000) data included a number of messages written by native speakers of English, the present study only consisted of messages written by non-native speakers of the language (although 2.5% of the recipients were native speakers).

77 The expression *prospective genres* is replaced by *message types* for reasons of clarity in the ensuing discussion.

focus group consisting of members of the international business discourse community in relation to the three messages presented to them (see Appendix 4). Finally, the chapter provides a summary of the four sections.

6.1 MESSAGE TYPES ACCORDING TO THEIR COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSE

The communicative purpose dominating in the messages was used as the main criterion in the identification of the message types, but the immediate context, i.e. the messages in the same chain, in which the message was embedded was also examined to confirm the initial identification. Furthermore, the informants' views of their own messages were used to complement the inquiry. A second evaluator, another genre analyst, was also consulted on the purposes of some of the messages to ensure a higher level of reliability. Although Swales (1990) emphasizes the views of genre users themselves, he also expresses doubts about the validity of their opinions. To increase reliability related to the purpose of the messages, the informants were also asked to specify what they did/would have done when they received the messages. The latter question thus also shed light on the audience's response, the study of which has been lacking, according to Rogers (2000: 249), in genre research. On the basis of content analysis of the messages in the primary corpus, three distinct communicative purposes were established: email messages were used to

- inform employees of corporate issues,
- deliver other documents for information and/or for comments, and
- exchange information about corporate issues.

The identification of the purposes dominating in the messages and the classification of the messages into the three groups accordingly was an unexpectedly smooth exercise. Only 2% of

the messages had multiple purposes in the sense that they combined two of the above and thus could not be classified into these groups. In addition to the above three purposes, no other purpose was found in any of the 282 messages.

In what follows, the email messages are referred to by invented names, which reflect their communicative purpose to facilitate the ensuing discussion. The messages whose communicative purpose was to inform employees of corporate issues are referred to as *Noticeboard messages*. The messages delivering other documents or messages are called *Postman*⁷⁸ *messages*. In the messages, reference was usually made to the attached documents or appended messages but sometimes also textless Postman messages were used for this delivery function. The messages exchanging information are called *Dialogue messages*; some of them opened dialogic exchanges (opening messages), while others responded to them (response messages).

Before discussing the characteristics of the message types in detail, a general comment about the classification needs to be made. In the beginning, only two message types were identified: messages whose purpose was to inform of corporate issues and those whose purpose was to exchange information. The classification was not satisfactory, however, since the messages that were used to inform were different in terms of where the information was presented: sometimes it was presented in the message itself and other times in attachments or appended messages. In addition, messages exchanging information sometimes made reference to the enclosed attachments or appended messages, other times the exchange of information was effected in the email messages alone.

The original classification was changed to guarantee a balanced analysis of the corpus and to better reflect the writers' concrete writing process and the recipients' interpretation process.

78 No political incorrectness is intended even though *Postperson* is not used.

Since the present corpus did not contain the attachments, the information they contained had to be clearly separated from that presented in the email messages. Furthermore, writing an on-line email message was considered a different type activity from writing a Word document to be later attached to an email message. Consequently, a new message type was identified, whose communicative purpose was to deliver either attachments or appended messages for information and/or comments. The new classification thus clearly excluded the attachments delivered via email from the analysis and focused on the communicative purposes of the email messages themselves. In other words, the information provided was always to be found in the email messages, i.e. in the Noticeboard messages; the exchange of information took place in the email messages, i.e. in the Dialogue messages; and although attachments and appended messages also contained information, the email messages were simply used to deliver them for either information and/or comments, i.e. the Postman messages.

To classify the messages according to their communicative purpose into different types, a set of criteria had to be developed to operationalize the purpose. The messages seemed to differ in three respects, i.e. in

- the number of recipients,
- the type of reaction expected from the recipient, and
- the manifestation of intertextuality with either the preceding or subsequent messages (see Fairclough 1992a).

Table 10 summarizes the characteristics of messages with different communicative purposes.

TABLE 10. Criteria used to identify different communicative purposes.

Criteria/Message type	Noticeboard	Postman	Dialogue
Number of recipients	Many	One/Many	One/Many
Reaction			
• Expected	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No ⁷⁹
• Type of reaction expected	Typically non-verbal	Verbal/non-verbal	Verbal
Manifest intertextuality to preceding or subsequent message	No	Yes/No	Yes

As can be seen from Table 10, the number of the recipients in the Noticeboard messages was always more than one, whereas in the two other message types also single recipients were possible. The second criterion related to the reaction of the recipients was further specified since all three message types could trigger a reaction/response of some kind, even though its nature varied between the types. The Noticeboard messages did not typically trigger a verbal response but only a non-verbal one, such as changing arrangements because of a delayed flight (but see examples 2 and 5). The Postman messages, on the other hand, acknowledged either that the documents were sent for information, with no expected response, or that they were sent for comments, in which case a verbal response was expected. The messages exchanging information, i.e. the Dialogue messages, consisted of two subtypes: opening and response messages. When an exchange was opened, a request for a verbal response was made; in the following message, the response was provided, and possibly a new request was made; consequently, a response message turned into a new opening message. The message exchange was terminated by a message without any further requests or with a clear conclusion to the exchange (see example 114 in 8.3.1). The classification, however, did not reflect this dual nature of the messages: only the first message of the exchange was classified as an opening message

79 The final message in an exchange was the only exception; it expected no verbal reaction.

and all the others as response messages. The two types of messages were interdependent of each other and could be compared to a genre system in a small scale (Yates & Orlikowski 2002). A few messages sent to one recipient only (which excluded their classification into Noticeboard messages) contained no request for verbal responses but only requests for action. Because the requests still seemed to invite verbal responses in their particular context, they were classified on the basis of their pragmatic force in their context of use rather than their linguistic realization (see below and 8.3.3 for details).

The third criterion, manifestation of intertextuality, was closely linked with the second one, the type of reaction expected. If no verbal response was expected, there were no references to future texts by the recipient either; this was the case with the Noticeboard messages.⁸⁰ If, however, a verbal response was expected, as was the case with all the opening messages of the Dialogue type and the Postman messages requesting comments on the attachment(s) or appended messages, it automatically meant that the messages contained explicit or implicit references to subsequent texts. Similarly, in the response messages of the Dialogue type implicit references to the preceding message were always present because all the response messages in the corpus had been sent via the *Reply* function of the system, which entailed that the opening message accompanied the response message. In addition, explicit references to the previous message were frequently employed (see 8.2.3).

In what follows, the three message types are introduced separately with examples. In addition, the informants' views of the communicative purposes as well as their replies to the question about what they did/would have done when they had received the message in question are discussed.

⁸⁰ The Noticeboard messages could still refer to follow-up messages by the same writer, for instance when the recipients were kept informed about the labor contract situation in Sweden (messages S22, shown as example 12 in 6.4, S36, and S55). See also 8.2.3.

6.1.1 NOTICEBOARD MESSAGES

The messages of the Noticeboard type could be compared with messages on the notice board or on the Intranet: they were for the recipients to see, that is, to inform them of corporate issues, but the writer did not expect subsequent contacts. If, however, the recipient found him/herself in a position in which more information was needed, subsequent contacts were possible (see examples 2 and 5). The Noticeboard messages accounted for 9% (n=25) of the primary corpus.

As was pointed out above (see Table 10), the Noticeboard messages were addressed to multiple recipients and they informed them of a variety of issues, such as closing of a unit, virus alerts, new contact persons in patent negotiations, and the state of trade union negotiations with regular updates; they also confirmed internal meetings and teleconferences. In addition, one informant (Monica) acting as the information officer in her unit received and forwarded press releases and appointment news. Below, a message⁸¹ sent to twelve recipients is shown.

(1) Subject: X calendaring, contacts with XYZ

Hello all,

I have now got confirmation that Stig Svensson will be XYZ's future contact person for negotiations regarding the patent and the meeting on Jan 28th is definitely postponed. As they are in the middle of the reorganization he could not give a definite answer regarding a new date but he will contact me as soon as possible to set up a new meeting. There might also be a change in opinion from XYZ regarding their Priorities for how to proceed in this matter. A direct cooperation was not as clear as indicated before and the new MD will take an active part in the process.

Best regards
Sven (S94)

81 This message was one of the messages presented to an informant, Henrik, together with the questionnaire given in Appendix (3).

As can be seen from example (1), no reaction is expected; the communicative purpose of the message is to inform the recipients of a new contact person in patent negotiations (also specified in the Subject line). Consequently, the message does not exhibit any intertextuality with the recipients' subsequent messages although references to prior events and shared knowledge between the participants are evident (e.g. I have *now* got, *the* patent, *the* meeting).

Example (2) differs from (1) as now the recipient might find him/herself in a situation in which more information would be required.

(2) Subject: ATD Directory

Dear colleagues,
Last week we started the distribution of the new edition. We have used the same list and numbers of copies as last time. If you want to change the contact person or numbers of booklets for the next time, please contact me.

If you have not received the directories the end of April, please let me know.

Best regards,

Berit Jonsson
Corporate Communications
Tel +46 2345678
Fax +46 3456789 (S274)

Example (2) contains two requests made conditionally (underlined); that is, if the conditions are not met, the requests will not be relevant. If, however, the conditions are met, the writer of the message will offer her help and is expecting a contact. This means that a Noticeboard message, under certain conditions, functioned as an opening message of the Dialogue type. In other words, for those recipients who had received the directory example (2) represented a notice on the notice board, whereas for those

recipients who had not received the directory example (2) offered an opening of a dialogue (for a response, see example 5 in 6.1.3). In the present study, this message type with two options of interpretation was classified as a Noticeboard message.⁸²

It seems that some of the Noticeboard messages were not written on-line but were drafted before and copied to the email template. They represented communicative events delivered to outside interest groups and were sent to corporate staff for information only. The most distinct examples were press releases and appointment notices. It can be expected that in the future messages of this type will be increasingly delivered as attachments or placed on corporate Intranet pages.

When the informants were requested to identify the purposes of and the reactions to three Noticeboard messages, either written by them or sent to them, their replies reflected the informative nature of the messages,⁸³ as can be seen from Table 11.

TABLE 11. Informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Noticeboard messages presented to them.⁸⁴

Noticeboard messages	Purposes	Reactions
Example (1) S94	Information.	Read it from the screen and then put it in the deleted box.
S158	To deliver timetable change info quickly to all people concerned.	Have to check and rearrange timetable. After that make the necessary flight and hotel bookings.
F214	Information and Agenda to meeting.	- (informant wrote the message himself)

⁸² Only 3 messages of the 25 Noticeboard messages were of this type (S274, F45, F251).

⁸³ The question sheet is in Appendix 3.

⁸⁴ If the informant wrote the message him/herself, his/her reaction to the message was not requested. To guarantee the anonymity of the informants, some answers were summarized and not given verbatim; this also applies to Tables 12 (in 6.1.2) and 13 (in 6.1.3).

As Table 11 shows, all the replies about the purposes of the messages included the word *information* or *info* either alone or together with a specification, such as *timetable change info*. The purpose of example (1) was described as *Information*. The replies to the question “What did you do/would you do when you got a message like this?” varied according to the content of the message. The message in example (1) confirming the name of a new contact person in patent negotiations was read and then deleted, whereas the message (S158) informing the recipients of a rescheduling of a meeting made the recipient *check and rearrange his timetable and then make necessary flight and hotel bookings*. Both replies thus confirmed one of the criteria for Noticeboard messages, i.e. that the recipient was not expected to reply verbally. However, as the informants’ replies show, the messages still invoked non-verbal action. Since the messages were not needed after they had been read, they could be deleted. This feature emphasizes the ephemeral quality of email as discussed by e.g. Baron (2000: 241) and Yli-Jokipii (1994: 39).

6.1.2 POSTMAN MESSAGES

Postman messages were used to deliver other documents, either attachments or appended messages, for information and/or comments. The Postman messages accounted for 36% (n=102) of the corpus: two thirds delivered attachments (n=65), less than a third delivered appended messages (n=26), and the rest delivered both documents (n=11). The distribution of the Postman messages in the informants’ mailboxes varied most, from 4% to 54% (see Table 14 in 6.2), reflecting the organizational position and tasks of the informant. The smallest percentage belonged to one of the specialists, and the biggest to managerial and executive staff. For example, Henrik (Vice President), responsible for one big client and having several employees working in his sales team, regularly received Postman messages with attachments about the sales, order stocks, order inflows, and customer overdues; reports about the

whole unit's performance, investments, and profits; agendas and minutes of meetings he had attended. In addition, the members of Henrik's sales team sent him messages to which they had appended their message exchanges with clients for his information and/or comments, or they sent their (visit) reports to other units, etc. as attachments. In this network of messages the Vice President seemed to be in the center; he was kept informed of the issues relevant for his managerial work and team leader position.

As described above, some of the Postman messages only delivered documents for information and no reaction was expected, whereas others commented or made requests related to the attachments or appended messages. A total of 21% (n=22) of all Postman messages were textless (apart from an occasional preprogrammed signature) but they served their purpose: email was only used as the medium to deliver the documents for information. The fact that an attachment accompanied an email message could be seen from the Mail Index; it always contained a paper clip symbol indicating enclosure. Below, example (3) shows a Postman message indicating that a document has been attached. It was sent to 30 recipients in the unit (DIS).

(3) Subject: Summer vacations 2000

Hello,
Please find attached the list of summer vacations in DIS,
changes are possible.

Have a nice weekend!

Best regards,
Marketta M.

Attachment Converted: "c:\Program Files\Eudora\Attach\
Summer~1.XLS" (F221)

Some attachments could be described as routine in the sense that they were delivered regularly; the Vice President, for instance, received updates on order stock and order inflow every other

week. Typically, these transmissions only contained the attached documents and there was no text in the Postman message effecting the delivery. In addition to these regularly sent attachments, there was a number of other documents, such as minutes of meetings, agendas, visit reports, different kinds of tables, calculations, etc. that were sent as attachments and which were also recognized and referred to in the email message delivering them. The Postman messages delivering attachments thus seem to have assumed the role of Cover notes or Fax forms that are used to enclose other documents.

A couple of times a text which seemed to assume the role of an attachment and was preceded by a phrase such as *Enclosed please find*, which was typical for Postman messages, was found in the email message itself and not as a separate attachment file. These messages were also classified as members of the Postman category. However, the 'attachment' text was excluded from the analysis of the email messages because the conventional attachments were not included in the corpus either (see Table 10 in 6.1 for the classification criteria).

The Postman messages that were used to append other messages for information and/or for comments were often sent to one recipient only. They appeared almost exclusively in the Vice President's mailbox and typically brought along email exchanges that his team members had had with clients for his information or for his comments. The function of the Postman message could be detected from the Subject in the Mail Index; it contained an abbreviation, such as *FW* (forwarded) or the equivalent Swedish abbreviation, *VB* (vidarebefordrat). Through forwarding, a message exchange found new readers. For example, an internal exchange in English between two employees about some contentious laboratory reports was forwarded to one Swedish staff member without any comment; it was forwarded by this recipient to another Swede, her team leader, with the comment *För info*⁸⁵;

85 In English: *For info*.

and by this recipient to a Finnish colleague with the words *For info* (see 5.4, example 22).

Below, example (4) shows a Postman message sent to one recipient, in which the writer is commenting on the appended message and making questions about it.

(4) Subject: VB: RN5 vs Xhall

Hej Niilo,

As you can see XX (Customer's name) is now getting info from the market about the new product quality from CN 5. Do you have any comments to Philipp's mail? I have all the time told them that the investment is of course aimed at increasing product-quality to at least the LN8 level, but we should wait see the actual outturn before discussing any real consequences for XX compared to their competitors. As you know XX is getting zz grade fro their most demanding jobs and we are charging a premium for these products.

Look forward to hearing from you

Kind regards (S11)

Example (4) was sent to one recipient to ask for his comments on the appended message received from a client. The Postman messages of this type tended to open with references such as *as you can see*, as in example (4), reflecting a situation where the sender and the recipient would be sitting face-to-face discussing *Philipp's mail*. To find a pre-existing genre for Postman messages of this type is not simple: could it be a meeting or a telephone call? If the answer were *yes* to either question, it would have to meet one further requirement: both participants would need to have access to the document being discussed simultaneously.

When answering the question about the purpose of the Postman messages, including one textless one, the informants seemed to bypass the actual email message and focused on the document attached. In other words, what they described was the purpose of the attachment (see Table 12).

TABLE 12. Informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Postman messages presented to them.

Postman messages	Purposes	Reactions
F101		
Example 10 in 5.4	To keep me informed and possible actions.	Open it and print a hard copy for reading later (at home) Saved it in a binder.
F107	Just info.	Open it and read it from the screen.
S154	Sharing memos and information from previous meetings.	I usually check the files whether the information is correct and updated.
F221	Inform group of people, concerning vacations.	Read information attached mail, this case vacation list.
S281	I would like to have more information about the ABC so that I can do X.	-(informant wrote the message herself)

The informants' reactions, i.e. their replies to the question of what you did/would do when you got a message like this (see Table 12) depended on the type of document attached because, as mentioned above, the informants focused their attention on them. For example, as Table 12 shows, a regular update on order inflow delivered with a textless Postman message (F107) would have been read on the screen by the Vice President, which suggests that the attachment would have existed only in the electronic form and would have been deleted when not needed any more. In contrast, he would have printed the visit report, which was attached to another Postman message (F101; see example 10 in 6.4), and saved it in a binder. The visit report would thus have been transformed from an electronic version into a traditional hard copy stored in a concrete binder.

Similarly to the action triggered by the Noticeboard messages in Table 11 in 6.1.1, the attachments here seemed to boost action when no explicit requests for action were present. For instance, the recipient of message (S154) would have checked the correctness of information in the attachment containing the minutes of a meeting he had attended. This type of action might have been due to shared knowledge in the corporate environment; in other

words, action was expected although it was not specifically requested.

Chaining of message types. – Postman messages served a specific function in email communication in enabling different kind of combinations of the three message types since the technology allows for forwarding of messages. A Postman message could forward Noticeboard messages, Dialogic exchanges, or other Postman messages appending still other messages. This meant that the same message could appear in different chains depending on its travels among the employees (cf. message A in examples 21 and 22 in 5.4). The messages embedded in such chains were interdependent although originally they were independent. It is only after they had been ‘reused’ as reference points and appended to a Postman message that they became related and thus connected via manifest intertextuality (see Fairclough 1992a). In this sense, the messages did not form any stable systems and their combinations could not be predicted. Rather, they formed ‘message communities’, which had different members depending on the situation.

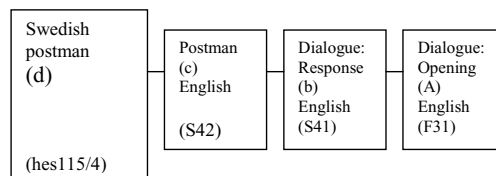


FIGURE 3. A message community of four messages.

Figure 3 shows a message community consisting of four messages from Henrik’s inbox. This community together with other messages creating other communities could be found in example (22) in 5.4. In this community, the opening message of the Dialogue type (A) contains a question which gets a reply in the response message (b). The writer of (b) forwards the exchange to Maria

with a Postman message (c), and Maria uses a Swedish postman⁸⁶ to forward all three English messages to Henrik for his information. As Figure 3 shows, email messages in different languages followed each other, which entails that message communities could be multilingual.

The phenomenon of message communities is unique in its ability to combine different types of messages. Although communicative events via telephone calls, faxes, internal mail, etc. have always followed each other, never before, however, has it been possible to forward other documents in this manner, and then print them all out in a sequence, or eliminate all of them simultaneously by pressing the Delete button.

6.1.3 DIALOGUE MESSAGES

The communicative purpose of Dialogue messages was to exchange information about corporate issues; the messages accounted for the biggest share of the corpus, a total of 53% (n=150). Some of them opened exchanges (n=34), and others were responses to opening messages (n=116). The response messages always included the abbreviations *RE(ply)* or the Swedish equivalent *SV(ar)*⁸⁷ in the *Subject*, when the *Reply* function of the email technology had been used. In these exchanges the dialogue could extend over many messages, with the opening message starting the exchange and a number of response messages subsequently taking turns. In this way Dialogue messages formed chains in which the later contributions were connected to the previous ones. Examples (5)-(6) show a two-message excerpt with two response messages from a longer dialogue between two employees.⁸⁸ The opening message of the exchange was show as example (2) above.

⁸⁶ Although this study focused on the English messages of the corpus, the operation of the message chains suggests that the same message types could be found in the messages in other languages.

(5) Subject: RE: ATD Directory

Hello Berit,
We have not received the new edition yet – can you please check how soon we shall receive it? Is it possible to get altogether 150 copies?
As I will be on maternity leave very soon, please note the contact person during my absence: Ms Satu Svensson.
Best regards,
Maija Keko (F275)

(6) Subject: RE: ATD Directory

Hello Maija,
The distribution started on April 12. I'll try to find out what has happened.
Best regards,
Berit Jonsson
Corporate Communications
Tel + 46 2345678
Fax + 46 3456789 (S276)

Examples (5) and (6) manifest the main criterion of Dialogue messages: they are not independent in the same way as Noticeboard messages are. Rather, they need each other to accomplish the exchange; interdependence between them is explicit. This type of manifest intertextuality (Fairclough 1992a) has also been called *cross-message coherence* or the *dialogic linkage* between the original message and the reply message (Yongyan 2000). The coherence across messages was facilitated by the *Reply* function of email technology, as discussed above.

87 The Finnish version, *VAST(aus)*, appeared only once in a reply to an external message.

88 The email program of the company automatically placed the latest contribution first and inserted right-pointing angle brackets at the beginning of each line of the original message. In the examples, the latest contribution is given last for reasons of clarity to the reader. In addition, the angle brackets have been eliminated.

Dialogic exchanges could also be compared to *genre systems* (Yates & Orlikowski 2002), which refer to sequences of interrelated genres. Although this study classified both the opening and response messages as Dialogue messages, their relationship was similar to that of genres in a genre system. In other words, their relationship could be described as “a highly choreographed interaction” (Yates & Orlikowski 2002: 20) as an opening message automatically presupposed a response message.

In addition to the interdependency between opening and response messages, another criterion used to recognize Dialogue messages was closely linked with it; it was the presence of a request for a verbal response either in the opening message or in the previous response message. In example (5) two requests can be found: *can you please check how soon we shall receive it? Is it possible to get altogether 150 copies?* Berrit gives her response in the response message (6).

Typically, Dialogue exchanges opened with opening messages but also Noticeboard messages could assume this role when they contained a request that was made under certain conditions. Indeed, example (5) is a response to a Noticeboard message shown in example (2) in 6.1.1 which contains the request *If you have not received the directories at the end of April, please let me know* (S274). As the writer of (5) had not received the directory, she responded to the Noticeboard message.

In addition, although some messages literally only contained requests for non-verbal action, they were still classified as opening Dialogue messages. The reason was that the requests, in spite of their linguistic realization, seemed to invite a verbal response in their particular context involving two participants. Consequently, the classification of messages was also influenced by pragmatic considerations. For example, the following request: *Would you kindly insert message in Insite that our office will be closed on Tuesday May 8th, 2001 (“ Victoire 1945 ”)* (F258), literally inviting non-verbal action received the following response: *it was a pity that you sent the message to me as I have nothing to do with Insite. And as you know*

by now I was not at the office on Friday to forward it (S259). The recipient of the first message felt that she needed to react verbally even though it was not specifically requested (see 8.3.3 for details).

Some Dialogue messages also had more than two participants in the message exchanges, thus creating something like a conversation. An example of an exchange of the conversation type having more than two participants was one with three messages concerning employee exchange⁸⁹ (see examples 115–117 in 8.3.1). The sender of the first message was MW, a head of an overseas unit, and the recipients were LH, the prospective exchange employee's superior, and HA, the Vice President of the employee's unit. Two other persons had been copied in. MW was willing to hire Anne, a Swedish employee, for a fixed period. He explained the practical arrangements to her superior LH and asked for comments. The second message was a response written by LH, which he also sent as a copy to Anne and the Vice President. He thanked for the arrangements explained in the first message and asked if MW would let Anne know about the accommodation. The third message was written by Anne and addressed to MW concerning the possible dates of her arrival. She sent a copy of the message to LH and the Vice President and one more employee in the unit where she was employed.

To summarize the exchange, MW, the overseas unit head, was either the sender or the recipient of each of these three messages, and HA, the Vice President, always received a copy. The other participants, however, had different roles. Anne was not involved in the first message, the second message was sent to her as a copy, and she wrote the third message, somewhat unexpectedly. LH, Anne's superior, was the recipient of the first message and the writer of the second one; in the third one he was

89 All the messages were written in English although two of the messages had only Swedish recipients (see 5.5 and footnote 64 in for the use of languages and Finnish and Swedish names). The reason for the choice of English could be that it was considered possible that the messages would be forwarded within the overseas unit to non-Swedish speakers involved in the exchange arrangements.

copied in. Moreover, the two persons present in the cc list in the first message disappeared, and there was one new person present in the third message. This message exchange resembled a conversation where one person was the key figure to whom the other participants 'spoke', taking turns. Thus, some participants remained at the background all through the conversation 'listening' like a quiet audience (e.g. HA), but some others 'listened' to one exchange only and left after it, and new audiences were summoned.

Automatic reply messages, which inform the sender of a message of the recipient's absence from the office or unavailability represented an exception to the criteria for the message classification. Since the email system sends them automatically when the Automatic reply function has been activated, they could be classified as response messages of the Dialogue type. However, automatic reply messages could also be characterized as Noticeboard messages since their communicative purpose was to inform the sender of the unavailability of the recipient. In the end, they were classified as Dialogue messages for two reasons: first, because they were always sent as responses to other messages and second, because they were sent to one person at a time.

The communicative purposes of the Dialogue messages presented to the informants were confirmed by them. The requesting function was recognized and the purposes were often described by using synonyms for the verbs used in the requests. Two Dialogue messages presented to the informants are given below to illustrate their replies that can be found in Table 13. The recipients of the messages were Seppo and Leena, both of them informants of the present study. Example (7) is an opening message and (8) a response message.

(7) Subject: A/B/C

Hello Seppo,
Could you please give me some dates in March and beginning of
April for visit/report at C and their A together with B.
Best regards,
Sven Lindgren (S160)

(8) Subject: SV: Envelopes via UPS, please forward asap

Hello Leena,
Confirm receipt of your message. To whom shall I distribute the
envelopes? Has it something to do with our M Group meeting in
Xplace? If so, only 5 of the participators live in Sweden.
Regards,
Mona (S186)

The responses given to Examples (7) and (8) are presented first in Table 13, which shows the informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Dialogue messages presented to them.

As Table 13 shows, the replies concerning the purposes were mostly explicitly worded. The purpose of example (7) containing a request starting with *Could you please give me some dates in March . . .* (S160) was worded by the informant as *To find suitable dates for an interview* and that of example (8) as *To confirm the receipt of the message and ask for instructions about what to do with the letters*. One informant elaborated on the issues taken up in the message (F150) and, doing so, bypassed the obvious purpose of the message, which he confirmed by answering the question about his own reaction: *I checked my calendar and later confirmed to the sender that the timetable was ok*. Another informant also acknowledged the purpose of the message (S222) when he said that he would *read information and answer to question* when asked what he did/would do when he received the message. To the question about the purpose he replied: *Handle daily operations with email*, suggesting that messages of this type were common in his mailbox and it was with these messages that everyday operations were handled. Both of these replies seem to emphasize the fact that the informants regarded this type of message so frequent and everyday that they bypassed the actual

question about the purpose and moved on to other issues: one of them into contemplations about the company's values and the other into summarizing the nature of email exchanges in general terms.

TABLE 13. Informants' views of the purposes of and reactions to the Dialogue messages presented to them.

Dialogue messages	Purposes	Reactions
S160	To find suitable dates for an interview.	As requested, I delivered some dates at the given time perspective in order to get the interview dates sorted out quickly.
Example (8) S186	To confirm the receipt of the message and ask for instructions about what to do with the letters. ⁹⁰	Would call/send an email in return and would give instructions. ⁹¹
F43	Open it and make a hard copy. Contact the person involved and give an answer back.	Information and request for response to a specific question.
F150	From the surface it is naturally providing information. However, it all shows that our sales office takes the issue seriously and does what is expected from them. Somehow it shows the values of the company, we care and we do things without unnecessary hassle.	I checked my calendar and later on confirmed to the sender, that the timetable was OK.
F184	To find out a person's email address. ⁹²	- (informant wrote the message herself)
F185	To alert about an incoming consignment and give instructions as to what to do on receipt. ⁹³	- (informant wrote the message herself)
S222	Handle daily operations with email.	Read information and answer to question.
F263	Katja wants to receive the X book.	I will send an e-mail to Sheila and ask if she has sent any X books to Katja.

90 Original in Finnish: *Vahvistaa että on saanut viestin, kysyy ohjeita mitä kirjeille tehdään.*

91 Original in Finnish: *Soittaisin/mailaisin takaisin, ja antaisin ohjeet.*

92 Original in Finnish: *Saada selville erään ihmisen sähköpostiosoite.*

93 Original in Finnish: *Varoittaa saapuvasta lähetyksestä ja antaa ohjeita miten pakeitin saavuttua. toimitaan*

Responses to the question of what you did/would do when you got a message like this suggested that the informants would meet the request in the message, as the responses to examples (7)-(8) show: *As requested, I delivered some dates at the given time perspective in order to get the interview dates sorted out quickly and Would call/send an email in return and would give instructions.* The latter reply also shows that the response does not need to be effected through email; also telephone may be used, which supports the finding of writing and speaking activities being closely intertwined in business (Louhiala-Salminen 2002a: 224; also Gunnarson 1997). Once it was obvious that the informant would do something for which there was no explicit request in the message. The reaction to message (F43) read: *open it and make a hard copy. Contact the person involved and give an answer back to the person who sent the mail.* The message contains the following request: *That's why I ask, if MP could come with us as an expert* (F43). The response shows that in addition to getting in touch with the sender, the informant would have also contacted MP, which was not explicitly requested in the message, but possibly implied. Similarly to the action triggered by the Noticeboard and Postman messages discussed in 6.1.1 and 6.1.2, some requests were embedded in the situations without any verbalized requests being present.

Finally, as pointed out in 6.1, 2% of the messages (n=5) could not be classified into Noticeboard, Postman, or Dialogue messages since they had multiple purposes and thus combined two of the message types in one message. Below, example (9) shows a combination of Dialogue and Postman messages.

(9) Subject: Material for R&D Seminar, rehearsal January 30

Dear Speakers at R&D Seminar,
I hope that the preparation work for your presentation for the forthcoming R&D Seminar is progressing well.

Material for R&D Seminar-technical equipment

Please note that we want you to send:

- Text summary and
- Presentation

as word and powerpoint files to

lena.karlsson@storaenso.com no later than February 3. We also want to know what technical equipment you are to use, PC or OH-projector –please advise

Internal rehearsal, Xcity January 30

We will arrange an Internal rehearsal for Stora Enso Research January 30 as per file below.

If anyone of you have an interest to participate, please let me know before January 25

Sven (S18)

Example (9) was the only message of the five whose nature could be detected on the basis of the Subject given in the email template: *Material for R&D Seminar, rehearsal January 30*, as two topics related to the R&D seminar, i.e. material and rehearsal, are specifically introduced. Issues relating to the material for the seminar are presented first: the section represents a Dialogue message since it requires a verbal response to its request concerning the equipment. The heading *Internal rehearsal, Xcity January 31*, worded as *rehearsal January 30* on the Subject line, marks a change in the purpose and also takes up the topic of rehearsal. This section represents a Postman message since it is used to enclose a document about an internal rehearsal 'as per file enclosed'. As example (9) also shows, messages that contain more than one purpose can be easily cut in two, which was not possible with the rest of the messages only exhibiting one purpose.

The other messages combining purposes could also be easily separated into the two sections present in them: in (S46), the Noticeboard section contained an agenda and the Dialogue section specific instructions to one recipient; in (S66), the Postman section delivered an attachment about a meeting and the Noticeboard

summarized another meeting with a customer; the third message (F151) contained a Noticeboard section informing the recipient of a winner of a competition and the Dialogue section announced a new competition specifically requesting contacts from the recipients. And, in message (S49) the Noticeboard part informed the recipient of a meeting and the Postman attached a reply form.

6.2 DISTRIBUTION OF MESSAGE TYPES

The distribution of the message types varied considerably. The share of the Noticeboard messages was the smallest in the corpus of 282 messages: around 9% (n=25) of the messages were classified into this category. The Postman messages accounted for some 36% (n=102) and Dialogue messages for some 53% (n=150) of the messages. Messages combining communicative purposes accounted for less than 2% (n=5) of the whole corpus. The distributions of the different message types varied in the informants' mailboxes and seemed to depend on the organizational position and type of tasks of the mailbox owners. Below, the percentages for each message type in the informants' mailboxes are given in Table 14. Even if the number of the messages is sometimes small and a percentage may feel like an awkward measure, it still shows the relationship of the types better than sheer numbers.

As can be seen from Table 14, the distribution of the three message types in the individual mailboxes was different even though the overall trend seemed to be similar: Dialogue messages dominated with Postman messages close behind, and Noticeboard messages ranked third. The messages combining some of the purposes were in a clear minority; they could only be found in Henrik's and Seppo's mailboxes.

TABLE 14. Distribution of the three message types of internal English email messages according to informant.

Informant	Job role	Notice-board messages %	Postman messages %	Dialogue messages %	Messages combining purposes %	Total/ number of messages
Henrik 0	Executive	10	47	43	-	100%/30
Henrik 1	Executive	11	54	32	4	100%/114
Kauko	Manager	8	50	42	-	100%/12
Erja	Manager	-	17	83	-	100%/23
Hannu	Manager	7	29	64	-	100%/14
Berit	Specialist	4	12	84	-	100%/25
Seppo	Specialist	12	4	80	4	100%/25
Leena	Staff	-	14	86	-	100%/21
Monica	Staff	22	33	44	-	100%/18
Total		9	36	53	2	100%/282

Henrik 0, mailbox collected in 2000

Henrik 1, mailbox collected in 2001

The main reason for the differences in the distribution of the message types would seem to be the organizational position of the informant and the type of tasks he/she was involved in during the collection period. As can be seen from Table 14, Henrik (Vice President) and Kauko (Local Manager) accounted for the biggest shares of the Postman messages. For example, Henrik received Postman messages with attachments about the sales and the financial performance of his unit and Postman messages with appended messages about his staff's negotiations with clients. Even though the percentages for Henrik were not exactly the same over the two collection periods and also the ranking of the Postman and Dialogue messages had changed, the overall trend was similar.

The high number of the Dialogue messages, especially in Erja's (Manager), Berit's (Specialist), Seppo's (Specialist), and Leena's (Staff) mailboxes, could be explained by the type of tasks they were involved in during the collection period. For example, Erja was negotiating arrangements for a training day, and Berit received a number of inquiries relating to her earlier message

about delivering an ATD Directory (see example 2 in 6.1.1). Some recipients needed more directories than their allocation was; others had not received any directories, whereas some did not want the ones they had received, etc. (see examples 5 in 6.1.3). These messages and her own replies (see example 6 in 6.1.3) filled her mailbox.

As can be seen from Table 14, Monica's (Staff) mailbox contained the highest number of Noticeboard messages. This was due to the fact that she was the person receiving and forwarding press releases and appointment news in the unit, which were classified as Noticeboard messages. The fact that Erja and Leena did not have any Noticeboard messages in their mailboxes was obviously due to the short collection period rather than to their being absent altogether.

The majority of the Postman messages, and all of the Noticeboard ones, had a large distribution, and they reflected what Suchan & Dulek (1998) call *public* discourse typical of managerial and executive communication. It seemed that managerial and executive staff did not only write, but also received, texts that could be defined as public discourse.; in addition, the Postman messages appending message exchanges typically sent to one recipient only were common. Most of the private discourse, on the other hand, could be found in the Dialogue messages of the specialist staff, confirming Suchan & Dulek's (1998) claims. Further, the varied subjects of the Postman messages seemed to confirm Suchan & Dulek's (1998) notion of broad corporate knowledge needed to fulfill the executive and managerial jobs whereas the expertise required of specialists is more focused, as the Dialogue messages suggest.

6.3 NAMES OF MESSAGE TYPES

According to Swales (1990: 61, 56), the communicative purpose of a genre should be ascribable in its name even though he admits

that there may be genres without any names. Although Swales (1990) also raises doubts concerning the discourse community's own views of genre names, the email messages were explored from this angle to find out how they were referred to by the writers and the recipients (see Appendix 3). When the informants were asked to give names to the messages presented to them, the request was met with some confusion. One of the informants wrote: "I don't really understand what you mean with this question but to me it does not have a name", and another one replied with seventeen question marks. Table 15 shows the names given to the messages by the informants.

TABLE 15. Names given to the messages by the informants.

Noticeboard messages	Postman messages	Dialogue messages
Timetable change information (S158)	Meeting info (S154)	Timetable Info (F150)
Meeting confirmation (F214)	Vacation information (F221)	Date/interview date info (S160)
(don't understand question) (S94)	ABC/2000 (issue discussed in the message) (S281)	Inquiry (F184)
	(don't understand question) (F101)	Advance notice (F185)
	(don't understand question) (F107)	A confirmation and an inquiry combined (S186)
		Technical question (S222)
		???????????????? (F263)
		(don't understand question) (F43)

As Table 15 shows, the names given by the informants equaled the content of the message in a summarized form typically including the word *information* or *info*. Only three Dialogue messages were given names familiar from business communication textbooks (e.g. Kortetjärvi-Nurmi et al. 2002, also Kankaanranta & Nordlund 1998): an inquiry, an advance notice, and a

confirmation and an inquiry combined.⁹⁴ The reason for the informant's exceptional ability to name the messages by using specific document names was likely due to her knowledge of business documents as components of the Finnish or English language curriculum in commercial institutions. The background information about the informants did not include details of their education, but it can be assumed that she must have had a formal education of the kind to qualify her for a secretarial position with a Vice President.

The fact that most informants did not indicate any specific document names apart from the word *info(rmation)* specified by the summarized content of the message suggests that the three email message types did not have names that would have separated them. Interestingly, the informants still attempted to find names for the messages apart from the one informant who said that he did not understand the question. However, if the informants had used the name of the medium for the messages it delivered, it would have meant that all the three types would have been referred to by a single name, *email message*, which the informants might have considered too obvious or mundane as an answer (see also 6.4).

This finding supports Louhiala-Salminen's (1995: 66-67, 51) survey of Finnish business professionals; the share of non-format-bound business writing had taken over from format-bound writing, which implied the existence of texts without any specific names. Indeed, over 70% of the documents were characterized as various types of inquiries or updates by the respondents and the rest were format-bound documents such as offers, orders, and requests for quotation. The increase in non-format bound documents was attributed to the fact that around 55% of the communication was effected in-house. Thus, it seems that internal

94 Originally, she gave the names in Finnish: *tiedustelu, vahvistus ja ohjeiden kysely sekä ennakoilmoitus*.

communication is characterized by non-format bound business writing in which documents do not necessarily have specific names.

6.4 FOCUS GROUP'S VIEWS OF THREE MESSAGES

A final comment concerning the three message types identified on the basis of their communicative purpose is given to the nine members of the focus group consisting of international business professionals. They represented the international business discourse community using lingua franca English but were outsiders to the specific Stora Enso community. The three messages presented to the focus group are given below (see also Appendix 4). As can be seen, example (10) represents a Noticeboard message, example (11) is a Postman message, and (12) a Dialogue message.

(10) From Svensson, Lars
Date Mon, 23 Sept 2001 11:04:20
To Majapuro, Marketta; Suni, Marke; Hippi, Jari; Lundstrom, Monica; Laine, Eija; Rahkola, Seppo; Suomi, Hannu; Sunila, Anne; Jaakkola, Henrik; Karlsson, Berit; Bjorn, Thomas; (+ aliases, and individual recipients)
Subject Labor contract situation – Sweden

Dear Sirs,

A bid for a 3 year contract giving a total increase in wages of 6,3% as well as a reduction of working days by 1 day/year during the contract period was rejected by the blue collar unions on 17/9. According to reports in media today, a new bid by the mediator is expected early this week.

We will keep you posted of any further developments.

Kind regards
Lars Svensson (S22)

(11) From Markuksela, Pirkko
Date Tue, 26 Jan 2001 13:57:28
To Laine Eija; Rahkola Seppo; Suomi Hannu; Sunila Anne;
Jaakkola Matti; Karlsson, Eva; Bjorn, Ulf; KA5 (+ 30
other recipients)
Subject: X Y's visit report 18.01.2001

Dear Colleagues,
Please find enclosed a summary of our visit at X (Customer's
name) Y's (Location) factory 18.01.2001.
Wishing you all a nice weekend!

Best regards,
Pirkko

Attachment Converted: "c:/eudora/attach/KP HU 180101.doc"
(F101)

(12) From Andersson, Sven
Date Mon, 15 Feb 2001 08:07:01
To Suominen, Pekka
Cc Nordström, Lars; Haglund, Monica
Subject Winterliner for Spain

Dear Pekka,
What was the outcome of your discussion with Henrik Lindfors?
Could we get approx 2000mt 265gsm trimming machine for feb
production?

Kind Regards,
Sven Andersson
tel int+46 54 123450
fax int+46 54 543210
email sven.andersson@storaenso.com (S20)

The focus group members replied to the question about the purposes of the messages on the basis of the three examples (10)–(12). Table 16 presents a summary of the replies by the focus group members.

TABLE 16. Focus group members' perceptions about the communicative purposes of three messages representing the three message types.

Focus group member No	Noticeboard message (Example 10)	Postman message (Example 11)	Dialogue message (Example 12)
1	To give the same info to all.	To distribute information.	To ask for the decision taken.
2	To report important information.	Just to inform.	To ask for something.
3	To report the progress of union negotiation.	To share information.	To ask for the outcome of the meeting.
4	To spread out information.	To record the visit.	To ask for a conclusion and advice.
5	No idea.	To record factory visit.	The sender asks whether he will get trimming machine.
6	To let the receiver know the situation.	A summary of a factory visit.	To ask something.
7	To inform.	To review the visit.	To ask for a consequence of the discussion.
8	To keep stakeholders informed.	It might be for some actions. A summary of information	For business purpose.
9	To inform relevant people of progress.	To share information.	To ask for information.

As can be seen from Table 16, the focus group confirmed the communicative purposes of the three message types: as to the Noticeboard and Postman message the word *inform* dominates the replies, whereas the Dialogue message 'asks for something'. Only one of the nine members (No 5) did not understand the purpose of the Noticeboard message informing the recipients of labor contract negotiations.

The replies to the question of what you would do if you got a message like this reflected the communicative purposes of the three messages. First, after receiving the Noticeboard message the focus

group members would have either waited for updates (as promised in the message) or done nothing. Member 1 implied that he might have asked for clarifications and member 3 would have sent a thank-you note; member 5, who did not have any idea about the purpose of the message, would have read it through once. Second, the Postman message, or rather the visit report attached to it, would have been opened and read either on receipt or later. Two focus group members implied that some action might be needed as well. Member 8, who described the purpose as *It might be for some actions. A summary of information said that he would glance over the message. If no actions are needed, that would be all I would do.* In addition, member 4 who described the purpose as *to record the visit* said that he would *read the attachment and see whether there is any action I need to take.* These replies suggest that in the business discourse community messages without any overt requests may still call for action. Third, the Dialogue message would have received a reply; four comments implied immediacy in replying by using the following to describe their reactions: *I'd answer it immediately* (member 1); *promptly respond to the message* (member 5); *reply immediately* (member 8); and *I'd reply as soon as possible* (member 9).

The replies of the focus group to the question about how they would call the three messages were mixed although there were only two answers reflecting confusion about the question itself (such as *no idea!*). The Noticeboard message would have been called *a report* or then the word *info(rmation)* would have been used. A couple of times no names were given but a verb phrase such as *Could you please advise us of the status of the contract?* A reference to the Postman message reflected the content of the message and the attachment since the answers included *a summary, a review, a report, and minutes of visit.* The Dialogue message would have been called *a request for information* or *a question*, distinctly drawing on the purpose of the message, or simply *an email* or *a business message.* The answers to the question about names were similar to those given by the informants although the informants were more consistent in the use of the word *info(rmation)* (see Table 15 in 6.3).

Although the focus group was small, their comments about the purposes and reactions to the message types were practically unanimous with the writers and recipients of the messages in *Stora Enso*. This suggests that the three message types classified on the basis of their communicative purposes were easily identifiable in spite of some minor problems that the focus group members seemed to experience regarding the content and language of some of the messages (see also 5.3 and 7.1). In spite of the fact that neither the focus group nor the informants agreed on the names for the messages they still had similar naming practices. Thus, it can be concluded that the members of the international business discourse community (e.g. Finns, Swedes, Koreans, Japanese, etc.) who use lingua franca English do not share the names they use for their email messages unless 'email message' was considered too mundane an answer.

6.5 SUMMARY

On the basis of the dominating communicative purposes, the internal English email messages could be classified into three types: Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue messages. The identification and classification of the messages was a smooth exercise, which was also emphasized by the fact that 98% of the messages could be classified into one of these types. Only 2% of them fell outside the classification since they combined some of the purposes. Thus, these 'combination' messages were considered exceptional, rather than prototypical, manifestations of the communicative purposes and were considered reinforcing the existence of the three types rather than challenging it.

Noticeboard messages were used to inform the recipients of corporate issues, Postman messages to deliver other documents for information and/or comments, and Dialogue messages to exchange information about corporate issues. Noticeboard messages were thus named since they could be considered

offspring from announcements on the notice board and Dialogue messages obtained their name from the inherent quality of the messages, i.e. exchange of information, typically carried on through the telephone, face-to-face meeting, or faxes in business settings. The Postman messages resembled real-life postmen delivering mail. However, when the Postman message forwarded previous dialogic exchanges, Noticeboard messages, or other Postman messages, it did not have an explicit predecessor. Never before has it been possible to chain messages like this and then print them all out in a sequence.

As was discussed above, the expert members of the discourse community, the writers and recipients of the messages, and the focus group members representing the wider business discourse community, had no difficulty in recognizing the purposes of the Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue messages. In addition, the replies to the question about what the recipient would have done on receipt of the messages reflected the purposes and gave further support for the classification of the corpus. The informants recognized the specific requests presented in the messages, but in addition to the action specifically requested, other kind of action was also triggered by the messages. This action seemed to be deeply embedded in the particular situations and it was not apparent to an outside researcher. Rather, it seemed that only the insiders of the discourse community familiar with the social context in which the messages were used were able to read between the lines and act accordingly. Knowledge of the corporate and social context seemed to be a prerequisite for an interpretation of the message in its entirety.

In spite of the fact that the message types were clearly assigned different purposes by the informants and focus group members, no support for the division could be found in the names suggested by them. It rather seemed that *info* was the label used for all the types by the informants, thus supporting the notion of all email messages as representative of one email genre. The focus group members were somewhat more versatile in their answers, which

could be attributed to the higher number of their answers (n=27) in comparison to those of the informants (n=16). It seems that (*email message*) may be used to refer to the messages, as suggested by the focus group a couple of times, although this option was not mentioned once by the informants. Overall, it can be suggested that the lack of a shared name for the prospective genre(s) as shown by the representatives of the international business discourse community is due to the too mundane a nature of the obvious name, i.e. *email message*, which might have been considered too obvious in a research setting asking detailed questions about some everyday communications. Anyway, the prospective genres seemed to reflect some instability in this respect.

Distribution of the message types varied according to the job role of the mailbox owner resulting in higher numbers of Postman messages in the executive and managerial mail and of Dialogue messages in the specialist and staff mail. This finding is in agreement with Suchan & Dulek's (1998) claim that higher hierarchical levels in an organization are involved in more public discourse. Hence, they needed broader corporate knowledge to manage, for instance, the variety of attachments delivered with Postman messages than the specialist or staff employees, whose mailboxes contained more Dialogue messages related to their specific expertise (see also Table 7 in 5.1.2).

7 SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE FEATURES IN THE MESSAGE TYPES

This chapter discusses some salient discourse features of the three message types by comparing them to features identified as either spoken or written. On the one hand, features identified as elements contributing to the involved spoken nature of discourse in email are presented and on the other hand, those identified as traditional (outdated) business letter phraseology contributing to the written nature of discourse. This chapter thus contributes to the third aim of the study. The data used in this chapter comprises the primary email corpus, Questionnaire (b) to the informants, an interview with one of them, the focus group survey, and business communication textbooks (Locker 1998, Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003).

As discussed in 3.1, there seems to be unanimous agreement today that email communication represents a hybrid in the sense that it combines features that have traditionally been associated with either spoken or written language (see e.g. Collot & Belmore 1996, Crystal 2001, Baron 2000, Nickerson 2000, Alatalo 2002). To explore this phenomenon further, the informants were asked how they would have delivered the messages presented to them before email technology (see Appendix 3). In addition, they were asked for other comments about the messages; this question was included so that the informants were able to comment on e.g. the language of the messages. The focus group members were asked a question specifically about the language in the messages (see Appendix 4).

In the questionnaire to the informants, the alternative media choice was explored by giving them five alternatives: telephone, fax, internal mail, notice board, and nothing. As expected on the basis of previous research into email communication, the alternative media choice of the informants reflected a continuum

between the two extremes of traditional spoken and written media: some messages would have been delivered by telephone, others by internal mail with a hard-copy in an envelope (see Table 17).

TABLE 17. Informants' views of alternative media to replace email messages.

Alternative media	Noticeboard messages	Postman messages	Dialogue messages
Telephone	1	-	6
Fax	0.5 ⁹⁵	2	2
Internal mail	1.5	2	-
Noticeboard	-	-	-
Nothing	-	1	-
Total number of messages	3	5	8

As can be seen from Table 17, according to the informants, the choice of media to replace the Noticeboard messages was somewhat hesitant since two media were indicated twice as alternatives for one message. The alternatives chosen for the Postman messages did not include the telephone at all but focused on fax and internal mail. The alternatives indicated for Dialogue messages centered on two alternatives: the telephone and the fax, with the first one clearly dominating. On the basis of the informants' replies it can be said that the telephone seems to have lost ground to email; this finding was also supported by an informant's (Erja) comments in the interview. She said that the office had become quieter in the four years that she had been employed by Stora Enso; she attributed this phenomenon to the increased use of email and decreased use of telephone at work.

As four examples of the messages presented to the informants were used in Chapter 6 to illustrate the three message types, the

⁹⁵ Two informants gave two alternatives, i.e. telephone/fax and telephone/internal mail; both alternatives were assigned 0.5. This means that 'telephone' was not assigned as a medium alone to replace Noticeboard messages.

media indicated by the informants to deliver them before email technology is given here: the Noticeboard message (example 1) in 6.1.1 would have needed either a telephone or a fax machine, the Postman message (example 10) in 6.4 would have been faxed, and the Dialogue messages (examples 7–8) in 6.1.3 would have been delivered by telephone.

The replies of the informants need to be approached with some caution, however, since it seems that some of the informants gave their first impressions rather than weighed opinions.⁹⁶ For example, the number of the recipients of the Noticeboard message that would have been either faxed or delivered over the telephone was nearly twenty. It is unlikely that anyone would have made that many telephone calls to provide information about a new contact person in the company's patent negotiations. Rather, the message would have been delivered using other means, for instance, internal mail or a meeting. The replies concerning the Postman messages, on the other hand, suggest that the informants did not indicate the alternative media for the Postman messages but rather for the attachments delivered with them, or both; otherwise it would be difficult to explain why a textless Postman message would have been faxed.

The informants' alternative media choice and the message type seem to correlate. Interestingly, the fact that Finns spent more time on email than Swedes, as pointed out in 5.2, did not seem to affect the informants' opinions. In particular, they were almost unanimous about the media to replace the Dialogue messages, i.e. telephone and fax. As fax communication has been found to contain features typical of oral discourse (see e.g. Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999, Louhiala-Salminen 1999a), it seems obvious

96 It was not possible to fully exploit the replies of the focus group since they were mostly very general due to the fact that the question about the media was not put specifically about each message sample (see Appendix 4). In spite of some very general replies, such as "some [messages would have been delivered] by memo, others by phone, newsletter or even fax", those three that specified the media for each message separately indicated telephone as the alternative for the Dialogue message (Message B in Appendix 4 and example 12 in 6.4).

that by naming these two media as replacements for the Dialogue messages, the informants recognized that telephone, fax, and email have something in common. The obvious characteristic shared in light of previous research in email (and fax) communication is the oral nature of the discourse manifested by involved and conversational features (Chafe 1982, Biber 1988).

Triggered by the informants' views about the alternative media choice, a decision was made to investigate all the twenty-five Noticeboard messages and an equivalent number of Dialogue messages in terms of spoken language features manifest in them. Postman messages were not included since the media choice by the informants was not considered unambiguous. However, since the corpus represented business communication, albeit internal, the amount of traditional business letter discourse was chosen as another area of inquiry since it can be regarded as reflecting the written nature of the messages. By combining the inquiry of spoken language features, on the one hand, and traditional business letter discourse, on the other, an attempt was made to approach the alleged hybrid nature of email communication. The analyses provided some quantitative data on the lexico-grammatical features of the messages, and features of conventional language use⁹⁷ were identified in the corpus (see Bhatia 1993).

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, the focus is on the features identified as elements contributing to the involved spoken nature of discourse in email. In this context, Fairclough's (1992a) notion of constitutive intertextuality and Chafe's (1982) notion of involvement as a distinct feature of spoken discourse are relevant (see 3.1). The Dialogue and Noticeboard messages are compared in terms of the involved spoken features. Second, the chapter is concerned with written language features from a particular viewpoint relevant in the investigation of this corpus, namely the use of traditional business letter discourse. Here, the

97 The third level of linguistic analysis, the structural organization of a text (Bhatia 1993), is discussed in Chapter 8.

Postman messages are taken under review. The third section provides a summary of the findings.

7.1 SPOKEN LANGUAGE FEATURES

The involved spoken features of discourse in the corpus were identified by referring to Nickerson's (2000), Louhiala-Salminen's (1999a), and Alatalo's (2002) investigations of linguistic features contributing to the involved, interpersonal, or conversational nature of business email discourse. All three researchers draw on Chafe's (1982: 55) notion of involvement and the claim that "speakers interact with their audiences, writers do not". Nickerson (2000: 168-169; see also Collot & Belmore 1996, Hyland 1998, Mulholland 1999) identified a number of linguistic features in the email genre exchanging information about corporate activities that contributed to interpersonal/involved nature of discourse. In her comparison of metadiscourse in three textual products, i.e. letter, fax, and email message, Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 161) concluded that although in email the amount was the smallest, the writer's own voice "sounded the most informal and personal". Alatalo (2002: 195) identified interpersonal metadiscourse as a contributor to the conversational nature of discourse in email communication. The majority of the email messages in the three studies represented internal communication; Nickerson (2000) focused on one email genre, Alatalo (2002) on problematic email messages, and Louhiala-Salminen (1999a) investigated a sample of email messages with no specific qualifying characteristics.

A combination of ten features of involved spoken email discourse was used in the investigation of the present corpus. The ten features were based on Nickerson's (2000) list of involved/interpersonal features to facilitate a comparison with her data; Louhiala-Salminen's (1999a) and Alatalo's (2002) categorizations were used to complement them. The features of involved spoken discourse used in the present study included

- (1) private verbs,
- (2) minimalism,
- (3) 1st and 2nd person pronouns,
- (4) hedges,
- (5) emphatics,
- (6) use of politeness strategy with request,
- (7) typographical features,
- (8) questions,
- (9) use of first names in salutations and signatures, and
- (10) other contributors to involvement.

In contrast to Nickerson (2000), the above list does not include the categories of *If clauses* and *Attributors*, but it has two new categories, *Use of first names* and *Other contributors to involvement*, not included in her taxonomy. As the significance of *If clauses* for the involved nature of discourse was considered ambiguous, they were not included. *Attributors* were eliminated as irrelevant because the present study did not aim to investigate how the corporation's social network was invoked through the indication of the source of quoted information (see Hyland 1998). The *use of first names*, not included in Nickerson's (2000) taxonomy, was identified as a relational marker together with the use of 1st and 2nd person pronouns by both Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 135) and Alatalo (2002: 42). The final category of *Other contributors to involvement* contains a somewhat mixed collection of conversational utterances such as small talk, personal wishes, and the co-operative imperative *let's*. As Nickerson (2000; for small talk see also Louhiala-Salminen 2002a: 223) did not discuss these features specifically, it may suggest that they were absent from her data.

In comparison to Nickerson (2000), the category of *Typographical features* includes some of Nickerson's (2000) *asides*, that is, interruptions of discourse marked by parentheses in the text (see Hyland 1998) which can be regarded as contributing to the effect of experiential involvement (see Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999; Alatalo 2002). In addition, the category of *Emphatics* combines Nickerson's (2000) *amplifiers* (e.g. *very, a lot*) and *emphatics* (e.g. *certainly*) because they basically serve the same purpose.

As could be expected, the three studies (Nickerson 2000, Louhiala-Salminen 1999a, Alatalo 2002) classified a number of items differently due to their different nature. In addition, since the interpretation of interpersonal metadiscoursal items in particular is heavily dependent on their context of use, and consequently the same item might be interpreted differently depending on its environment, it was difficult to adopt the categorizations as such to be applied to a different data. For example, Nickerson (2000), drawing on Mulholland (1999), considered the use of *Politeness strategies* with requests an indication of interpersonal strategies, whereas Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 136) discussed, for instance, questions and imperatives modified by a modal expression as examples of attitude markers. Also, although both Nickerson (2000: 170) and Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 125) discussed *emphatics* and *hedges*, it would not mean that their classification criteria were exactly the same. The list of involved spoken features (in italics) is presented in Table 18 with some examples from the corpus.

Table 18 shows two examples of private verbs referring to the writer's non-observable mental processes (see Collot & Belmore 1996: 17): *hope* and *think*. *Think* was used in the meaning of 'in one's opinion' as in *I also think it is very important for us . . .* (S44) but it was also used in hedges when propositional information was presented tentatively as in *I think it will be end February when we will have new charts* (F183). The classification of this verb was heavily dependent on its immediate context.

TABLE 18. Features of involvement with examples from the corpus.

Features of involvement	Examples from the corpus
Private verbs	<i>I hope</i> this clarifies the matter. (S143) <i>I also think</i> it is very important for us to get to know the capability and future plans of X. (S44)
Minimalism	asap (S117), specs (S83), info (F196), pls (F74), rgds (F249), BR (F133), OK? (S270), y-days (S89), ref (58), No trouble at all! (S278), Hope this information gives you some ideas... (S222) Thanks for info (F196)
1 st and 2 nd person pronouns	<i>I</i> will send <i>you</i> our last minutes . . . (F225)
Hedges	<i>I think</i> it will be end February when we will have new charts. (F183) Once more <i>we would like</i> to stress out that the booklet is for internal use only. (S282) <i>I'm afraid</i> that 150 copies will be impossible to find. (S266)
Emphatics	Of course we do also other benchmarking and technical discussions. (F43) The one you recommend must be <i>much</i> faster! (S224) IPW would be <i>very</i> happy if you could provide them with picture/pictures of . . . (F168) <i>Thanks a lot</i> for the arrangements (F167)
Politeness strategy with request	<i>Can you please</i> comment. (S96) <i>could you pls</i> comment on this! (S118). If you do not have any objections, <i>please contact</i> Mats/Hans . . . (S44)
Typographical features	GOOD ADVICE! (F133) for sure!!!! (S3) ☺ (S200) I see strongly that shortly (<i>year !?!!</i>) trainee and university work . . . (F209) So if you like to have a discussion about UR case, please inform me or Bosse about that (<i>he will be my "host" there!</i>). (F115)
Questions	Do you like the Swedish one? (F204) What was the outcome of your discussion with XX? (S20)
Use of first names	<i>Irma</i> , could You pls check are we having any claims with this customer. (F249) Hello <i>Monique</i> (S240) Best regards, <i>Göran</i> (S256)
Other contributors to involvement	· <i>Dear Anne!</i> I hope that your summer has been really relaxing and joyful. I am just back from my holiday and would like to . . . (S194) · <i>Dear Carola,</i> I had very relaxing summer as you also. Below . . . (F197) <i>Have a nice weekend in London!</i> (S282) . . . and <i>let's</i> see on Monday if we get everything together (S9) <i>Yes I am possitive</i> (S206) <i>Hej Santtu</i> (S9)

Minimalism in email (see Mulholland 1999: 74) was not only represented by contractions of words, such as *info* and *pls*,⁹⁸ but also by omission of pronoun subjects, contracted phrases, or ellipsis, as the question tag *OK?* added after the utterance *Shall I change into your name in the future. OK?* (S270) shows. Some expressions occurred in both abbreviated and full forms, for instance, *for info* (F196) and *for your information* (S155), *asap* (S117) and *as soon as possible* (F6), and *thanks for info* (F196) and *thank you for the information* (F199).

The use of the first and second person pronouns, including *I*, *me*, *my*, *we*, *us*, *our*, *you* and *your* evoked experiential involvement and involved the reader (see Collot & Belmore 1996). In this way, both the writer and the recipient of a message were explicitly present in the text.

Hedges, following Hyland's (1998) definition, represented tentative presentation of propositional information, whereas emphatics were used to express a full commitment to the truth-value of a proposition and to "emphasize force or writer's certainty in the matter" (Hyland 1998: 228). In both cases the writer was present in the text and involved in the matters at hand.

The use of politeness strategies with requests did not necessarily reveal much about the spoken quality of the discourse but rather about its involved and interpersonal nature: the recipient's face was protected. All instances of requests with politeness markers were included into the category with the exception of imperatives used alone. Thus it can be argued that what the category reveals is the frequency of mitigated requests of which the imperative with *please* was the most frequently used. An imperative such as *please do this* conveys involvement through the reader-perspective inherent in the imperative form (see Yli-Jokipii 1994: 230; also 6.3.3 and Chapter 10 on discussion of the Requesting move).

98 Contracted verb forms such as *don't* or *wasn't* were not included in the category.

Although paralinguistic features of spoken language such as voice quality effects and facial expression are denied to the writer (Brown & Yule 1983: 4), typographical means, that is, exclamation marks, block capitals, etc. may be used to evoke experiential involvement and conversational tone, as is indicated by Alatalo (2002: 196; Nickerson 2000; see also Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999 for usage in fax communication). Baron (2000: 242; see also Mulholland 1999: 60) points out that in business contexts the use of emoticons designed to reflect emotions has been marginal; this was supported by this study as well. Typographical marks, nevertheless, were used to some extent to evoke experiential involvement. For instance, block capitals in *GOOD ADVICE!* clearly emphasized the writer's strong opinion about the 'goodness' and the four exclamation marks in *for sure!!!!* his determination and strong agreement. The use of exclamation marks after the salutation was not included in this category, however, although it does not represent standard usage in native-speaker letters, faxes, or email messages. In this corpus it was considered transference from the native languages of the writers since it represents conventional usage in both Finnish and Swedish (see 8.2.2).

Corporate closeness of employees is evidenced by the use of questions according to Nickerson (2000: 183). When a question is made, an answer is explicitly expected. Hence, a question can be considered a heavy imposition unless there are mitigating circumstances such as a close relationship, i.e. small social distance, between the requester and the requestee (see Labov & Fanshel 1977: 98; also 10.3.1). Work in the same team, unit, or even organization can be considered such a circumstance of corporate closeness.

Use of first names, especially in salutations and signatures, emphasized the close relationship between the participants and built rapport in accordance with the Relational orientation (see 5.3; also Morand 1996). The salutation with the first name, in particular, also effectively involved the recipient (for more on salutations and signatures, see Chapter 9).

Other contributors to involvement included small talk, personal wishes, message-initial *yes* emphasizing the shared context, and the co-operative imperative *let's*. A particular feature of this corpus was Swedish greetings or closings such as *hej* and *med vänlig hälsning*, which were also included in this category. There were only two examples of small talk extending over two (or more) messages and in both cases small talk was used to open a Dialogue message (see example 18 in 5.3).

The ten features of involved spoken discourse established above were used as a benchmark against which Dialogue and Noticeboard messages were compared. The aim of the investigation was to find evidence for the informants' alternative media choice and not to provide an in-depth analysis of the oral nature of the messages. Since the alternative media choice of the informants' concerning Postman messages was not considered reliable, their features were not specifically investigated.

7.1.1 DIALOGUE MESSAGES

Before an analysis of the involved spoken features in the Dialogue messages, Chafe's (1982) three characteristics apparent in spoken interactions, i.e. shared knowledge of the environment, possibility of immediate feedback, and experiential involvement of the interactants, are taken up in terms of Dialogue messages. First, shared knowledge of the environment was illustrated by the Dialogue messages opening, for example, as follows (see also 8.3.1):

- (1) Yes I am possitive. (S206)
- (2) Not what I have heard of, but I will ask when I visit UR on
Wednesday with J and
R. (S113)

In example (1), the affirmative *yes* provides an answer to a question posed in the preceding message (see also Table 18 above), and the use of pronouns such as *what* in (2) shows that the writer shares the environment with the recipient; a reference is made to

something mentioned in the previous message. Without the shared environment provided by the previous message to which excerpts (1)-(2) respond, they would not make sense. Second, the possibility of immediate feedback in the Dialogue messages was evident since the time between the opening and response messages could only be a few minutes, which suggests instantaneous on-line composition albeit the response time extending to a few days was also possible. The immediate feedback facility seemed to be emphasized by the incorporation of apologies for delayed replies, which were found in around 10% of the response messages (for further discussion, see 8.2.3). Third, experiential involvement which was reflected in, for instance, frequent references to speakers/writers themselves and became manifest in the use of the first person pronoun in examples (1)-(2).

A selection of involved spoken features was found in all the 150 Dialogue messages although, as expected, some messages were more packed with them than others. To make a comparison with the 25 Noticeboard messages to be discussed in 7.1.2, it was considered sufficient to choose 25 Dialogue messages at random⁹⁹ to represent the 150 messages, since the aim was to account for the differences in the alternative media choice, rather than present a detailed analysis of the entire corpus. In Table 19, the frequencies of features of involvement in the 25 Dialogue messages are presented. The table shows the percentage and the number of messages in which there was at least one occurrence of the discourse feature listed. The ranking of the feature in the corpus and the rankings based on Nickerson's (2000) data are also given.¹⁰⁰

As can be seen from Table 19, the two most frequent involved spoken features were the use of the 1st and 2nd person pronouns with 92% of messages containing them and the use of first names

99 Around every sixth Dialogue message starting from number 1 was included in the sample.

100 The frequencies of the features in Nickerson's (2000: 170-171) data were calculated on the basis of her findings given separately for Dutch and British writers.

in salutations and signatures with nearly 90% of the messages exhibiting this feature. The third place was occupied by minimalism; then came politeness strategies, private verbs, and hedges with nearly half of the messages containing them. The share of emphatics and other contributors to involvement, followed by typographical features and questions, was around 20% each.

In comparison to Nickerson's (2000) findings, the rankings of the first five items were practically the same with the exception of the use of first names, which Nickerson did not include in her taxonomy. The rankings of hedges and emphatics were also similar; both Finns and Swedes and their Dutch and British counterparts favored hedges to emphatics. The biggest differences occurred with typographical features and questions, which occupied the two final positions in the rankings of the present study but which were somewhat higher in Nickerson's (2000) data. The rankings, however, only revealed the relative frequency of the features and not the absolute numbers of the features present in the two data sets. The fact that the use of typographical features to evoke experiential involvement ranked lower in the present corpus may be due to a larger number and diversity of the writers, and also their geographical distance; Nickerson's messages were collected from managers within the same division based in the Netherlands. In such networks, in which the physical corporate closeness is also distinct, block capitals, exclamation marks, etc. may be more easily used to evoke experiential involvement.

TABLE 19. Distribution of features of involvement in 25 Dialogue messages with ranking of their respective frequency and comparison with Nickerson's (2000) findings.

Features of involvement	% and (No) of messages/25	Ranking	Ranking in Nickerson's data
1 st and 2 nd person pronouns	92% (23)	1	1
Use of first names	88% (22)	2	N/A
Minimalism	56% (14)	3	2
Politeness strategies	48% (12)	4	3
Private verbs	44% (11)	5	4
Hedges	40% (10)	6	7
Emphatics	24% (6)	7/8	8
Other contributors to involvement	24% (6)	7/8	N/A
Typographical features	20% (5)	9/10	5 ¹⁰¹
Questions	20% (5)	9/10	6

The average number of the different features of involvement present in each message was 4.6; the highest number was 8 and the lowest 1. Below, example (3) presents a Dialogue message with eight features of involvement (in italics).

- (3) *Hej Santtu and Happy New Year!*
I am still trying to set up meeting with P M. On Monday I will get confirmation hopefully for a meeting on Thursday next week 18th afternoon with Mr Joachim Schatz. Pls plan for late departure out of Nancy on Thursday evening and let's see on Monday if we get everything together. Hope you can accept this proposal and it would be nice if you drop me a short line confirming your possibility to join the possible meeting.

Kind Regards,
 Henrik Årskog
 tel int+46 1234567
 fax int+46 2345678
 email henrik.arskog@storaenso.com (S9)

101 The data only included block capitals and exclamation marks used for emphasis.

In total, there are seven 1st and 2nd person pronouns and the first name is only used in the salutation as the writer uses a preprogrammed signature. Two instances of minimalism are present: an abbreviated politeness marker, *pls*, and omission of the pronoun subject in front of a private verb, *hope*, referring to the writer's non-observable mental process. The writer has used politeness strategies in reducing the face threatening act inherent in the two requests, and one of them is further modified by a hedge in the imposition, that is 'dropping a *short* line'. In addition, *hopefully* and 'the *possible* meeting' are considered hedges since in this context they seem to suggest that the writer is not sure about the feasibility of the meeting. The writer's efforts in organizing the meeting are, however, emphasized by the emphatic *still*. Finally, other contributors to involvement in example (3) include the Swedish greeting, the wish for a happy new year, and the use of *let's*. As example (3) shows, the actual occurrences of each of the features of involvement can, in fact, be rather numerous; in this case a total of 20.

Example (4) illustrates how only one feature may be enough to contribute effectively to the involvement manifest in the message.

- (4) Hello Manique,
Xplace Mill organized paperschooling autumn 2000. The contact person here is Olle Axelsson.

Monica Gunnarsson
Xplace Mill
Tel +46 34 56789
Fax + 46 45 67890
Mobile + 46 98 76543
e-mail: monica.gunnarsson@storaenso.com (S240)

Example (4) is one of the two messages lacking the first and second person pronouns in the data, but both of the messages contained the first name of the recipient in the salutation, which alone made the tone of the message involved. In addition to the first names,

also typographical features alone were able to convey strong experiential involvement as is indicated by the four exclamation marks in one two-word message: *for sure!!!!* (S3) (for the message chain in its entirety, see example 26 in 5.5).

The investigation into the involved features contributing to the spoken character of the discourse in the Dialogue messages shows that there are a number of strategies available to the writer. However, the two most popular strategies, the use of the first and second person pronouns and first names, clearly dominated. To better understand the significance of the frequency of these features in the Dialogue messages and their contribution to the informants' alternative media choice, a comparison with the Noticeboard messages is discussed in 7.1.2. Neither Nickerson (2000) nor Alatalo (2002) compared their findings with other types of email; in other words, Nickerson's findings only related to her Genre IE of exchanging information on on-going corporate activities, which seemed to be comparable to the Dialogue messages of the present study, and Alatalo's (2002) findings related to repair work messages. However, Nickerson (2000: 168) points out that all email communication is not involved in nature; she also takes an example of another genre identified in her data. In her comparison of business letter, fax, and email discourse, Louhiala-Salminen (1999a) did not make any comparisons between different types of email messages.

7.1.2 NOTICEBOARD MESSAGES

When the Noticeboard and Dialogue messages were compared in terms of features of involved spoken discourse, it had to be remembered that two features identified by Chafe (1982) as markers of spoken interactions were totally missing from the Noticeboard messages. First, while the participants in the Dialogue messages shared the environment and showed it by, for instance, starting their response messages with expressions such as *Yes I am positive* (S206), those in the Noticeboard messages could not do

it since the messages did not respond to any other messages. For the same reason, the possibility of immediate feedback was not relevant in Noticeboard messages, since they neither provided nor expected responses.

The distribution and ranking of the involved spoken features in the Noticeboard messages was compared with that in the Dialogue messages. The results of the comparison of the 25 Noticeboard messages with the 25 Dialogue messages are presented in Table 20.

TABLE 20. Distribution and ranking of features of involvement in the 25 Noticeboard messages with comparable data about the Dialogue messages.

Features of involvement	% and (No) of messages/25	Ranking in Noticeboard messages	% of Dialogue messages/25	Ranking in Dialogue messages
1 st and 2 nd person pronouns	76% (19)	1	92%	1
Use of first names	60% (15)	2	88%	2
Politeness strategies	36% (9)	3	48%	4
Hedges	20% (5)	4	40%	6
Minimalism	16% (4)	5	56%	3
Emphatics	12% (3)	6/7	24%	7/8
Typographical features	12% (3)	6/7	20%	9/10
Private verbs	8% (2)	8	44%	5
Other contributors to involvement	4% (1)	9/10	24%	7/8
Questions	4% (1) ¹⁰²	9/10	20%	9/10

As can be seen from Table 20, the Noticeboard messages contained less involved discourse than the Dialogue messages; the percentages were lower for each feature. This was also evident in the average number of the features per message, which was 2.5 as against 4.6 for the Dialogue messages. The highest number of

102 This item represented a rhetorical question that did not invite a response by the recipient.

involved features in a message was 5 and the lowest was zero. However, the two message types also had a striking similarity: the rankings of the 1st and 2nd person pronouns and the use of names were the same although the distribution was lower in the Noticeboard messages, in which the first names only appeared in the signatures and not in the salutations. The ranking and distribution of politeness strategies were also similar and the distribution of typographical features was similar although their rankings were different. The biggest differences between the two message types could be found in the use of minimalism and private verbs; both were clearly less frequent in the Noticeboard messages.

The comparison of the two email message types used in the same company suggests that the involved character of discourse is manifested through the 1st and 2nd person pronouns and the use of first names in both the Dialogue and Noticeboard messages. In other words, the different communicative purposes of the message types did not differentiate them much in this respect. However, the pronouns may be used in various combinations and for various purposes (see e.g. Nickerson & Bargiela-Chiappini 1996, Poncini 2002); this was not revealed by the present investigation. However, the use of first names, both in salutations and signatures, also warranting further investigation is in focus in Chapter 9.

The comparison also revealed differences between the two message types. Minimalism and private verbs were used clearly more in the Dialogue messages (56% vs. 16% and 44% vs. 8% respectively). This difference can be explained by the number of recipients; communication with multiple recipients, as was always the case with the Noticeboard messages, suggests the use of more public as opposed to private discourse (see 5.1.3). Consequently, private thoughts or abbreviated words and phrases would be avoided to guarantee understanding by an audience which may number tens of recipients instead of just one or a few, as was often the case with Dialogue messages. The fact that minimalism was used more in the Dialogue messages could suggest that the messages were drafted on line in haste, whereas the Noticeboard

messages were planned and prepared (see Baron 2000: 242 about the two emerging styles in email).

The comparison of the Noticeboard and Dialogue messages suggests that they shared something that contributed to the similar presence of a number of features evoking involvement and orality, 1st and 2nd person pronouns and use of first names in particular. The obvious common denominator was the communication technology used (see 5.4) but the fact that the messages were written in a shared corporate and social environment and they dealt with issues relevant for the corporation (see 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3) could not be ignored. The findings seem to support previous research into email communication which has found features of oral discourse in the messages. Since the corporate environment was shared with the communication partner in the present study, the oral discourse features might have become even more pronounced: the better you know your partner, the less formal, i.e. more involved and conversational, the language is likely to be. However, the fact that the message types also exhibited distinct differences in the distribution of the features of involvement contributed to their integrity. In other words, the messages represented different types that did not only differ in terms of their communicative purpose but also in terms of the degree of involvement manifest in them.

7.2 TRADITIONAL BUSINESS LETTER DISCOURSE

Although the occurrence of written language features in the messages was not specifically investigated, the phrases that could be labeled as belonging to traditional business letter discourse were listed. They involved phrases used in business correspondence with parties external to the company. The identification of such phrases was carried out by reference to business communication textbooks (Locker 1998: 92, Bovée et al. 2003: 119–120, Munter 2003: 77), which provide lists of phraseology to

be avoided in modern business communication because such phrases are considered obsolete, stuffy, or bureaucratic. Such phrases include for instance *at your earliest convenience*, *in due course*, *under separate cover*, *enclosed/attached please find*, *don't hesitate to*, and *kindly advise*. Table 21 lists the traditional business letter phrases that appeared more than once in the corpus and the type of message in which they occurred.

TABLE 21. Traditional business phraseology according to the message type.

Phrase	Total No	Noticeboard messages	Postman messages	Dialogue messages
Enclosed please find	14	-	14	-
Please find enclosed	14	1	13	-
Please find	5	-	2	3
Please find attached	4	-	4	-
Please/Kindly be informed	3	3	-	-
Total	40	4	33	3

As Table 21 shows, the Postman messages exhibited the highest frequency of features of traditional business letter discourse; the most common phrases included *Enclosed please find* and *Please find enclosed*, which were used to refer to the attached documents. A few times *Please find* and *Please find attached* were used. The phrase *Please/Kindly be informed* was only used in the Noticeboard messages, seemingly to emphasize the informing nature of the message type.

The messages also included some individual occurrences of outdated phrases such as *in due course* (F47), *please do not hesitate to (contact us)* (F179), and *as per (file enclosed)* (S18). Although *Kindly advise* was not used once, *kindly* replaced *please* ten times and a couple of times *advise* was used together with *please* or *pls*. In addition, some salutations evoked business letter discourse; they could not be classified as outdated but their use was different from that in business letters. *Dear Sirs* was found three times in the Noticeboard messages and *Gentlemen* alone, or together with

Dear or *Hello*, four times in all three main message types. In British business letter discourse *Dear Sirs* is used when a letter is sent to the company and no specific person is labeled as a recipient, and the same applies to *Gentlemen* in US business letter discourse. The implication is that the sender either does not know anybody by name in the company or does not want to address the letter to anybody in particular. In the email messages, in contrast, the salutations were used to greet multiple recipients whose names the sender must have known, as he/she was able to list them as recipients of the message. The salutations were mostly used by men; the recipients, however, also included women, which made the usage (politically) incorrect (see 8.2.2 and 9.1).

Since the Postman messages contained the largest share of traditional business letter discourse, they are discussed below.

7.2.1 POSTMAN MESSAGES

The Postman messages with attachments typically made use of the outdated phraseology such as *Enclosed please find*, *Please find enclosed*, *Please find*, etc., as is shown in Table 21. This phraseology represented the typical choice in the messages including no other text, apart from the salutations and complimentary closes, i.e. in around 50% of Postman messages with attachments. The messages could hence be characterized as predominantly ‘written’, especially if the salutation was left out. The formulae are fixed and in the business context seem to represent relics from the times when the business letter was the dominating genre in use. The messages that made use of more modern alternatives such as *Enclosed is* and *Here is* were also, by definition, more ‘written’ than when a 1st person pronoun with a verb was used, as in *I enclose* (see 8.3.2). In the textless messages the question about the spoken and written language features was not relevant. However, the messages appending other messages for comments tended to contain involved spoken features since questions were asked and requests made (see example 4 in 6.1.2).

As Table 17 above showed, to deliver the Postman messages before email technology, the informants would have used either fax or internal mail, or the message would not have been sent at all. The telephone was not given as an alternative once. The replies suggest that the informants did not indicate the alternative media for the Postman messages but rather for the attachments delivered with them, or both; otherwise it would be difficult to explain why a textless Postman message would have been faxed. No pattern emerged from the replies; the Postman messages containing only the minimum phrase *Please find enclosed* and those containing a request or a comment related to the attachment would have been either faxed or sent via internal mail. One informant would not have sent the Postman message at all (example 3 in 6.1.2); the message was sent to thirty recipients in one unit and it informed them of their summer vacations.

The media choice concerning the attachments can be seen to suggest that the attachments were considered to represent written discourse features more than the Noticeboard and Dialogue messages discussed 7.1.1 and 7.1.2. The informants were unanimous about the alternative media: it was either internal mail or fax, both of which involve a written document. Despite the small number of the informants, it can still be suggested that they considered Word documents, i.e. the attachments, to be of a somewhat different nature from email messages. Even though both are 'written' in the conventional sense, the context of writing is different. When Word documents are written, it is the writer with the keyboard and the printing facility that defines the context, and the mindset. When email messages are written, maybe the most significant contextual feature is the opportunity to be online, with communication partners one keystroke away. This opportunity seems to have an effect on how texts are conceptualized, as predominantly written or oral, or both.

Because the informants' views of alternative media seemed to concern the attachments, and not the actual email messages, it was decided not to perform an analysis of the presence of the

involved spoken features in the Postman messages. It can be said, however, that the Postman messages using the minimum phrase only, which was *Enclosed please find* or similar, did not manifest involved features, apart from the occasional use of first names in salutations. Since the phraseology was identified as outdated, it inevitably contributed to a more written nature of the discourse in spite of the fact that it also evoked the reader-perspective through the imperative. The Postman messages presenting either comments or requests concerning the attachment, on the other hand, often contained, for instance, 1st and 2nd person pronouns, as can be seen from example (4) above in 6.1.2.

7.3 SUMMARY

The findings concerning spoken and written language features in the email messages reinforce those of earlier research concerning the hybrid nature of email discourse. Both spoken and written language features were found in the messages. First, all the three message types exhibited features of involvement, but to varying degrees. The distribution of the features and the alternative media chosen by the informants to deliver the messages before email technology supported each other. The Dialogue messages, exhibiting the highest frequency of involved spoken features, would mostly have been delivered by telephone; the Noticeboard messages would have been faxed or delivered by telephone or internal mail. However, here the choice was more hesitant as the media chosen included two alternatives twice. Thus, although telephone appeared as an alternative, it was only indicated as one of two options, never alone. The Postman messages, or rather the attachments sent with them, on the other hand, would have been faxed or sent by internal mail; telephone was not considered an alternative.

When the the three message types are placed on a spoken-written continuum, the Dialogue messages would occupy a position

closer to the spoken end and the Postman messages with attachments (only containing the phrase *enclosed please find*, or similar) the one closer to the written end. The Noticeboard messages would be somewhere in between (see Figure 4). If the Postman messages with comments or requests were added to the continuum, their position would vary depending on the relationship between traditional business phraseology and spoken language features in them. The attachments delivered with the Postman messages would likely occupy a position close to the written end.

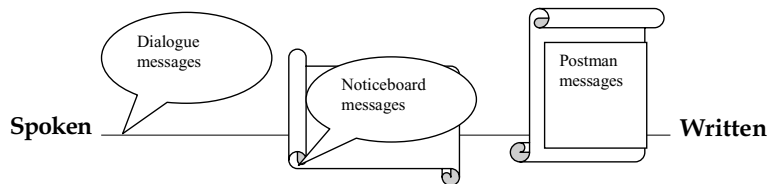


FIGURE 4. Dialogue, Noticeboard, and Postman messages on spoken-written continuum.

Internal email messages written in Business English Lingua Franca thus represented a hybrid, a combination of spoken and written language, as has been claimed by previous email research (see 3.1). What was significant, however, was that some email messages exhibited more spoken features than others and the distribution of the features among the messages was not haphazard. It was dependent on the type of the message. Oral discourse features were concentrated on the Dialogue messages, whereas written discourse features, especially those representing traditional business letter discourse, were the most prevalent in the short Postman messages (and supposedly in the attachments delivered by them). The use of such outdated phraseology showed one side of the hybrid nature of electronic language: its ability to make use of phraseology adopted from business correspondence in new circumstances. In particular, the phrases used to refer to attachment(s) were so frequent that they seemed to characterize

the discourse of the Postman messages to some extent. This suggests that they were considered highly functional in their assigned task. Irrespective of the level on which the identification of email genres occurred, it seemed that the discourse community members drew selectively on the business letter genre rules in email, sometimes maintaining them and sometimes rejecting them for more informal alternatives. Although this type of genre knowledge can be considered subliminal (see e.g. Coe 1994: 158), Yates & Orlikowski (2002: 15; also 1992: 303) distinguish between habitual and deliberate genre use. They argue that sometimes individuals act out of habit to facilitate a particular communicative act and other times they make deliberate decisions about how to accomplish it.

Although the distribution of spoken and written language features in the primary corpus supports the classification into the three message types, the corpus also contained some messages whose discourse represented a somewhat confusing mixture of spoken and written language. Thus, the hybrid nature of the messages driven simultaneously by the new medium and the pre-existing business genres was detected distinctly a few times, especially in the texts written by the business practitioners who must have received training in business English prior to entering the workforce and who were used to the conventions of traditional business correspondence. The process resulted in a dichotomy between spoken and written features, when the new medium and the traditional conventions of business correspondence were integrated. In extreme cases, texts like the one in example (5) emerged.

- (5) Hello Monica
kindly be informed that the flight from Helsinki to Stockholm
has been cancelled and he had to change his flights. Please find
new flight enclosed;

SK 838 COPENHAGEN -KARLSTAD 10.55 -12.15

Kindly change your arrangements accordingly.
Thanks you for your effort

Kindest regards
Emma Kuokkanen (F86)

Example (5) offers an instance of business writing where generic characteristics of letters, faxes and email messages can all be found. It was written by a secretary to inform another secretary of her superior's changed flight schedule. It contains business correspondence phraseology such as *kindly be informed*, *please find*, *enclosed*, and *kindly change*. . . *accordingly*, while the salutation with an informal *Hello* and the first name of the recipient evokes impressions of involved spoken discourse. The semi-formal closing with *Kindest regards* does not quite match with the full name signature.

Drawing on discorsal leads alone, example (5) could well be a letter or a fax, albeit with somewhat unusual combination of formal and informal features. It is only the contextual information that would lead to the correct conclusion about the medium used. The message was sent at 7.22 in the morning with the *High Priority* label and the Subject line *Changes in Markku 's flights today*. There were three primary recipients: the secretary greeted in the message, Monica; and Monica's two superiors. It is clear that a business letter would have been an impossible option under these contextual constraints; a fax would have been feasible, but not as quick and simple. A telephone call would naturally have been possible – but not probable in the early morning hours, nor practical in delivering the message to all three recipients. Therefore, email was the business practitioner's choice although the discourse might

have suggested otherwise. It seems that the foreign language experts, whom the secretaries represent, find the changeover from the business letter genre to the new evolving genres in email challenging (see Nickerson 2000: 157, Alatalo 2002: 128). It is obvious, however, that messages such as example (5) were exceptional in the corpus and the three message types identified were relatively stable in terms of the distribution of the features of spoken and written language. For the language experts striking a balance between traditional business letter discourse, still emphasized in their education, and the informal language use encouraged by the communication medium and colleagues requires flexibility and takes time.

In spite of some mixed examples such as (5), which were somewhat removed from the prototype, the fact that the three message types exhibited distinct variety in terms of their salient linguistic features supports the arguments of Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 319) which challenge the media richness theory (e.g. Lengel & Daft 1988) as introduced in 2.1.1 (see also 5.1.2). Yates & Orlikowski (1992) argue that different genres may occupy different positions on the continuum from lean to rich media, whereas Lengel & Daft (1988) claim that routine tasks can be communicated through lean media, such as email, whereas non-routine, high uncertainty tasks require a richer medium such as face-to-face discussion. As the present study shows that all email messages manifested features identified as belonging to involved spoken discourse, it would also suggest that tasks other than routine might be communicated through email. This view was supported by the fact that the informants were able to name an alternative medium that they would have used before email technology to deliver their messages. Since the medium chosen for the Dialogue messages in particular was predominantly the telephone, it would suggest that (written) email messages had conquered some space from 'richer' spoken media. When Noticeboard messages informed the recipients of corporate issues or when Postman messages attached documents for the recipient's information, the

communication was unilateral and, indeed, in this sense the task communicated could be described as routine. However, when corporate activities were furthered by exchanging information in the Dialogue messages, typically making use of involved spoken language, it meant that comments and opinions were requested and provided, questions were asked and answered, and corporate issues were negotiated between a number of people. Since misunderstandings were rare (see 5.5.1), it seemed that email technology also met the requirements of these more complex tasks.

Since the late 1980s both the email technology and its users have undergone a huge maturation process: the technology has developed and become easier to use, and users have become used to its ubiquitous presence in the workplace. These processes have contributed to the potential of email to perform other than only routine tasks. Depending on the message type, email seems to occupy different positions along the media richness scale (see also e.g. Markus 1994, Sullivan 1995, Ku 1996, El-Shinnawy & Markus 1998). Interestingly, it could be suggested that the positions occupied by the message types on the spoken-written continuum in Figure 4 would match their positions on the media richness scale. In other words, the Dialogue messages would be 'richer' than the Postman messages.

Finally, when the informants were invited to give further comments about the messages (see Appendix 3), there were none from any of them. Although this may be attributed to the informants' reluctance to answer one more question possibly requiring a longer reply, it seems to suggest that the messages were typical: there was nothing to comment about in terms of language or content.

In contrast, the focus group consisting of international business practitioners commented on quite a few features concerning the language of the messages (see Appendix 4). To illustrate the answers, example (6)¹⁰³ below shows a Postman message (A)

103 Although the example was shown in 6.4 (example 11), it is taken up here for ease of reference.

presented to the nine focus group members, a question about the language use, and their answers to it.

(6)

Message A	<i>Dear Colleagues, Please find enclosed a summary of our visit at X (Customer name) Y's (Location) factory 18.01.2001.</i> <i>Wishing you all a nice weekend!</i> <i>Best regards, Pirkko</i> <i>Attachment Converted: "c:/eudora/attach/KP HU 180101.doc" (F101)</i>
Question	Do you have any comments about the language use in the message?
Focus group members' (1-9) answers	1: - 2: Simply too formal. Not adequate for insiders' communication. 3: The date is hard to understand. One or two sentences of summary are needed in the email. "Dear Colleagues" sounds strange. I am not sure whether all the recipients want this report. The object of the message is not clearly stated. 4: There are some grammatical errors. 5: 18.01.2001 -> on Jan. 18 2001 6: I will write down some summary of the report such as time, place, the number of visitors and the result (good, excellent and need something to do). 7: I think this message is usual thing. 8: Clear and concise, informal. 9: -

As the answers of the focus group members show, the expectations of four members seemed to be met as two (1, 9) did not give any comments, one (7) said that the message was 'usual', and one (8) described it by using terms that in the context of business communication would be interpreted as positive qualifications. The other comments reflected different practices about giving a summary of the attached document (3, 6), the date (3, 5), and the salutation (3). Further, one member (2) considered the message too formal and one found (4) problems with grammar, which did not exist. To sum up: about half of the focus group members considered the message typical while the expectations of the other

half were not quite met. The unfamiliar features concerned certain conventionalities but also excess formality, which might have been due to the phrase *Enclosed please find*.

Table 22 summarizes the comments of the focus group members on the Dialogue and Noticeboard messages presented to them (see examples 11 and 12 in 6.4).

TABLE 22. Summary of the focus group's views of the language of the Dialogue and Noticeboard messages.

Focus group member	Dialogue message (example 12 in 6.4)	Noticeboard message (example 10 in 6.4)
1	-	-
2	Salutation and closing formal, questions informal.	Very formal.
3	Too direct.	'Dear Sirs' is too formal.
4	Informal.	Too long sentences.
5	Grammatical errors.	Complicated.
6	A specific request should be added	Reorganization of the content needed.
7	Usual.	Too formal.
8	A bit formal.	Formal.
9	Simple and concise.	Salutation does not include women readers.

As Table 22 shows, the formality or informality of the messages, which can be seen to reflect the share of oral discourse features in the messages, triggered a few comments. It was obvious that the focus group and the writers and recipients of the messages in question did not share the concept of *typicality* of the linguistic features. This can be seen to suggest that there were some features in the messages that were unique for email communication in Stora Enso, making the messages typical responses in recurrent situations in the company (see also 5.3). This was the case in spite of the fact that both the informants and the focus group members were unanimous about the communicative purposes of the messages (see 6.4).

8 MOVES IN THE MESSAGE TYPES

This chapter discusses moves, the building blocks of the three prospective genres. It thus contributes to the third aim of the study as did Chapter 7. The data used in the inquiry comprises both the primary and secondary email corpus and the interview with one of the informants. In the study of the textualizations of some moves business communication textbooks were also used.

According to both Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993), a genre is organized in a series of discriminative structural elements or moves, which distinguish one genre from another and which are necessary for genre recognition. In the same way as each genre has a communicative purpose that it tends to serve, each move also serves a typical communicative intention or function which contributes in some way to the fulfillment of the overall communicative purpose of the genre (Bhatia 1993: 30).

In order to realize a particular intention at the level of a move, writers may use different rhetorical strategies; moves can be realized or executed through different rhetorical options, which are “the allowable contributions available to an author for creative or innovative genre construction” (Bhatia 1993: 32). For example, Swales (1990: 141), calling these strategies ‘steps’, shows how writers of research article introductions can realize the move ‘Establish a territory’ by using any of the following three steps: claiming centrality and/or making topic generalization(s) and/or reviewing items of previous research. Thus, a move can be realized through three strategies. This chapter does not discuss the steps or strategies systematically but they may be drawn into discussion when relevant from the point of view of the move. Similarly, the linguistic realizations of the moves are discussed to some extent by using the concepts of manifest intertextuality (Fairclough 1992a) and involvement (Chafe 1992). However, a more thorough treatment of the textualizations of four moves

(Salutation, Closing, Signature, and Requesting) can be found in Chapters 9 and 10.

The definition of the rhetorical move as a unit has been considered “a real question” without a clear answer (Swales 2001, personal communication). In the present study, this dilemma was not addressed, and the somewhat elusive nature of the move was taken for granted, as the aims of the study did not require a thorough analysis of its boundaries. To identify the moves in the corpus, the messages were investigated to establish the possible (functional and/or) communicative intentions of the writer in the context. A second opinion was also sought from another genre analyst on some of the messages to ensure a higher level of reliability. As only some of the moves seemed to have clear linguistic markers of move boundaries (e.g. Salutation, Closing, Indicating enclosure), it was necessary to base the identification of the moves on what Brown & Yule (1983: 69) call the “intuitive notion of topic”. This also meant that some of the moves seemed to assume different intentions simultaneously, and in this way they could overlap. Whatever the definition and the boundaries of the move, it was evident that its length could vary a great deal. Indeed, Bhatia (1993: 65, 56) maintains that one sentence may contain three moves and one move can cover four paragraphs.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section identifies the moves in the corpus and briefly discusses their presence and order in each message type. The second section presents the moves that provide a frame for the three message types, i.e. the framing moves. The third section discusses the key content moves contributing to the key communicative purpose of each type with special emphasis on those that distinguish one type from another. Following the general aim of genre analysis, an attempt is made to account for the choices of the expert users of the prospective genre (Bhatia 1993). The final section summarizes the findings and presents support for the existence of three distinct email genres in the primary corpus.

8.1 IDENTIFICATION AND ORDER OF MOVES

Nine categories of moves in total were identified in the corpus but this finding does not exclude the possibility that the number could be smaller or greater depending on the aims of the study. For the purposes of the present study, the present level of detail was considered appropriate. The types of moves identified in the corpus are listed in Table 23. The moves that support the main communicative purpose of a message type were marked with an X; this means that the moves were found in all the messages of the particular type. An (x) was used to indicate that the move occurred in around half of the relevant messages in the corpus, and an xx that one third of the messages of a particular type contained the move.

TABLE 23. Moves in the Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue messages.

Moves	Noticeboard messages	Postman message	Dialogue messages/ /opening /esponse	Dialogue messages
Move I: Identifying subject	X	X	X	X
Move II: Salutation	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Move III: Referring to previous contact				(x)
Move IV: Indicating enclosure		X		
Move V: Providing information	X		(x)	
- Vri = Requested information				Xa
- Vr = Reaction				Xb
- Ve = Commenting on enclosure		(x)		
Move VI: Requesting				
- VIa = For action	(x)			
- VIvr = For verbal response			X	
- VIif= Conditional	(x)			
Move VII: Pre-closing			xx	
Move VIII: Closing	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)
Move IX: Signature	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)

X = supports the main communicative purpose of the message type and occurs in 100% of the messages

(x) = occurs in 50% of the messages representing a particular type

xx = occurs in 30% of the messages representing a particular type

Xa/Xb = usually alternatives to each other

As can be seen in Table 23, only Move I (Identifying subject) supported the communicative purpose of all three message types. Move V (Providing information) was found in all the Noticeboard messages, Move IV (Indicating enclosure) in all the Postman messages, and either Move VI (Requesting) or Move V (Providing information) in the Dialogue messages, in either opening or response messages.

Two of the moves, Move V (Providing information) and Move VI (Requesting), were further elaborated to account for the different versions of the same move. They represented the key moves supporting the core communicative purposes of the message types, and from the point of view of recognition it was necessary to define what kind of information was provided and what was asked for. In other words, the comments on the attached documents in the Postman messages and the information provided in the Noticeboard messages both represented Move V, but their communicative intention was still different. Move V was the key content move of the Noticeboard messages supporting the main communicative purpose of informing, whereas Move Ve (Commenting on enclosure) was not always present in the Postman messages even though it was fairly common. Similarly, Move V in the Dialogue messages was different depending on the phase of the dialogue: the opening messages provided (new) information (Move V) and the responses provided either requested information (Vri) or reactions to the opening message (Vr).

Furthermore, it was necessary to make a distinction in the Requesting move (VI) between those seeking a verbal (VIvr) and those seeking a non-verbal, or action, response (VIa) because this was a decisive factor in the recognition of the message type. Move VIvr was always found in the response messages of the Dialogue type as it contributed to the main communicative purpose of exchanging information, but not in any other message type. For the purposes of this study, this level of elaboration was considered detailed enough (for an example of a more detailed analysis, see e.g. Pinto dos Santos 2002: 181-182).

The moves were classified into two groups on the basis of their overall function in the message types. The first group consisted of the framing moves, which were responsible for the beginning and the ending of the message, and thus contributed to the physical layout of the message types (see also 5.4). It contained Moves I (Identifying subject), II (Salutation), III (Referring to previous contact), VII (Pre-closing), VIII (Closing), and IX (Signature). The second group consisted of the content moves that were responsible for contributing to the key communicative purpose of the message types. It contained Moves V (Providing information), IV (Indicating enclosure), and VI (Requesting).

In what follows, examples of messages representing the three message types are given to illustrate how the moves were combined into a sequence to serve the communicative purpose of each type.¹⁰⁴ Example (1) illustrates the moves in a Noticeboard message, example (2) those in a Postman message attaching other documents, and example (3) those in a Postman message appending other messages. Example (4) shows the moves in an opening message and (5)–(6) those of subsequent response messages of the Dialogue type.

Example (1) illustrates the moves in the Noticeboard messages contributing to the communicative purpose of informing the recipients of corporate issues (content move underlined).

As example (1) shows, the most frequent move in the message is Move V, providing information. However, the first two of the realizations could also be defined as Move VI, requesting, on the basis of their linguistic realization alone. Both interpretations are possible but it seems that in this context the communicative intention of the move referring to the website was to inform the recipient of a site where more information was available, rather than ask him/her to go there (see Chapter 10 for details; also e.g.

104 The examples are not the same as the ones in Chapter 6 illustrating the communicative purposes of the messages because in this way more examples from the corpus could be discussed.

Alatalo 2002: 122). This is a good example of the multifunctionality of moves and also of the elusive nature of the concept. The overall purpose of the Noticeboard message in example (1) is to provide information on what to do in case the recipient receives a certain type of email message. The message only invites action; no verbal response is expected.

(1)

Move I Subject: VIRUS ALERT

Move V If you receive an email with the subject line - "Fw:Naked
Wife"

(VIIf) DO NOT OPEN IT, DELETE IT.

Move V Find description at

(Move VIa) <http://tim.nai.com/tim/virusSummary.tps?virusk=001135>

Move V Emergency 5237 EBU will be posted today, soon.

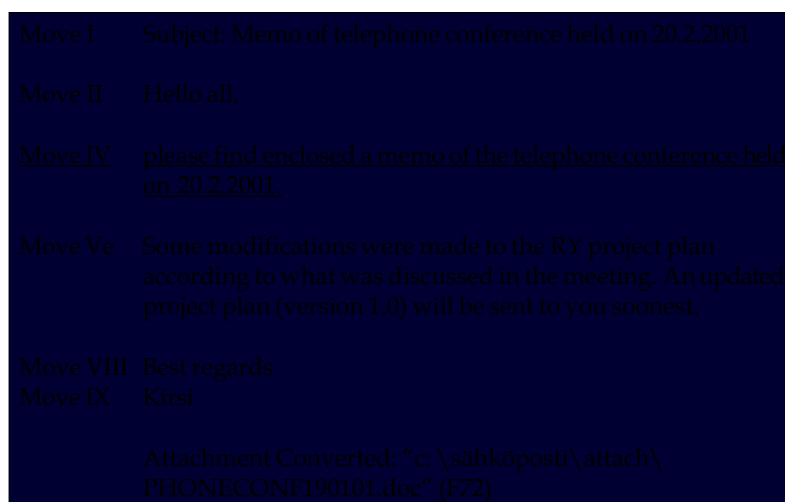
Move VIIf If you have any questions please email Virus Research. (S250)

Move I = Identifying subject
 Move V = Providing information
 Move VIIf = Requesting: conditional

The sequence of the content moves in example (1) is V+VIIf; typically Move V opened the messages, and if other moves were present, they followed it. The only moves that could appear prior to Move V were two of the framing moves, that is, Moves I (Identifying subject) and II (Salutation); typically, the final moves in the Noticeboard messages were Moves VIII (Closing) and XI (Signature).

Below, two examples are given of the moves in the Postman messages delivering documents, either attachments or appended messages, for information and/or for comments. Example (2) illustrates a Postman message attaching a document (content move underlined).

(2)



The screenshot shows an email message with several moves labeled on the left side. The moves are: Move I (Subject: Memo of telephone conference held on 20.2.2001), Move II (Hello all), Move IV (please find enclosed a memo of the telephone conference held on 20.2.2001), Move Ve (Some modifications were made to the RY project plan according to what was discussed in the meeting. An updated project plan (version 1.0) will be sent to you soonest), Move VIII (Best regards), and Move IX (Kirsi). At the bottom, there is an attachment converted from a Word document: "c:\sahkoposti\attach\PHONECONF190101.doc" (F72).

Move I = Identifying subject

Move II = Salutation

Move IV = Indicating enclosure

Move Ve = Providing information: comments on enclosure

Move VIII = Closing

Move IX = Signature

Example (2) shows a typical Postman message attaching a document; Move IV opens the body of the message with a linguistic realization most common in the corpus, *please find enclosed*. Before even opening the message, the recipient was able to see that he/she had received a message with an attachment because of a special paper clip symbol in the Mail Index. This symbol functioned like a premove, which was automatically provided by the email system and which told the recipient that the message delivered an attachment. Example (2) also contains all the basic framing moves: Move I (Identifying subject), Move II (Salutation), Move VIII (Closing), and Move (XI) Signature. This message was representative of around half of the Postman messages in that it offered some comments on, or requests concerning, the attachment

with the help of Move Ve, or VI (Requesting). The other half of the messages only contained Move IV. The sequence of the content moves in example (2) is IV+Ve, which was characteristic of the Postman messages, even though Move IV could also stand alone or together with the Requesting move, VI.

Example (3) illustrates the moves in a Postman message appending another message (content move underlined).

(3)

Move I	Subject: FW: Board wrapping
Move II	Hej Mia and Peter,
Move IV + Move VI	Have you got a request <u>like this</u> or do you know the competitor who has started the project with L?
Move Ve	This is not exactly in line with Stora Enso targets.
Move VIII	Best regards,
Move IX	Tauno (F108)

Move I = Identifying subject

Move II = Salutation

Move IV = Indicating enclosure

Move VI = Requesting

Move Ve = Providing information: comments on enclosure

Move VIII = Closing

Move IX = Signature

In Postman messages appending other messages Move IV was not as conspicuous as it was when other documents were attached. The move in example (3) is typical of those found in the corpus in that it appears together with another move (in the example with Move VI) and only comprises a couple of words. Not once did a whole sentence assume the function of Move IV. The Postman messages of this type also featured a premove in the Mail Index, in the same way as those with attachments. The abbreviation *FW* told the recipient that the incoming message delivered, or

forwarded, another message that the sender him/herself had previously received. The sequence of the content moves in the Postman messages appending other messages could not be established unless two moves were accounted for simultaneously. Thus, the sequence in example (3) is (IV+VI)+Ve, which represents the structure of roughly half of the Postman messages of this type. In the other half, the appended messages were delivered for information, without any requests related to them, and consequently, only Move IV occurred in the messages (for details, see 8.3.2).

Examples (4)-(6) illustrate a chain of Dialogue messages. The first message (4) opens the exchange, and the next two (5)-(6) provide requested information and a reaction respectively (content moves underlined).

(4)

Move I	Subject: Meeting B.Jonsson-P.Vanhanen 17.1. Helsinki
Move II	Hello Anna,
<u>Move V</u>	<u>as you certainly know, Bo Jonsson and Pertti Vanhanen will meet next Wednesday (17th of January) in Helsinki at 8.30 a.m. Now R is wondering if Pertti would be available already in Tuesday afternoon or evening?</u>
Move VIa	Could you please check and
<u>Move VIvr</u>	<u>get back to me then soonest?</u>
Move V	R needs the information today.
Move VIII	Best regards
Move IX	Satu Virtanen (E171)

- Move I = Identifying subject
- Move II = Salutation
- Move V = Providing information
- Move VIa = Requesting action
- Move VIvr = Requesting verbal response
- Move VIII = Closing
- Move IX = Signature

(5)

Move I	Subject: RE: Meeting B.Jonsson-P.Vanhnen 17.1. Helsinki
Move II	Satu,
Move Vri	<u>Mr Jonsson is having a meeting in Dresden on 16th in the afternoon and arrive in Helsinki 19.50. Not so good. But very late in that case.</u>
Move VIII	Regards,
Move IX	Anna (S172)

Move I = Identifying subject
Move II = Salutation
Move Vri = Providing requested information
Move VIII = Closing
Move IX = Signature

(6)

Move I	Subject: RE: Meeting B.Jonsson-P.Vanhnen 17.1. Helsinki
Move II	Anna,
Move III	thanks for your quick reply.
Move Vr	<u>We will stick to the earlier agreed time so they will meet on Wednesday at 8.30 a.m.</u>
Move VIII	Best regards
Move IX	Satu (F174)

Move I = Identifying subject
Move II = Salutation
Move III = Referring to previous contact
Move Vr = Providing information: reaction
Move VIII = Closing
Move IX = Signature

The message exchange in examples (4)-(6) containing three Dialogue messages presents a situation in which the opening message (4) provides information (Move V) and a request for a

verbal response (Move VI_{vr}). The first response message (5) provides the requested information (Move V_{ri}) and the second response (6) only a reaction to the preceding response message (Move V_r). As can be seen from the three messages, Move I in the Subject line remained the same in the exchange, which was always the situation in the Dialogue messages; not once was it modified over the message exchanges. However, as can be seen in examples (5) and (6), an abbreviation *RE* was added in front of the *Subject* in the template. This was done automatically by the system and it told the recipient that he/she had received a reply to one of his/her earlier messages. This abbreviation functioned like a premove; it prepared the recipient for the reply without giving specific information about the nature of the reply. In addition to Move I, examples (4)–(6) also contained three other framing moves, Moves II, VIII and IX.

The sequence of the content moves in the three messages was also typical. In the opening messages (example 4), Move V typically preceded Move VI_{vr}: information was provided before any requests were made. Only a couple of times was this sequence reversed. In the response messages, Move V_{ri} (example 5) typically opened the response to the opening message and Move V_r (example 6) the reaction to another response message. As in example (6), however, Move V_r (and Move V_{ri}) was sometimes preceded by Move III (Referring to previous contact).

Examples (1)–(6) representing the three email message types of internal English communication in *Stora Enso* show that the overall communicative purpose of each type was reflected on the level of moves, whose communicative function contributed to that purpose. The examples also show that the key content move in each message type tended to be placed up front (but see e.g. Mauranen 1993), which contributed to the understanding of the rationale for the prospective genre. The structure of the message type thus helped the reader detect the main purpose of the message early, which was likely to contribute to speeding up the communication process. In addition, as was mentioned above, the

email system itself helped in the identification of the purpose through the abbreviations of *FW* and *RE* and the paper clip symbol.

Below, the moves in the primary corpus are described one by one with a few examples. First, the moves that provide a frame for the message, referred to as framing moves, are introduced; they were responsible for the beginning and the ending of the message and they were present in all three message types. Second, the focus is on the content moves that were responsible for the main purpose of the message. They were Moves V (Providing information), IV (Indicating enclosure), and VI (Requesting). Although most of the examples to be presented only consist of single moves, their interpretation has taken their immediate textual context, accompanying messages, the writer, and the recipient(s) into account to the extent it has been possible in light of the information available.

8.2 FRAMING MOVES

This section deals with the framing moves, i.e. Moves I (Identifying subject), II (Salutation), III (Referring to previous contact), VII (Pre-closing), VIII (Closing), and IX (Signature).

8.2.1 MOVE I: IDENTIFYING SUBJECT

The single move most frequently applied in the corpus and the one that was present in all three message types was Move I (Identifying subject). This phenomenon was a consequence of the way the email system has been set up. Namely, the system calls for the identification of *Subject*, and it provides a slot for it in the email template. In the corpus, if the writer left the Subject line empty, the first sentence of the message assumed the task of identifying the subject.

The email system also helped in the identification of the three message types. As was mentioned in 8.1, the Postman messages

were indicated either by a special paper clip symbol in the Mail Index when attachments had been enclosed and by an abbreviation such as *FW*¹⁰⁵ in front of the Subject line when appended messages were delivered. The response messages of the Dialogue type were shown by the abbreviation *RE*¹⁰⁶ in front of the Subject line. Only the Noticeboard messages and opening messages of the Dialogue type remained unmarked in the Mail Index.

Noun phrases were clearly the most common linguistic realizations of Move I; verbs were hardly used at all, although in the Dialogue messages they would have supported the overall communicative purpose of exchanging information (see Munter et al. 2003: 30).

The detail of the linguistic realizations used for identifying the subjects varied a great deal. Roughly, the Subject lines were divided into three groups according to the detail or specificity they provided to the recipient: first, abstract or general expressions; second, concrete and specific expressions; and third, expressions containing specific lexis that must have been shared knowledge among the members of the larger Stora Enso discourse community or smaller division or unit specific communities. The first group, identifying the subject on an abstract or general level, not common in the data, consisted of examples such as (7)–(11) below:

- (7) Info (F209)
- (8) Internet (S213)
- (9) Exchange (S206)
- (10) Scores (F15)
- (11) 500t?? (S96)

When the recipient found a Subject line such as examples (7)–(11) in his/her incoming mailbox, it may have been difficult to know what the message was about, and for this reason business

105 The Swedish equivalent *VB* (*vidarebefordrat*) was also found in the corpus.

106 The Swedish equivalent *SV* (*svar*) was also found in the corpus.

communication guidelines do not recommend them (see e.g. Munter et al. 2003). On the other hand, if the participants had just agreed on the phone that they would exchange specific information about something, for instance, *Info* could well have been enough for the recipient to identify the subject in the shared corporate context.

Most of the Subject lines in the data represented the second group; they were concrete and specific and thus seemed to identify the subject more effectively. Of course the concreteness or specificity could be on different levels as the following examples show:

- (12) Budget 2001 (S78)
- (13) Hedging and IAS 39 (F128)
- (14) Layout meeting postponed (S158)
- (15) Visit report TP Berlin on 24.2.2001 (F103)
- (16) Agenda for the meeting on 17th June concerning XX Mill Future concept (S13)

Examples (15)–(16) specify the subject in quite a detail, whereas the wording in examples (12)–(14) is still fairly general; however, their interpretation by the recipient(s) of the relevant message, as that of examples (7)–(11), would be dependent on the context and the shared knowledge between the communication partners. In other words, example (12) could have referred to a number of budgets drafted for year 2001, but its immediate textual context revealed that it referred to the sales budget per customer for a given quantity of a product; the recipient of the message was preparing the budget and the writer was expecting the information. When the recipient of the message saw the subject of the message, it was unlikely to cause any confusion. The recipient knew that the writer (whose name the recipient was able to see in the Mail Index) was one of the people who were expecting information about the budget. Similarly, example (14) still looks rather general when isolated from its immediate context but when embedded in it, the subject becomes clear (even for an outsider). Example (17) shows the message in full.

(17) Betreff: Layout meeting postponed

Dear team,

Please note that the planned layout meeting on February 26 has been postponed due to Emma's sick leave. Instead we will meet after Seppo and Emma have done the next proof reading. Preliminary we will thus meet in Xplace on April 9, between 08.30-12.00.

Best regards,

Anders (S158)

All the recipients of example (17) were members of the same team and the writer of the message was their team leader. Thus, when the subject of this message, Move I, appeared in the Mail Index of the recipients' mailboxes together with the sender's name, it can be argued that it revealed the essential content of the message itself. It was specific in its context, and its meaning was shared by the recipients of the message.

Only a few messages had Subject lines that specifically boosted action and told the recipient what was expected, as examples (18)-(21) show.

(18) Press release for distribution: Stora Enso's subsidiary X strengthens market presence (S228)

(19) I need your help (S240)

(20) Envelopes via UPS, please forward asap (S185)

(21) Urgent - meeting February 1 (S85)

Interestingly, example (20) was marked with a High Priority label but example (21) including the word 'urgent' did not have it.

The third group of Subject lines might have remained (somewhat) mysterious to an outside researcher but seemed to represent shared knowledge in the form of corporate-bound lexis, or jargon, for the members of the relevant discourse community. Examples (22)-(26) illustrate the point.

(22) Clc/C duplex 150 mN (F135)

(23) TBA Square (F56)

(24) LPB 2000 (F105)

- (25) Studies on crocodile skin (F31)
- (26) förf kundf.xls (S32)

Examples (22)–(24) refer to the products of the company and (25) does not have anything to do with reptiles but the quality of paper. Example (26) contains excerpts of Swedish words; it was the name of a regularly sent attachment enclosed with the message. Thus, it can again be argued that the recipients would have been able to conclude what the message was about.

It was not always an easy exercise to identify the subject with the help of the Subject line in the three message types. As the communicative purpose of the Noticeboard messages was to inform the recipients of corporate issues and the messages were meant to stand alone, as if placed on the bulletin board, the Subject line typically introduced the topic, which was then repeated partly or in full and further elaborated through Move V (Providing information). Hence, the Subject line and the first sentence of the message were closely connected and the Subject line functioned like a conventional document heading summarizing the key content of the message. In the Postman messages, especially when attachments were delivered, the situation was the same, whereas when old messages were appended, it was different. The reason was that the Subject line of the appended message(s) was kept even though the focus often changed when the message was forwarded. Overall, the Subject line always framed the message and gave an indication of the business at hand.

In the Dialogue messages, on the other hand, the identification of the subject of the message possibly was a more demanding exercise. Typically, the Subject line was not changed in the long chains of messages (but see Munter et al. 2003: 30), which often led to a situation in which it only identified a general theme of the exchange and did not identify the subject on a more concrete level, as was the case in the Noticeboard messages and, for the most part, in the Postman messages. This meant that to identify the subject of the Dialogue messages, the recipient needed to look, not only at the Subject line, but also at the message at hand and

maybe even at the previous messages in the chain. On the one hand, the recipient was able to keep track of the general focus of the email messages on the basis of the Subject line but, on the other hand, it did not help him/her see what aspect of the topic was under discussion. For example, in one informant's (Berit) incoming mailbox 70% of the internal English messages had the Subject line *ATD Directory* while the corresponding figure was over 80% for her own outgoing messages (see also Table 7 in 5.1.2). The reason for that was partly her own doing since she sent out a Noticeboard message (see example 2 in 6.1.1) with a long distribution list informing the recipients of the distribution of the directory. The messages in her incoming mailbox mostly concerned the nondelivery of the directory (see example 5 in 6.1.3) and those in her outgoing mailbox were her responses to those messages (see example 6 in 6.1.3). In this case, the Subject line identified the topic on a general level, but it can be suggested that when Berit saw a new message with the same subject in her incoming mailbox she 'knew' that it would likely relate to the nondelivery of the directory.

Only five messages in the corpus had empty Subject lines, and in each case the omission seemed to represent an oversight; no apparent reason could be established. When the Subject line was missing, the first sentence of the message gave the information about the topic at hand. Examples (27)–(28) represent the first sentences in messages without Subject lines.

- (27) I'm sad to inform you, tha we have come to the decision to run
down our converting operation in B by the end of July 2000 (F45)
(28) Please find here modified table. (F104)

Example (27) functions as Move I and identifies the subject of the message, but it also starts Move V (Providing information). Example (28) shows all the text of a Postman message with the exception of framing moves; this message might have caused difficulty in interpretation, as neither the first and only sentence nor the name of the attachment, *TPSU00D.XLS*, seemed to identify

the subject explicitly. However, for an expert member of the discourse community the message may have been transparent; for example, the recipient might have known exactly what kind of table *TPSU00D.XLS* was. As the expert members of the discourse community worked in a shared environment, a subject line which was opaque in a researcher's opinion may be, and is likely to be, quite clear for the insiders: a one-word Subject line may tell the recipients what is expected of them. This phenomenon of reading messages into texts where outsiders cannot find them is also reflected in the answers the informants gave to the questions about their reactions to the messages they had received. For example, they interpreted some texts as requests although no request was textualized (for more, see 6.1).

8.2.2 MOVES II, VII, VIII AND IX: SALUTATION, PRE-CLOSING, CLOSING, AND SIGNATURE

The position of the move which was the second in frequency in the data was shared by three framing moves: Move II (Salutation), with or without the recipient's name, Move VII (Closing), and Move IX (Signature), indicating the name of the sender.

Move II (Salutation) was found in almost 80% of the messages; it could be omitted in any one message type, but it was not a common practice. The informant (Erja) who was interviewed gave support for the frequent use of salutations; she said that she always used them in her email messages, which was also evidenced by the messages written by her in the corpus. Typically, the move was realized through phrases such as those shown in examples (29)–(33).

(29) Hello (+first name)

(30) Hi (+ first name)

(31) Hej (+ first name)

(32) Hello all

(33) Dear colleagues

Move II also contained salutations of conventional business correspondence such as *Dear Mr. So-and-So*, although they were rare. The use of first names versus surnames in the Salutation move was sensitive to the context in spite of the dominance of first-name usage (see example 47a-c below; also 9.1). Also, *Dear Sirs* and *Gentlemen* were used a few times when multiple recipients were greeted. As this usage excludes female recipients, it suggests a lack of best practices in email since it does not seem likely that the writer would ignore female recipients on purpose (see example 10 in 6.4). When, however, *Gentlemen* was preceded by *Dear* and *Hello* resulting in a mixture of formal and informal discourse, the usage seemed to convey togetherness and even a humorous air as the primary recipients in these messages were men.

Some transference from Finnish and Swedish was also detected in how the move was textualized (see Sajavaara 1999 for discussion on transference). In these languages salutations can end in an exclamation mark, and this practice was transferred to the English email messages. In Anglo-American salutations, in contrast, the conventional ending is either with or without a comma. Another feature typical of both Finnish and Swedish, which was found in the present corpus, was starting the first sentence after the salutation with a lower case letter, especially when the salutation ended in a comma, but also when no comma was present. Examples (34)–(38) illustrate these phenomena.

- (34) Hello Henrik and Lars!
Concerning UR E-business pilot I have following opinions ...
(F115)
- (35) Hello Juha!
I will represent BU/BA UR in the meeting in ... (S129)
- (36) Dear Emma!
I hope that your summer has been really relaxing and joyful
... (S194)

- (37) Hello Anne,
as you certainly know, Bo Jonsson and Pertti Vanhanen will
meet next Wednesday (17th of January) in Helsinki at 8.30 a.m.
.. (F171)
- (38) HejSeppo
could you pls comment on this! (S118)

As pointed out above, almost 80% of the messages contained Move II; however, there were differences in its distribution among the message types. The percentages in the Noticeboard and Postman types were practically the same, i.e. 68% and 64% respectively, whereas almost 90% of the Dialogue messages exhibited this feature.

Move VIII (Closing) was typically realized through conventional phrases used in business faxes in particular; they were not as formal as those used in business letters although a couple of times *Sincerely yours* was found. Below, examples (39)–(42) represent some typical and (43)–(46) not so typical examples of Closing moves.

- (39) Kind regards
(40) Best regards
(41) Regards
(42) rgds/brgds/BR/B'regs
(43) Med vänlig hälsning/Bästa hälsningar/ MVH¹⁰⁷
(44) Sincerely yours
(45) mfg (mit freundlichen Grussen)
(46) Sunny regards/☺

Examples (39)–(40) clearly dominated in the corpus and as example (42) shows, *(Best) regards* has also generated a number of alternatives. Swedish also featured a couple times in the Closing moves, as example (43) shows (see also 5.5.1 and 9.2). The closings in (45)–(46) appeared only once each and both of them seemed to

107 In English: *With best/kind regards*.

be motivated by the context. The German salutation (see example 11b in 5.3) was used by a Finn in his message to a close Swedish colleague; the salutation was likely motivated by the Finn's immediate working environment in a German office. However, the motivation for the emoticon (S200) and *Sunny regards* (S245) could not be established with the information available although it seemed to be the creation of goodwill. Sometimes the Closing move was omitted leaving the sender's name to stand alone. This omission occurred in all three message types. The informant who was interviewed said that she always signed her messages but she could not give an explanation why she sometimes did not use the Closing move.

The salutations and closings in the messages did not always operate on the same level of formality: for instance, multiple recipients were greeted with *Hello* but the closing conveyed a more formal relationship with *sincerely yours* (F253). The Closing move is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9 together with the Salutation and Signature moves.

Move IX (Signature) was present in over 90% of the messages; in half of the messages first names were used, preprogrammed signatures (usually including the Closing move and the full name of the sender with his/her contact information – see example 19 in 5.4) accounted for about a fourth and full names for about 20% of the messages.¹⁰⁸ A few times first names were added in front of preprogrammed signatures to better reflect the relationship between the communication partners; once the signature did not contain the full name at all (see example 2 in 9.1.1). Most of the time, however, the users of preprogrammed signatures did not modify them in any way; they used them as such in all their messages. For example, one of the informants, Henrik, always signed his messages with a preprogrammed signature.

108 If the signature only had the full name of the writer without any other information, it was regarded as a full name signature, not a preprogrammed one.

The preprogrammed signatures were used by representatives of all the four job roles in the company, i.e. executive, managerial, specialist, and staff; in the corpus they were frequent in the executive and secretarial staff's messages in particular. However, only one version of each preprogrammed signature was used although the technology enables the creation and use of many different versions. Further, they were employed consistently in all the messages of the users.

The Signature move was only omitted in some Postman and Noticeboard messages. In other words, in this corpus the Signature move was always present in the Dialogue messages, maybe emphasizing the dialogic nature; the turn in the exchange was thus explicitly marked. Typically, in the Postman and Noticeboard messages both moves were missing simultaneously. For example, textless Postman messages with attachments or appended messages appeared without these moves; the sender/writer simply forwarded the appended messages or attached a document, and thus used the technology only to deliver. If, however, the sender made use of a preprogrammed signature, the email system automatically added it into the otherwise empty Postman message. When the moves were missing from the Noticeboard messages, only press releases and appointment news were affected.

The dynamic nature of first name versus full name usage in the Salutation and Signature moves is illustrated by example (47a-c). It shows a chain of three Dialogue messages with only the Salutation and Signature (and Closing) moves.

- (47)
(a) Dear Mr Steuer,
...
Best regards,
Leena Virtanen
- Secretary/Assistant
XYZ unit
Tel. +358 123 456
Mobile +358 40 234 567
Fax +358 345 678 (F179)

(b) Dear Ms Virtanen
...
Best regards
Thomas Steuer (lee16/25)

(c) Dear Mr Steuer
...
Best regards
Leena (F180)

Example (47a) has been signed by a preprogrammed signature and the recipient is greeted by employing the traditional salutation of business letter discourse. This usage was most likely motivated by the social distance between the communication partners but the recipient's cultural background was also likely to play a role: he was a German. It is common knowledge that Germans prefer using titles and surnames to first names in their correspondence (see e.g. Lainio 2000). In example (b) full names appear in both the Salutation and Signature moves but in (c) Leena switches to first-name signature. Unfortunately, there was no evidence in the corpus on how Mr Steuer reacted to this change.

The frequent application of the Salutation and Signature moves was somewhat peculiar since the information they provided was repetitious; it was always found in the email template specifying the sender and the recipient of the message. In the hectic business world, it seems unlikely that business practitioners would waste time in repetition, which seems to suggest that these moves had a specific function in the three email message types. As was pointed out in 5.3, these moves, with the use of first names in particular, contributed to the Relational orientation in the messages.

Move VII (Pre-closing) was not very common in the data; it could be found in approximately every fourth message. Typically, in over half of the occurrences, it was realized through phrases such as those in examples (48)–(50).

- (48) Thanks.
- (49) Have a nice weekend!
- (50) Looking forward to seeing you.

The move was placed immediately before the Closing move and was employed most frequently in the Dialogue messages, in approximately every third message, and less in the Postman and Noticeboard messages. Some of the moves were multifunctional and combined with the Requesting move, as in *I look forward to hearing from you* (S67); the function of *Pls confirm* (S100) seemed to be that of reinforcing the request in the previous sentence, which read: *In my opinion we can not give any exclusivity to NFBE for selling DIC in the US but should you have another approach to this issue, pls let me know asap.*

In Nickerson's (2000: 157-158; see also Jung 2002) data, these elements were realized in a conventionalized form and were often similar to those in business letter discourse (e.g. *Thank you in advance for your cooperation*). Less than 20% of the messages in her data included such an element. In the present corpus, the total percentage of the Pre-closing moves was somewhat higher. However, it would be difficult to claim that they were conventionalized although they included utterances such as *look forward to*, which was the third most frequently used single Pre-closing move in the corpus. *Thanks* was the most frequently used alternative followed by wishes for a nice weekend.

Nickerson (2000: 157) suggests that the inclusion of the Pre-closing move is related to corporate politeness determined by the corporate distance between the participants and by the measure of compliance required from the receiver. In other words, the bigger the distance the more likely the writer is to use a pre-close; similarly, the more cooperation from the recipient is needed, the more likely it is that a pre-close is used. This explanation seems to hold, at least to the extent the corporate distance could be established between the participants. It was typically used by subordinates writing to their superiors but it could also be used in a message having multiple recipients on different organizational levels: *Have a nice weekend!* (F221) was used as a pre-close in a Postman message to 30 recipients (see example 3 in 6.1.2).

The frequency of the framing moves in the corpus suggests that in their English email messages the Finnish and Swedish writers evoked the business letter or fax genre rather than the memo genre typical of native speaker business writers in the USA in particular (see e.g. Orlikowski & Yates 1994, Baron 2000). This finding was also reinforced by a focus group of American business practitioners who paid attention to the frequent use of salutations and closings in the English email messages written by Finns and Swedes (Kankaanranta 2005: 51). However, unlike the formal salutations with *Dear* and the surname of the recipient, the salutations in the corpus reflected a closer relationship with the recipient since first names were typically used. As the company did not have any guidebook of email usage at the time the corpus was collected and there were no recommendations about email usage, the reason for the frequent use of salutations and closings, with first names in particular, might be the writers' desire to contribute to amicable relations between the employees. The use effectively imported Relational orientation to the messages, which was further reinforced by the Pre-closing moves.

8.2.3 MOVE III: REFERRING TO PREVIOUS CONTACT

Move III (Referring to previous contact) was identified on the basis of its reference to an event in which the participants of the message had been involved. For example, a reference could be made to a preceding message or a meeting attended by the participants. This type of *manifest intertextuality* (Fairclough 1992a), which makes explicit references to previous (or future) communication, was most frequently used in Move III, although it also appeared in other moves (see 8.3.2). The move, and the intertextuality it realized, offered evidence of the ongoing connections between events and texts in the company.

The distribution of Move III varied among the three message types. Although, by definition, the Noticeboard messages did not refer to the preceding or subsequent messages of the recipient,

they still contained instances of manifest intertextuality, referring to previous communicative events, in about 20% of the messages. In example (51) references to previous (and future) communicative events are apparent (Move III underlined).

- (51) You have got earlier draft of the guidelines concerning German call-off stocks. The new method will be postponed and will start later. This means that call-off stocks in Germany will be dealt as direct sale like today.
You will be informed later about the future changes. The earliest time to start could be 2.11.2001. (F131)

Move III in example (51), combined with Move V (Providing information), includes a reference to an earlier draft, whose elaboration is being continued in the current message; the future changes will be taken up later.

In the Postman messages, references to previous messages were practically non-existent. Only a few times was Move III present. It always co-occurred with another move, usually with IV (Indicating enclosure) but also with V (Providing information) and VI (Requesting) as examples (52)–(54) show (Move III underlined).

- (52) Here is still as an addition to the file, which we worked out in the last meeting. (with Move IV) (F8)
(53) The conclusion from our e-business-meeting in Kplace was that we start F extranet realization with our UR and H cases. Enclosed please find. . . (with Move V) (F61)
(54) As decided at the last meeting, please also mail me ideas of feature articles. (with Move VI) (S281)

In examples (52)–(54), there is something in the message that supports the identification of the move as one referring to a previous contact between the participants. In (52)–(53), the personal pronoun *we/our* suggests that the recipients of the message have been present at the meetings referred to, and the definite article before *meeting* in example (54) fulfills the same function. In contrast, on the basis

of the example such as *please find enclosed a memo of the telephone conference held on 20.2.2001 (S72)*, it was not possible to conclude that the recipients had been present at the conference, and that was why Move III was not identified in the sentence. This conclusion was also supported by contextual information, the large number of recipients of the message (16 and one alias); it was unlikely that all of them would have been present at the meeting. Thus, the move was classified as Move V (Providing information).

In the Dialogue messages, Move III was found in about one third of the 150 messages. However, only three of the 34 opening messages contained an explicit reference to a previous contact¹⁰⁹ between the participants, as examples (55)–(57) below show (Move III underlined).

- (55) As discussed earlier, we are very interested in having Anne working with us during some of the months this year, as FG will be on maternity leave from (wild guess) mid/end of March to the end of September. (S38)
- (56) With reference to our short conversation about this in Helsinki one week ago I would appreciate it if you would look deeper into this. (S117)
- (57) I asked that couple months ago when we had a Internet recruiting meeting in Aplace. (F216)

Examples (55)–(56) open the messages, as is typically the case with Move III, but (57) represents the last sentence before the Closing move. It may be that this unusual position of the move after Moves VI (Requesting) and V (Providing information) could also suggest that the function of Move V, with which it was combined, was

¹⁰⁹ The opening messages of the Dialogue type sometimes referred to corporate events involving either the writer or the recipient (but not both) that functioned as triggers for the exchange. Three such examples with their first sentences are given here:

PL is again asking for RF coated board suitable for . . . (F2)

What was the outcome of your discussion with XX? (S20)

Mrs Suvi Kuokkanen told me that the new ATD has been published. (F263)

taking over. In other words, the writer was simply providing some further information about why he should have been included in the mailing list.

In example (58) no explicit verbal reference to a previous contact was found in the first sentence.

(58) JUST FOR YOUR INFO THIS WEEK 9 IS STILL PART OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON AND THEREBY XCITY AND XCITY AIRPORT IS OVER GROWDED, TO PUT IT MILDLY. IF UR XCITY INVITES YOU THERE THEN AND YOU HAVE FLIGHT TICKETS, THAT'S FINE. . . (F74)

In spite of the lack of an explicit reference to an earlier contact, it is obvious that the writer and the recipient have been in touch and the writer knows that the recipient is about to visit Xcountry. Otherwise, the topic would seem strange. The second sentence seems to support this assumption since the writer knows that the recipient has been invited to Xcountry. Indeed, the Subject line read *Visit to Xcountry*.

Further, one message opened with small talk *How is life in Dusseldorf? I hope you had a nice Christmas and a good start of the year* (see example 18a in 5.1.3). Since Relational orientation (Rogers & Hildbebrandt 1993) of this type extending over longer stretches of text was extremely rare in the data (only twice did participants engage in a small talk exchange; see 7.1), it was not assigned the status of an independent move in this study. However, since the set-up was similar to that of example (58), i.e. the writer and the recipient had a common frame of reference; the writer clearly knew the recipient well and knew that he was in Dusseldorf, the two sentences could be characterized as an implicit reference to previous contact and thus could be classified as Move III. However, since the opening small talk question also generated an answer (see example 18b in 5.1.3), it suggests another interpretation, i.e. Move VI (Requesting). Thus, as mentioned above, the assignment into a specific move category was fluid.

In the response messages of the Dialogue type the reference to the previous contact implicitly took place because the preceding messages in the chain were always present (see Louhiala-Salmi-nen 1999a; also 5.1.3). In around 40% of the 116 response messages Move III was also verbalized. As is discussed later, Move III could overlap with Move Vr (Providing information: reaction) as, for example, thanking could sometimes be interpreted as a reference to the previous contact and as a reaction to the previous message simultaneously. However, most of the time Move Vr appeared alone without any overlap with Move III.

The most common realizations of Move III were expressions of thanks for the preceding message or the information provided, references to other communicative events shared by the participants, and apologies for a late reply. Around half of the realizations were expressions of thanks (see examples 59–61), a reference to other communicative events was present in 40% of the messages (see examples 62–64), and in about 10% an apology for a late reply could be found (see examples 65–67). Interestingly, both thanks and apologies imported Relational orientation into the message to build rapport between the participants (see Rogers & Hildebrandt 1993). Here are some examples of each occurrence (Move III underlined):

- (59) Thank you for your e-mail. (S39)
- (60) Thanks for info, I have received Johanna's information. (F196)
- (61) I would like to thank you for the reports you sent us. (F31)
- (62) referring to our discussion about the length of my stay, we have now tried to arrange . . . (S40)
- (63) Further to our phone conversation on the above subject I confirm our wish . . . (S67)
- (64) As agreed on the phone, I send you some questions. (F146)
- (65) I'm truly sorry, that I haven't answer earlier. (F28)
- (66) I regret that I am late with my answer. (S44)
- (67) Sorry because I couldn't answer earlier but I was on sick leave a couple of days. (F180)

Once Move III contained both an expression of thanks and an apology for answering late as in

(68) Thanks for your message. Sorry for answering this late, I came back... (F164)

As examples (59)–(64) show, references to previous events contained both spoken and written communicative events and thus seemed to speak for the interplay between the two as suggested by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002a; also Gunnarsson 1997) study of a business professional's typical working day (also 5.3). The number of messages apologizing for late replies (examples 65–67) could be taken as evidence of the conception of email as a rapid medium of communication with the possibility of immediate feedback, suggesting a high level of involvement, a feature typical of spoken interactions (Chafe 1982; see 7.1). When the presupposition of immediacy was not met, the participants seemed to consider an apology necessary. When to apologize depended on the expectations presented in the received message; sometimes a delay of a couple of days triggered an apology as in (67), other times more days passed by.

There were two references to communicative events which had not taken place between the participants of the email exchange but which were still classified as realizations of Move III. The reason for that was that the superior of the writer had asked him/her to write, and in this way the writer could be considered a participant in the preceding event. In Goffman's terms (1974), the superior was the *principal* and the writer the *animator*.

Example (69) shows how a subordinate starts his message after his superior seems to have delegated the job to him after discussing it with the recipient of the message on the phone.

(69) Regarding the phone call between you and Mr. Lidström yesterday, would we like to get orders for Forella latest 26/1. (S73)

In the other example of Move III, not involving the participants of the email exchange, the writer has discussed her job with the Vice President of the Human Relations function (Sven) and is now sending the result of the discussion to her immediate superior (Henrik); example (70) contains the beginning of the message.

(70) Hello Henrik,
I discussed today with Sven e.g. my job and its contents. Sven asked me to send you contents from the discussion, you have a meeting next Wednesday related to our units "situation" - how to coordinate resources. . . (F209)

Move III refers to a discussion, not with the recipient of the message (Henrik), but with the Vice President (Sven), who has asked the writer to send the message to the recipient. Thus, it represents a reference to a previous contact, albeit somewhat unusual, which justifies or explains why Henrik received the particular message from the writer.

A couple of times, Move III was realized through a reference to the topic in an earlier contact, not the contact itself, as is shown in example (71).

(71) Hej Kalle,
From BU UR we have a neutral position in this question as we are not in the front-line driving this development.
Kind Regards, (S141)

The demonstrative *this* together with the noun *question* make a reference to the topic in the preceding message. The only sentence in example (71) thus combines both Move Vr (Providing reaction) and Move III.

To summarize, the realizations of Move III seem to suggest that email invites a response via email, as suggested by Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 319), but also that a distinct link between spoken and written texts in the everyday communication of the company can be established (see Louhiala-Salminen 2002a: 224; also Gunnarsson 1997). These observations were supported by the high

number of messages where thanks for the preceding email message were expressed and messages where references were made to other communicative events, especially telephone calls and discussions. In Move III the existence of a shared environment also became evident, as did the possibility of immediate feedback, both of which are qualities of involved spoken interactions according to Chafe (1982; see also 7.1). The references to previous communicative events anchored the messages in the flow of everyday activities in the company and in that sense contributed to the Informational orientation of the messages.

8.3 CONTENT MOVES

Below, the focus is on the content moves that were responsible for the communicative purposes of the message types: Moves V (Providing information), IV (Indicating enclosure), and VI (Requesting). Move VI (Requesting) gains the least attention, as the textualizations of the move are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10.

8.3.1 MOVE V: PROVIDING INFORMATION

Move V (Providing information) was central in the furtherance of the company's activities and it was common in all three message types, although the information provided was different. A distinction was made between four types of information provided in the move by indicating three of the types with a lower case letter. The basic move, Move V, provided information in all other situations but the following three: first, when comments on attachments or appended messages were given, the move was specified as Move Ve (Commenting on enclosure); second, Move Vri provided requested information; and third, Move Vr gave a reaction. The move in its different versions is discussed below in relation to the three message types.

Move V played a central role in maintaining the major organizational systems of task, structure, technology, and control in the company (see 5.1) and consequently, was responsible for the Informational orientation of the messages (see 5.3). In the Noticeboard messages, Move V provided information about corporate issues, and in the Dialogue messages, Move V in the opening message and Moves Vri and Vr in the response messages contributed to the exchange of information. Move Ve did not specifically contribute to the dominant purpose of the Postman messages of delivering attachments or appended messages for information and/or comments but it was used in around half of the messages to comment on the enclosed document.

Move V in the Noticeboard messages. – In the Noticeboard messages Move V was always found, and it contributed to the overall communicative purpose of informing the recipients of corporate issues. Around 70% of the messages only exhibited this content move; in the rest the Requesting move (in either VIa or VIif versions) was also found. In the Noticeboard messages, Move I (Identifying subject) and Move V always seemed to mix in the first sentence of the message. In other words, some words of the Subject line identifying the subject were repeated either in part or in full in the first sentence of the message, which then typically elaborated on the subject and thus opened Move V. In about three fourths of the 25 Noticeboard messages, the first sentence repeated the Subject line either in part or in full. Only once did the moves blend fully as the Subject line was empty and the first sentence assumed the task of both identifying the subject and of providing information. Example (72) shows the first sentence of the message.

(72) Subject:

I'm sad to inform you, tha we have come to the decision to run down our converting operation in B by the end of July 2000 (F45).

Some typical examples of the interplay between Moves I and V in the Noticeboard messages are presented in Table 24 in examples (73)-(81). Repeated words have been underlined.

TABLE 24. Interplay between Moves I and V in the Noticeboard messages.

Move I in the Subject line	Move V in the first sentence
(73) <u>Layout meeting postponed</u>	Please note that the planned <u>layout meeting</u> on February 26 has been <u>postponed</u> due to Satu's sick leave. (F158)
(74) <u>Visit to UR Xcity</u>	please be informed that we will be <u>visiting UR Xcity</u> on 21.7.2001 regarding KT's ...work. (F136)
(75) <u>Hedging and IAS 39</u>	I have been informed that handling of financial <u>hedging</u> instruments in book keeping would be changed latest from 2.2.2001 onwards due to <u>IAS 39</u> (or FAS 133). (F128)
(76) Labour <u>contract</u> situation	A bid for a 3 year <u>contract</u> giving a total increase in wages of 6,3% as well as reduction of working days by 1 day/year during the contract period was rejected by the blue collar unions on 9/1. (S22)
(77) <u>Global pageplan</u>	For your information: The decision to build a new paper machine in L must be reflected in next <u>Global</u> . (S155)
(78) <u>CHANGES IN MATTI'S FLIGHTS TODAY</u>	Kindly be informed that the <u>flight</u> from H to S has been cancelled and he had to <u>change</u> his <u>flights</u> . (F86)
(79) Internet recruiting, <u>meeting room</u>	Here are our <u>meeting room</u> in Stockholm (F214)
(80) ATD Directory	Last week we started the distribution of the new edition (S274)
(81) VIRUS ALERT	If you receive an email with the subject line - "Fw: Naked Wife" DO NOT OPEN IT, DELETE IT (S250)

In examples (73)-(75), Move I is repeated in full in the first sentence of the message and, in addition, some further information is provided through Move V. In examples (76)-(79), Move I and V share some items of information but not all. For example, the Subject lines in examples (78)-(79) provide more details than the first sentence of the message: in (78) Move I gives the name of the

person, which is not repeated in Move V anymore; in (79) Move I specifies the type of meeting, which does not appear in Move V.

In the rest of the Noticeboard messages, the link between the Subject line and the first sentence was established in another way, for example through a synonym; in other words, Move V used an anaphoric reference to an item in Move I. For example, in example (78) *Matti* in Move I has been replaced by the personal pronouns *he* and *his* in Move V. Similarly, in (80) the subject has been identified as *ATD Directory* on the Subject line, and the first sentence uses a synonym, *edition*, for it. Sometimes the link between the two moves was also subtler, as in example (81), in which there is no direct lexical link between the two, but it is clear that the two moves are closely related: this wording is expected from virus alert messages.

Move V was the longest move in the Noticeboard messages, which was understandable as their main communicative purpose was to inform. The body of the message often contained only this one move. The longest move in the data contained over 350 words, which is equivalent to about one A4 sheet (F92). But a four-word move was also identified as example (82) shows:

(82) ID number is 834. (F241)

This message was a follow-up to the writer's earlier message informing the recipients of an upcoming video conference, in which she stated that the ID number for the conference would be given later.

The key communicative intention of Move V in the Noticeboard messages was sometimes emphasized through words and phrases that focused on the act of informing. For example, as can be seen from examples (74)–(75) and (77)–(78), the messages open with phrases such as *please be informed*, *I have been informed*, *For your information*, and *kindly be informed*. Examples (74) and (78) represent conventional, formulaic expressions of business letter discourse, as was discussed in 7.2 (see also Bovée et al. 2003).

Move V in the Postman messages. – In the Postman messages, Move V typically commented on the attached documents or appended messages, and was thus realized in the form of Move Ve, Commenting on enclosure. The move was not always present but was found in around 50% of the messages; the percentage was the same for both types of enclosures, i.e. attachments and appended messages.¹¹⁰ The move was realized somewhat differently in the two messages, though.

In the Postman messages with attachments, Move Ve typically gave some additional information such as an explanation, details, or an evaluation concerning the content of the attached document(s). For example, when an agenda for a meeting was attached, the move provided information about the social program and transportation. Below, examples (83)–(84) illustrate two other situations.

(83) Hello all,
please find enclosed a memo of the telephone conference held on 20.2.2001. Some modifications were made to the RY project plan according to what was discussed in the meeting. An updated project plan (version 1.0) will be sent to you soonest.
Best regards, (F72)

(84) Hello,
Please find attached the list of summer vacations in CHR, changes are possible.
Have a nice weekend!
Best regards, (F221)

Move Ve provides information on the project discussed at the meeting, as example (83) shows, or it may give a very short comment, as in example (84).

110 For a researcher, without access to all the attached documents, it was sometimes difficult to establish if Move V occurred in Ve version. As this distinction was not relevant for the purposes of the study and the number of ambiguous cases was very small, and especially because the (prospective) V moves seemed to be connected to the issues in the attachment or the appended messages and thus did not provide any information outside the identified subject, no attempt was made to treat them separately.

Move Ve in the Postman messages with appended messages typically drew conclusions based on the appended messages, which were thus used as evidence for the information provided in the move, as in examples (85)–(87).

- (85) As you can see UR is now getting info from the market about the new product quality from CN 4. (S11)
- (86) Based on this mail from PM at M I think we can now close any further discussions about possible co-operation with M in the USA. (S100)
- (87) life does not look so good and promising like beginning of last year (F90)

In examples (85) and (86), where UR and PM represent buyers of the company's products, the writer offers a conclusion based on the appended messages. Example (87) offers a one-sentence comment on a long message containing 380 words, which dealt with competitors' activities.

Moves V, Vri, and Vr in the Dialogue messages. – In the Dialogue messages, Move V appeared in three versions: it simply provided information (V) in the opening message, as in the Noticeboard messages, or it provided information that had been requested (Vri), or it gave a reaction (Vr) to something presented in the previous message. Moves Vri and Vr were only found in the Dialogue messages and together with the Requesting move (VI) they explicitly supported the communicative purpose of exchanging information.

In the opening message of the Dialogue type, Move V typically opened the message and was followed by Move VI, Requesting. A couple of times the opening messages (n=34) did not have any Move V, which is the case with example (88).

- (88) Subject: Winterliner for Xcountry
Dear Paavo,
What was the outcome of your discussion with XX? Could we get approx 2000mt 265 gsm trimming machine for feb production?
Kind Regards, (S20)

The writer puts two questions to the recipient about a discussion he knows has taken place. Since both participants seem to share the information, no specific move giving information is needed.

Somewhat similar examples were provided by the two messages in which the move seemed to be combining with Move VI, Requesting. The combinations resulted in one-sentence messages as shown in examples (89) and (90).

- (89) Subject: Stora Enso Xland closed 8/5
Would you kindly insert message in Insite that our office will be closed on Wednesday May 8th, 2001 ("Victoire 1945"). (F258)
- (90) Subject: W/E/M
Could you please give me some dates in February and beginning of March for visit/report at M and their W together with E.
(S160)

In examples (89)–(90), the subject is identified in the Subject line and then repeated and elaborated in Moves V (Providing information) and VI (Requesting) occurring in the same first sentence. It can also be argued that only the Requesting move is present because it represents the main function of the utterances in question. I argue, however, that the interpretation that the two moves are combined better reflects the overall purpose of the utterances; in addition to requesting, they also provide further information about the subject.

Typically, in the opening messages of the Dialogue type the interplay between Move I and Move V was similar to their interplay in the Noticeboard messages: some words of the Subject line were repeated in the first sentence of the message containing Move V, but the connection, if any, between the moves might also

be subtler. The repetition concerned fewer words than in the Noticeboard messages, as some of the information between the participants seemed to be shared as examples (91)-(98) in Table 25 show; repeated words have been underlined.

TABLE 25. Interplay between Moves I and V in the opening messages of the Dialogue type.

Move I in the Subject line	Move V in the first sentence
(91) <u>Board for milk and juice packaging for XYZ</u>	Papyrus <u>XYZ</u> is again asking for PE coated board suitable <u>for milk and juice packaging</u> . (F2)
(92) <u>Anne's stay at the M sales office</u>	As discussed earlier, we are very interested in having <u>Anne</u> working with us during some months this year, as ER will be on maternity leave from (wild guess) mid/end of March to the end of October. (S38)
(93) <u>Internet</u>	I'm updating text for our <u>Internet</u> (www.storaenso.com , "careers") pages. (F212)
(94) Meeting 9.2.2001	Here is the draft. (F4)
(95) Meeting with UR, March 2	Below please find AH's flight details: (S29)
(96) Urgent - meeting February 1	Below please find a proposal from A. (S85)
(97) Duplex board for TR (Country A, Country B)	With reference to our short conversation about this in Helsinki one week ago I would appreciate if you would look deeper into this. (S117)
(98) Xhall wtl 250 gsm 2001	know its not always easy, but lets try our best with the following. (F79)

Examples (91)-(93) represent a situation where Move I (Identifying subject) and Move V mix in the first sentence of the opening message. In other words, some words of the Subject line identifying the subject are repeated in the first sentence of the message, which then elaborates on the subject and thus opens Move V. The information is shared to some extent as the wording *again* in example (91) and *As discussed earlier* in example (92) suggest; this was not the case in the Noticeboard messages. Examples (94)-(96) illustrate how the same subject of a *meeting* is specified and elaborated on by Move V in the first sentence of the message. For an outsider, it may not be easy to understand the interplay but

for an insider (and even for a researcher with access to the other messages in the immediate context) the connection is explicit: example (94) gives a draft of the meeting held, and examples (95)-(96) both provide information about the travel arrangements of a meeting participant. In each case, the writer and the recipient(s) seem to share the topic of the discussion. Examples (97)-(98) may remain somewhat mysterious for an outsider, partly because of the terminology used, but again the context of the situation creates a link between Moves I and V. The only possible reference point for the demonstrative *this* in example (97) is the product given in the Subject line; the matter has also been discussed before. Example (98) also seems to suggest that it is known that the business at hand is not *always* easy.

One opening message differed from the rest since the interplay between Moves I and V seemed to be non-existent; example (99) gives Move I and three first sentences of the message (for the full message see example 18 in 5.3).

(99) Subject: Article in G about the Productivity Programs

How is life in Dusseldorf? I hope you had a nice Christmas and a good start of the new year.
Today I spoke to Mikko Heinonen in XTeam about the coverage from Ymagazine of the program there. (continues) (S153)

As can be seen from example (99), the beginning of the message (the first two sentences) contains small talk about holidays and can be characterized as an implicit reference to earlier contact between the participants, i.e. Move III, although other interpretations are also possible (see 8.2.3). The Informational orientation takes over in the third sentence and the interplay with the subject is manifest through synonymous expressions such as *article* in the Subject and *coverage* in the message.

As shown by examples (91)-(99), despite the repetition of information between Moves I and V, there were also differences in comparison with the Noticeboard messages. In the opening

messages of the Dialogue type some of the information was shared between the participants, which was not the case in the Noticeboard messages.

In the response messages of the Dialogue type (n=116) either Move Vri (Providing requested information) or Move Vr (Providing reaction) was always found. Move Vri, providing requested information, was defined as an answer to a question or a response to something specifically requested. Two examples (100)–(101) of Move Vri with the equivalent Requesting moves are presented below.

<u>Move VI: Requesting</u>	<u>Move Vri: Providing requested information</u>
(100) Is it okay if they take a look at your reports? (F31)	I will not allow to submit all these reports to the open literature or institutes like LDM because they contain ideas in how to develop superior boards in x performance (S41)
(101) Please communicate the times that suit you to LS (F6)	As I am out traveling most of next week Friday 19 th suits me best (S7).

Move Vr, on the other hand, was preceded by neither a question nor a request for a verbal response in the preceding message, which meant that it provided reactions to the response messages of the Dialogue type. It was only the opening messages that always contained a request for a verbal response (but see 6.1). For example, Move Vr was preceded by a request for a physical act (see example 112 below), or sometimes no request of any kind could be established in the previous message (see examples 113–114). In other words, the move was not necessarily a response to any specific move but to the overall situation the messages were embedded in. In such a case the recipient of a particular message might have only felt that he/she needed to respond. This usage seems to suggest that Move Vr was employed to acknowledge receipt of a message and to confirm understanding of the business at hand and to indicate that matters were in process or under

control. As the corpus did not include all the opening messages with or without the Requesting moves to which Vri and Vr provided responses, it was sometimes difficult to determine which one of the moves was realized.

The interplay of Moves Vri and Vr with Move I was understandably weaker in the response messages than that in the opening messages since the dialogue had moved on to the response stage and the Subject line only gave a frame for the message (see Table 26).

TABLE 26. Interplay between Moves I, Vri and Vr in the response messages of the Dialogue type.

<u>Move I in the Subject line</u>	<u>Moves Vri and Vr</u>
(102) Board for milk and juice packaging for XYZ	for sure!!!! (S3)
(103) Internet recruiting	The 5 th or the 7 th of July is ok with me. (S226)
(104) W/E/M	Please reserve March 14 and 15 for this. (S163)
(105) Exchange	Yes I am possitive. (S206)
(106) <u>Mentors' training day.</u>	I'm looking forward to participate at the <u>Mentors training day</u> (S192)
(107) ATD Directory	I'm afraid that 150 copies will be impossible to find (S266).

As examples (102)–(105) in Table 26 suggest, the link between Move I and Moves Vri and Vr is difficult to establish. Indeed, the previous message to which Moves Vri and Vr provide responses would be needed to do it. However, the connection between the moves can also be explicit because of repetition, as in example (106), or a synonymous expression, as in example (107).

In Table 27 some examples of Move Vri are given together with Move VI (Requesting) in the preceding message.

TABLE 27. Interplay between Move VI of the opening message and Move Vri of the response message of the Dialogue type.

Move VI of the opening message	Move Vri of the response message
(108) . . . would it be possible to inform us the total volume delivered to Xcountry (UR) in the year 2000? (hee172/1)	Deliveries to UR Xcountry year 2000= 16.616mt (S1)
(109) Could you please read through and come back with your comments. (S97)	After quick reading I would make the following comments: (F98)
(110) . . . jag antar vi håller fast den linjen? ¹¹¹ (hes169/2)	for sure!!!! (S3)

In examples (108)–(110), Move Vri is easy to identify since it so explicitly connects with the preceding request in the opening message and provides the requested information. In the three examples, the move consists of one sentence or a noun phrase. In example (108), the move is preceded by Move III (Referring to previous contact), and this intervention may result in Move Vri repeating *Deliveries to UR Xcountry year 2000* from the Requesting move. In example (109), Move Vri opens the message with only the salutation preceding it. The comment itself, which represents the requested information, is introduced by the phrase that seems to hedge the comment by using *quick* and the conditional *would*. In example (110) Move Vri restricts itself to the minimum response thus creating a feeling of immediate feedback (see Chafe 1982; see also 5.4 and 5.1.2 for the switch of languages in message chains).

As was mentioned above, Move Vr was preceded by a request for a physical act (Move VIa) or no request of any kind was established in the previous message. In other words, Move Vr might be a reaction to Move V (Providing information). Here is an example of Move VIa (Requesting action) followed by Move Vr in the subsequent message:

111 In English: *I assume we will stick to this policy?*

Move Via: Requesting action	Move Vr: Providing reaction
(111) . . . so please hold the air freight info until we know the outcome of this test. (S126)	thanks for your mail and info. We'll hold the air freight until tomorrow. (F127)

As can be seen in example (111), Move Vr seems to extend over two consecutive sentences: the first may also be interpreted as referring to the previous contact (Move III), and the second represents Move Vr in giving a reaction to the request for a physical act.

The recipient of a message containing Move V (Providing information) might have also felt that he/she needed to respond even though there was no specific request to that effect. The reactions were often realized through thanking for and confirming the receipt of the preceding message, which meant that the move often overlapped with Move III (Referring to previous contact). Table 28 presents three examples of Move Vr together with Move V in the preceding message.

In example (112), the preceding Noticeboard message does not contain any request but the recipient still acknowledges the receipt of the message containing an agenda for a meeting and gives an explanation about his inability to attend. Again, both Move III (Referring to previous contact) and Move Vr seem to function together. In example (113), Move Vr is used to show that the writer of the preceding message is right in her assumption. The realization of Move Vr, with the affirmative *yes*, resembles that of an answer to a specific question. In example (114), Move Vr provides closure for a five-message Dialogue exchange.

TABLE 28. Interplay between Move V of the preceding message and Move Vr of the subsequent message.

Move V of the preceding message	Move Vr of the subsequent message
(112) Here are our meeting room in Stockholm Place: Stora Enso, Stockholm office Meetingroom: 9:00-10:30: Xhall, 10:30-14:30: Video Time: 8.6.2000, . . .(continues) (F214)	thanks for info – due to some internal matters I have to be in H on Monday early morning and I will be in K in the afternoon, but have a meeting there which I cannot leave. Sorry for this (S215)
(113) Mrs JV told me that the new ATD Directory has been published. And she told me that you take care of these things. So would it be possible . . .(continues) (F263)	yes, I'm responsible for both the production and the distribution of the directories. . . (continues) (S264)
(114) I'm really sorry yo have caused you all this extra trouble: I just found 1 box of the new ATD in the corner of my office – I hadn't noticed it earlier, as it had been put there when I was on vacation. . . Thanks very much in any case for your assistance! (F277)	I'm glad to hear. No trouble at all! (S278)

Below, examples (115)–(117) show how the interplay between Moves V and Vr can create a dialogic exchange with more than two messages and with more than two participants (for a general discussion about the message exchange, see 6.1.3). Here the first message of the exchange triggers a reaction through the following phrase (Move V):

- (115) If you do not oppose, the idea would be to have Anne down from the 1st of March until at least the 1st of July and preferably until the 13th (S38)

In the following message, the writer agrees to this suggestion, using Move Vr, as follows:

- (116) I would like to confirm that the period that we have discussed is March 1st until middle of June (S39)

Then Anne, the person who has been the topic of the exchange, joins the dialogue by reacting to the time period like this:

- (117) . . . we have now tried to arrange the vacations here in order to make it possible for me to stay as long as possible. Preliminary it would now be OK for me to stay until the 28th of June since I would like to have . . . (S40).

Examples (116)–(117) show how Move Vr is used to respond to another Vr and in the end the matter is settled.

Finally, an automatic realization of Move Vr was offered by the Automatic reply function, which always delivered the same reaction to an incoming email message without any human input. The messages in the data were almost identical when it came to the information they provided. Here is one typical example:

- (118) Thank you for your mail. I'm out of the office – back again 01-02-20. If urgent please contact P L + 46 54 876543 or M O + 46 54 67890 (S33).

In sum, as shown in the above discussion, the email messages containing Move V (Providing information) represented all three message types in the data. In the Noticeboard messages the move supported the key communicative purpose of informing the recipients of corporate issues, and in those of the Postman type it commented on the enclosures. In the Dialogue messages, the move had three realizations: it simply provided information, it provided information that had been requested, and it provided information which functioned as a reaction to the preceding message. This move was central in the maintenance of the major organizational systems in the company because it enabled both the provision and exchange (together with the Requesting move) of information (see 5.1). It thus imported Informational orientation into the messages and played a key role in furthering corporate activities.

8.3.2 MOVE IV: INDICATING ENCLOSURE

Move IV (Indicating enclosure) contributed to the overall communicative purpose of the Postman messages. The nature of the move also meant that it was always realized through *manifest intertextuality* (see Fairclough 1992a), as a reference to the document enclosed was always present. However, the move was realized differently depending on what was enclosed, i.e. attachments or appended messages. Of the 102 Postman messages 65 delivered attachments, 26 appended messages, and 11 both.

Attachments. – Anytime a document had been attached to an email message, the recipient was able to see this from the paper clip symbol in the Mail Index. In other words, the symbol could be regarded as a representation of Move IV, or a premove, which was automatically provided by the email system. Indeed, this feature may have partly contributed to the high percentage (17%) of textless Postman messages enclosing attachments. However, only attachments sent regularly, including those updating order inflow and order stocks data in one informant's mailbox, were delivered with the help of textless Postman messages. Typically, when attachments were enclosed, Move IV was realized in the following four ways:

- a noun phrase alone giving clarification of the attachment,
- a finite verb form or a noun phrase (including *enclose*, etc.),
- a noun phrase incorporated in another move, and
- a conventional phrase of business letter discourse.

First, Move IV was realized with a noun phrase giving some clarification or elaboration of the Subject line and/or the name of the attachment as examples (119)-(121) in Table 29 show.

TABLE 29. Subject line, attachment name, and Move IV.

Subject line	Attachment	Move IV
(119) förf kundf_ckb.xls	förf kundf_ckb.xls	Customer overdue CKB W.03. (S59)
(120) Square trial run in Germany 12.-13.2.2000	Hannover0101.doc	The visit report. (F65)
(121) Board news	liquid packaging.doc	liquidpackaging and food service news with the first results for 2000 from our U competitors (F111)

Noun phrases standing alone in a message were not found in any other message type and thus, even without the attachment symbol, they would have been recognized as indicating enclosure in the Postman type. A case in point was the Subject line and the name of the attachment in example (119), which impressed as somewhat cryptic with the abbreviated Swedish words. Attachments of this type, with practically the same name, were delivered regularly, which would suggest that *förf kundf_ckb.xls* was familiar to the recipients and the message might not even have needed the explanatory noun phrase of *Customer overdue CKB W.03* in Move IV.

Second, a (noun or verb) phrase including the word *enclose* or *similar* was used as Move IV in around 25% of the Postman messages with attachments. In these cases the move did not always appear in the first sentence. Below, a few examples are given:

- (122) Enclosed is a summary of the price increases 1999 to 2000. (S112)
- (123) I enclose the corrected version. (F241)
- (124) Here is the draft. (F4)

Examples (122)–(124) represent the recommended usage in modern business communication textbooks (see Locker 1998: 92, Bovée & al. 2003: 120, Munter 2003: 77). Third, Move IV was expressed through a noun phrase referring to the attachment as *paper*, *the*

sertificates, or *the form*, as examples (125)–(127) show. In these cases, the move was always incorporated in another move.

- (125) I tried to put some ideas on paper. (S97)
- (126) pls. check the sertificates concerning your mills, pages 6&7, and inform Raija W as well as myself if any changes needed. (F231)
- (127) did you receive this form I mailed to you on Monday last week? (F181)

As examples (125)–(127) show, the status of Move IV seemed to be subordinate to other moves: in example (125) to that of Move V (Providing information) and in (126)–(127) to that of Move VI (Requesting).

Fourth, the most common realizations of Move IV could also be found in business letter discourse, which suggests that they had been imported into the email medium from traditional business correspondence. Examples (128)–(131) are typical textualizations of the move.

- (128) Pls find enclosed a list of common xx codes of all divisions. (F47)
- (129) Enclosed please find a summary of our visit to UR. . . (F103)
- (130) Please find changes for XX Mill enclosed . . . (S236)
- (131) Please find attached the file, which was made on 12.6 in X. (F125)

As the examples show, the move is realized through a conventional set phrase including *please* and either *enclosed* or *attached* (see also 7.2). Typically, this move appeared in the first sentence of the message. This practice was followed in half of the messages. And, if the 11 textless messages were excluded from the calculations, the percentage would rise to 60%. Thus, this move was exceptional among the content moves: to recognize it, the recipient only needed to look at the first few words of the message. Consequently, it can be said to represent what Brown & Yule (1983: 69) call ‘formulaic expressions’, which can function as boundary markers

of the moves. Table 30 presents a list of the most common textualizations of Move IV and their frequency.

TABLE 30. The most common textualizations of Move IV and their number.

Textualization of Move IV	Number of occurrences
Enclosed please find	14
Please find enclosed	13
Enclosed you (will) find	5
Pls/Please find attached	4
Enclosed is/are	4
Enclosed (noun)	3

As can be seen from Table 30, the two textualizations that were the most favored also seemed to be the most conventional: *Enclosed please find* and *Please find enclosed*. These forms were also common in professional cover letters written by both native and non-native speaker academics enclosing articles for publication as shown by Okamura & Shaw (2000). In modern business communication textbooks, however, the phrases are considered outdated (see Locker 1998: 92, Bovée & al. 2003: 120, Munter 2003: 77).

As Table 30 shows, the recommended forms were used clearly less than the outdated alternatives which seemed to be the default options, almost like fossilized alternatives, to meet the task of indicating enclosure. It seems that an old rhetorical response has been transferred from business letter discourse to a new medium where documents need to be enclosed in the same way as was the case when documents were enclosed with a business letter or attached to a fax form. Following Miller (1984: 157), the new typified response, which has evolved from an existing type, has proven useful for the situation; its application has become routine. The reason for the popularity of these set phrases seems to be that they are economical as their use was close to being automatized, they sound polite with *please*, and they implicitly involve the recipient through the imperative form of the verb. In addition, following the principles of social constructionism (see e.g. Rubin

1988; also 5.2), their wide use reinforces their further use. The linguistic realization of Move IV was the most distinctive and most routinely used single phrase that had been adopted from traditional business letter discourse and was (re)used in the electronic medium. Even though traces of business letter discourse were found in other moves as well, nowhere was the use this consistent and frequent.

In the same way as in the Noticeboard messages, Move I (Identifying subject) and Move V (Providing information) seemed to be mixed in the first sentence of the messages, Move I and Move IV were closely connected in the Postman messages. In other words, some of the words of the Subject line identifying the subject were repeated either in part or in full in the first sentence of the message, which typically contained Move IV. This was logical, as the structure of the move required that the attached document be mentioned. While in the Noticeboard messages Move V took over in the first sentence and elaborated on the subject, in the Postman messages the elaboration, if any, was usually minimal. In Table 31, some examples are given; repeated words have been underlined.

TABLE 31. Interplay between Moves I and IV in the Postman type.

Move I: Subject line	Move IV: First sentence
(132) <u>Visit report UR Xcity</u>	Please find enclosed <u>visit report</u> and dust follow up, <u>UR Xcity</u> , w. 1 -00. (S60)
(133) <u>BI-report</u> and <u>Market Outlook</u> - <u>Hägglund</u>	Enclosed please find my proposals for* the <u>next BI-report</u> * <u>Market Outlook</u> - <u>Hägglund</u> . (S26)
(134) <u>Rehearsal for R&D Seminar</u> - <u>January 30</u>	Welcome to Falun, <u>january 30</u> for <u>R&D rehearsal</u> , see file for additional information. (S17)
(135) <u>Travel report/TS Xtown</u> 13.12.2000	Enclosed please find the <u>travel report</u> . (F23)
(136) <u>CKB meeting</u> , February 8	Enclosed please find the Invitation to the <u>CKB meeting</u> in London. (S50)

As examples (132)–(136) show, after reading the first sentence, the recipient knows that the communicative purpose of the message is to deliver documents for information (and possibly for comments). In addition, the interplay between Move I and Move IV, repeating the key information about the enclosed document, reinforces the clarity. In examples (132)–(134), the whole or most of Move I is repeated in the first sentence, whereas in examples (135)–(136) only the key words.

Appended messages. – When Move IV was used to refer to appended messages, its realization was not as conspicuous as it was when it was used to refer to attachments. In the same way as attachments were delivered with the help of textless messages, also appended messages were forwarded this way. This meant that Move IV was realized through the emptiness of the message itself in more than every third message ($n=10/26$). The function of the message appending other messages was detected from the Subject in the Mail Index via a premove, *FW* (forwarded) or the Swedish version, *VB* (vidarebefordrat), after which came the subject of the appended message.

The textualizations of Move IV were divided roughly into two classes: implicit and explicit textualizations. Implicit textualizations of the move included those in which the appended messages were not specifically referred to ($n=7/26$). Below three examples are given:

- (137) For (your) info (S52, F93, S132, S134, S144)
- (138) Life does not look so good and promising like beginning of last year (F90),
- (139) Xnäs... (F99)

The most common example is shown in (137), which, in this abbreviated form, was only found in this move in the corpus. Mulholland (1999: 73–74) describes this usage as democratic since it does not require anything from the recipient. This same phrase is frequently used in fax communications, as is shown by Akar &

Louhiala-Salminen (1999: 214–215). Sending documents without any commentary or reference to key issues leaves the document open for the recipient’s individual interpretation. Move IV was realized ‘democratically’ in two other messages, in which it was somewhat difficult to establish whether it was actually present or not; examples (138) and (139) illustrate these cases. Example (138) shows the only sentence of the relevant message. The appended message contained almost 400 words and concerned capacity reductions in an important market. Example (139) illustrates the only word of the message; it is followed by three dots, and the appended message was a newsletter where one piece of news concerned Xnäs, a co-operation partner. In example (138), the sentence seems to combine Moves IV and Ve (Commenting on enclosure). In example (139), since the Subject line of the message only contained the name of the newsletter, the one-word message combines Moves I (Identifying subject) and IV, and seems to serve as a lead for the reader to look for such a particular piece of news in the appended newsletter.

Explicit textualizations of Move IV entailed that a reference was made to the appended message(s). Once a conventional business letter discourse phrase, i.e. *Please find attached* (F37) was used. Most often, however, the demonstrative *this* was employed in the first sentence of the message. This usage seemed to emphasize the fact that the message was at hand, easily available, as if the participants were sharing the same location and time while talking to each other. In each case the move was combined with another move. Below the examples from the corpus are given.

- (140) Based on this mail from PM at M I think we can now close any further discussions about possible co-operation with M in the USA. (S100)
- (141) Have you got a request like this or do you know the competitor who has started the project with L? (F108)
- (142) could you pls comment on this! (S118)
- (143) Could you take care of this? (F279)

As examples (140)–(143) show, Move IV is combined with either Move V (Providing information), as is the case in example (140), or Move VI (Requesting) as shown by examples (141)–(143). The moves need the appended message for further support; especially, in examples (141)–(143) the Requesting move would be impossible to interpret without the appended message. Examples (142)–(143) were the only moves appearing in the messages. This usage with the demonstrative was similar to that in which a reference was made to attachments by using a noun phrase, such as *this form* or *the certificates*, incorporated in another move (see examples 123–125 above). However, references made to appended messages seemed to be more implicit at times as *this* was used alone without any nouns, implying that it should guarantee the understanding of the message.

The rest of the explicit textualizations of Move IV used noun phrases, or nothing, to refer to appended message(s), typically combining with other moves, as is the case in examples (144)–(146).

- (144) As you can see TP is now getting info from the market about the new product quality from CN 4. Do you have any comments to Philipp's mail? (S11)
- (145) Please disregard the previous file as it did not contain the update I thought I had made. (S114)
- (146) sending again as to delivered correctly (S12)

Examples (144)–(146) contain specific nouns referring to the appended message: *Philipp's mail* and *the previous file*. In example (146), the omission of the object does not hinder the interpretation; as nothing else is being sent, the reference can only be to the appended message.

A couple of times no textualization of Move IV was found in the Postman messages appending other documents. Examples (147)–(148) show the first sentences of two such messages.

- (147) Based on our calculation, should it not be 5% (really 4.95%) per N2 based exchange-rate 9.74???? (S5)
- (148) Maria has added proposed visit week 13. (S10)

In both cases, it seems clear that the examples represent direct reactions to the appended messages. Example (147) is from a superior's message to a subordinate. The superior did not reply to the sender of the message triggering this reaction, in which case it would be a dialogic exchange, but to his co-recipient. The message was sent by a customer who inquired about price differences, and the superior was only copied in. Example (147) thus represents his direct reaction to the appended message. Example (148) is the fourth message in a chain in which a document attached to the first message has been discussed and commented on. In this example, the superior advises what has been added to the original document.

To summarize, Move IV in the Postman messages was the easiest of the content moves to recognize for three reasons. First, it could be recognized on the basis of the two premoves: the Postman messages with attachments via a special paper clip symbol and those appending other documents through an abbreviation such as *RE* in front of the Subject line. Thus, the recipient did not even have to open the message to recognize its communicative purpose. Second, it was the only move that was realized through 'emptiness', a textless message. No other message type was delivered empty. Third, the realizations of the move were exceptional in that most of them were recognized through what Brown & Yule (1983: 69) call 'formulaic expressions', i.e. phraseology from conventional business letter discourse. In no other message type was the main content move this conspicuously realized and positioned at the beginning of the text. The choice of the realization was not random, however, but it was contextually constrained. Only regularly delivered documents were attached to the textless Postman messages; most likely it would have seemed strange if other types of documents, for example visit reports, had been sent without

any explicit Move IV. Thus the realization of this move, as of any other move in the data, was influenced by contextual factors.

8.3.3 MOVE VI: REQUESTING

Move VI (Requesting) played a key role in maintaining the major organizational systems of task, structure, technology, and control in the company (see 5.1) and consequently, was responsible for the Informational orientation of the messages (see 5.3). It was found in all three message types. The requests were made for verbal responses (specified as VI_{vr}), for non-verbal responses, i.e. for action (specified as VI_a), or they were made conditionally under certain circumstances (specified as VI_{if}). Move VI_{if} always contained *if* expressing a condition under which the request was made.

Different versions of the move characterized the three message types. In the Postman and Dialogue types, all versions of the move were found. In the Noticeboard messages, Move VI_{vr} was not possible because no reply was expected. However, as discussed in 8.3.1 (see example 110), when Move Vr (Providing information: reaction) was in focus, sometimes no request of any kind was established in the previous message and still the recipient of such a message felt that a reaction was in order. In addition, if Move VI_{if} appeared in the Noticeboard message, it might trigger a response message of the Dialogue type as shown in examples (2) and (5) in Chapter 5. In the Postman messages, on the other hand, Move VI_{vr} inherently expected a response message, which meant that a Postman message could also generate a dialogic exchange.

The messages of the Dialogue type, however, were the only ones in which Move VI was compulsory in the sense that it contributed to the overall communicative purpose of the opening messages. Typically, the move occurred in the VI_{vr} version, requesting a verbal response, which functioned as a trigger for the dialogic exchange. However, a few times the messages only containing Move VI_a were classified as Dialogue messages

because, as discussed in 6.1, in certain contexts Move VIa might be interpreted as requiring a verbal response. Because the requesting move is investigated in detail in Chapter 10, only some general points are taken up here.

In the Noticeboard messages, both Move VIa and Move VIif appeared in less than one fifth of the messages each. Two messages contained both of them. Below, examples (149)–(154) of Move VIa and VIif in the Noticeboard messages are given.

- (149) Kindly change your arrangements accordingly. (F86)
- (150) I would like to invite you to a meeting in E on Monday. . . (F95)
- (151) For further information, please contact: XX . . . (S228)
- (152) If somebody needs more info, please call me, JP or OJ. (F45)
- (153) If you have any questions please email Virus Research. (S250)
- (154) If you have not received the directories at the end of April, please let me know. (S274)

As examples (149)–(150) show, Move VIa requests action and in examples (151)–(154) Move VIif seems to function not so much as a request but as an offer of availability or flexibility (see Pinto dos Santos 2002: 184, 195). The recipient is given options, and the request only concerns those that meet the conditions expressed in a noun phrase such as *For further information* in example (151) or in a subordinate if-clause in examples (152)–(154). For instance, the message containing example (154) generated a number of responses because there were quite a few recipients who had not received the directory at the end of April.¹¹²

In the Postman messages, all three versions of the Requesting move were found, but VIif only occurred a couple of times. The distribution of Moves VIa and VIvr was practically the same in the Postman messages and they seldom occurred alone with Move IV (Indicating enclosure). In around one fourth of the messages

112 See also example (2) in 6.1.1 that shows the whole message. One of the response messages can be found in example (5) in 6.1.3.

they occurred together with Move Ve (Commenting on enclosure), which meant that the attached documents or appended messages attracted both comments and requests. Typically, with the help of Move VI comments were invited on the attachments or appended messages, which were referred to by various means, as discussed above in 8.3.2 (see examples 124–125 and 139–143). Examples (155)–(156) show some further textualizations of the move suggesting that the documents on which requests have been made are close at hand.

- (155) Could you please read through and come back with your comments. (S97)
- (156) Please have a look and contact me when you feel that we can start discuss details. (S138)

In examples (155)–(156) the omission of the object assumes that the reader needs to rely on the closest option available, that is, on the enclosed documents, for ‘reading through’ and ‘having a look’.

The Requesting move was the key content move in the opening messages of the Dialogue type: typically, the dialogic exchange was triggered through Move VI_{vr}, but a few times the messages that only contained Move VI_a were classified as belonging to the Dialogue type for two reasons. First, the message with Move VI_a was sent to one recipient only, which thus excluded it from the Noticeboard type category. Second, in spite of the form of the request literally inviting action, it still seemed to be a request for a verbal response of some kind. Example (157) represents one such example; it was the only sentence in the message.

- (157) Would you kindly insert message in Insite that our office will be closed on Tuesday May 8th, 2001 (“ Victoire 1945 “). (F258)

Although there is no question mark at the end of the above request, it seems to be an oversight as some confirmation seems to be invited. The recipient of the message also sent a reaction starting like this: *it was a pity that you sent the message to me as I have nothing*

to do with Insite. And as you know by now I was not at the office on Friday to forward it (S259).

Moreover, the participants of the exchange were able to influence the situation in such a way that Move VIa clearly required some acknowledgement or reaction. This was the case at least in one message in which a superior singled out one of his subordinates and asked him to accomplish a task:

(158) Seppo, could you kindly provide Paul with CRF story. (F147)

Even though no formal request for a verbal response is present, the fact that the superior is making the request may impose the need to react. This is how Seppo reacted in his subsequent message: *I will provide CRF press release for Paul (F149).*

Four messages that can be described as conventional business orders also initially caused some hesitation as to their rightful place in the message types. Example (159), sent to one recipient, is one of the messages.

(159) Stora Enso Uk would be grateful if you could send them 8 English maps as "tube" version: (F159)

Example (159) only contains Move VIa, but since it is a common practice in the business world to send order acknowledgements (see e.g. Kortetjärvi-Nurmi et al. 2002, also Kankaanranta & Nordlund 1998), it can be argued that also in this case the sender expects some verbal acknowledgement in response. The need for an acknowledgement was emphasized because the orders were sent on somebody else's behalf. In other words, the writer/sender of example (159) was not based in Stora Enso UK. For these reasons, the four messages were classified as opening messages of the Dialogic type and not as Noticeboard messages.

Move VI was found in all three message types even though in different versions. In the Dialogue type, Move VI_{vr} contributed to the key communicative purpose: it was central in promoting corporate activities in the company. In no other message type was

this move compulsory for the meeting of the communicative purpose. All versions of the move were found in the Postman messages but in the Noticeboard messages requests for verbal responses were not possible since the communicative purpose was only to inform the recipients of corporate issues. The textualizations of Move VI are discussed in Chapter 10.

8.4 SUMMARY – SUPPORT FOR THREE EMAIL GENRES

The move analysis supported the division of the messages into three distinct types, and ultimately, it also supported the identification of *three email genres*. In total, nine categories of moves were identified, but it does not mean that more or fewer moves could not be identified depending on the detail of the analysis. The moves were classified into two groups: the framing moves, which could be present in all three message types and which were typically responsible for the beginning and the ending of the messages, and the content moves, which supported the key communicative purposes of the three types. Only one of the framing moves was always present, either in the Subject field of the email template or in the first sentence of the message; it was Move I (Identifying subject). However, the other framing moves, i.e. Moves II (Salutation), VIII (Closing), and IX (Signature) in particular, were also frequently employed, which contributed to the Relational orientation of the messages and to amicable social relations in the company. Although Move III (Referring to previous contact) only occurred in around half of the Dialogue messages, it also imported the Relational orientation into the messages since around 60% of its textualizations were either thanks or apologies. Finally, Moves II, VIII, and XI also evoked the business letter or fax genre in contrast to the memo genre, which seemed to be evoked in email by native English speakers in the US business community (see Kankaanranta 2005: 51).

As the framing moves were used in a similar fashion in all three message types contributing to a similar layout, the argument for the possibility of viewing all the email messages as representative of *one email genre* received support: all the messages tended to look alike (see also 5.6). This notion of one email genre entailed that the messages were viewed on a high level of abstraction or generality and that they would be comparable to the genre of the business fax or to that of the business letter (see Yates & Orlikowski 1992, Louhiala-Salminen 1997). As the present analysis was more detailed, it also revealed differences in the distribution of the framing moves (e.g. Move III) and in the use of the content moves, in particular, which supported the classification into *three different email genres*.

As this chapter has shown, the content moves in the Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue messages contributed to the communicative purpose of each message type; the moves provided information about corporate issues, they delivered documents for information and/or for comments, and they exchanged information about corporate issues. Consequently, they imported the Informational orientation into the messages and played a key role in furthering corporate activities. Although the same content moves were found in different message types, the versions in which they appeared were different. Of the content moves, Move V (Providing information) supported the overall communicative purpose of informing the recipients of corporate issues in the Noticeboard messages and Move IV (Indicating enclosure) the purpose of delivering attachments or appended messages for information and/or for comments in the Postman messages. Neither of the moves could appear alone in any other message type. In the Dialogue messages, two content moves were responsible for the exchange of information. In the opening messages, Move VI_{vr} (Requesting verbal response) together with Move V (Providing information) typically triggered the exchange, and in the response messages, Moves V_{ri} (Providing requested information) and V_r (Providing a reaction) brought the exchange

to a closure. In no other message type did these moves occur in the same way. Consequently, the move analysis supported the existence of the three distinct email genres: those of Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue.

The findings indicate that the content moves tended to be placed conspicuously at the beginning of the messages; moreover, some of them were supported by premoves provided by the email system such as *RE*, *FW*, and the paper clip symbol. Following Bhatia (1993: 32), this regularity of organization can contribute to the way in which the rationale of each genre is understood. Where this regularity was the most salient was in the Postman messages attaching documents; the messages were typically opened with Move IV including a conventional phrase, such as *please find enclosed*, which further reinforced the recognition of the message type. Furthermore, it can be suggested that when an expert member of the discourse community only received a textless message or one with the text *for your information*, he/she would have known that a reference was made to the attachments or appended messages that were brought into his/her attention.

It can be argued that initially the Noticeboard messages and the opening messages of the Dialogue type could be confused because of their similarity. Move I in the Subject line did not differentiate them; neither did the structure of the message. Typically, both message types opened with Move V (Providing information) since Move VI_{vr} (Requesting for a verbal response) in the Dialogue type appeared later. However, some of the information provided in Move V in the Dialogue type seemed to be shared among the participants, which was not the case in the Noticeboard messages. This also meant that Move V did not repeat as much information from Move I as was done in the Noticeboard messages. Consequently, the recipient might still have been able to recognize and distinguish the two message types without much effort.

Overall, the content moves supported the three distinct communicative purposes attributed to the three email message

types and supported their reidentification as three genres. The framing moves, on the other hand, did not clearly distinguish the three message types. The textualizations were similar although, for example, for obvious reasons the Noticeboard messages always employed salutations greeting multiple recipients, and first names were used in salutations greeting single recipients in the Dialogue and Postman messages.

The question thus remains whether, on the basis of the above discussion about the communicative purposes (see Chapter 6) and the salient discourse features (see Chapters 7 and 8) of the three email message types, they could be renamed as *Noticeboard genre*, *Postman genre*, and *Dialogue genre*. The suggested answer is positive. The communicative purposes established in the analysis of the messages, the distribution of the features typical of involved spoken discourse in accordance with the message type, and the occurrence of the content moves in the three message types support the division. In addition, the informants representing the Stora Enso discourse community as well as the focus group members representing the global business discourse community gave evidence to that effect.

There was no doubt about the communicative purposes of the messages among the users. Since Askehave & Swales (2001: 195–196) question both the privileged role of communicative purpose as the criterion for genre membership and the reliability of insiders' own opinions of the purposes, some further clarification to the issue was sought by asking the informants to explain what they did/would have done when they had received a particular message. The replies of the informants about their reactions confirmed the purposes identified in the corpus-based text analysis and their own replies to the question about the purpose of the messages. To seek further validation for the communicative purposes from outside the discourse community, a focus group consisting of international business practitioners was consulted about three messages from the corpus representing the three message types. Although the focus group was small and there

were variables that might have confused the issue at hand,¹¹³ their replies showed distinct unanimity about the purposes of the messages. What caused uncertainty among some of them was the content of some of the messages, which suggests that they did not share the contextual knowledge that the insiders did (see 5.3).

In accordance with genre approaches in the ESP tradition, shared discourse features within the prospective genres were sought; the extent of spoken and written language features manifest in the messages was the obvious choice since email has been found to represent a hybrid combining them. This study supports the hybrid nature of email communication as, on the one hand, features of involved spoken language (Chafe 1982) and, on the other hand, phraseology typical of traditional business correspondence (Bové et al. 2003) could be identified in the corpus. This finding thus also entails that via constitutive intertextuality (see Fairclough 1992a) oral discourse was present in the messages, but simultaneously the messages made use of items typical of written business letter discourse.

Although features of spoken and written language occurred in the same message, their distribution still clearly followed the classification into the three genres. The Dialogue messages contained the highest frequency of features of involvement, reflecting the preferred alternative media choice of the telephone indicated by the informants. The Postman messages contained similar features when comments were given or invited on attachments. When, however, the message only contained the minimum, that is, a phrase referring to the attachments, characteristics of written discourse appeared through the phrases that were outdated remnants of traditional business correspondence, such as *enclosed please find*. The Noticeboard messages ranked somewhere between the Dialogue and Postman messages;

113 For example, the members were participants in an intensive pre-MBA course at the University of Michigan preparing them to meet the challenges of American university life. The specific topics handled included e.g. business writing.

especially the use of the first and second person pronouns and first names in salutations and signatures were frequent contributing to the spoken involved nature of the messages. Since the informants did not comment on the linguistic features of the messages, they seemed to consider the messages typical. The international focus group, however, drew attention to either the formality or the informality of the messages. This would seem to suggest that although the communicative purposes of the messages were shared by the focus group and the Stora Enso informants, there were some linguistic features as well as issues related to the content of the messages that were not shared by the two groups (see 5.3 and 6.4).

As was discussed in 7.3, some messages contained a somewhat confusing mixture of spoken and written language (see example 5 in 7.3). Discoursal leads alone would not suffice for assigning a genre label to such texts; more information about the context in which the message was embedded would be needed. For business practitioners well-versed in the conventions of business correspondence striking a balance between traditional business letter discourse, still emphasized in their education, and the informal language use encouraged by the communication medium and colleagues requires flexibility and takes time.

As the corpus shows and as has been established by a number of genre theorists (e.g. Miller 1984; Fairclough 1992a; Yates & Orlikowski 1992, 1994, 2002; Paltridge 1997; Bhatia 1997a), genres develop in new circumstances and respond to the users' needs. This can be interpreted as one type of intertextuality as new genres do not emerge from nothing; rather, they are based on existing genres. For example, Yates & Orlikowski (1992: 319) claim that with email messages, the genre perspective allows for two interpretations: users may be invoking other genres or they may be modifying existing genre rules in ways that may ultimately lead to the emergence of new genres in response to new recurrent situations. The informants' replies to the question about alternative media choice suggested that, for instance, the Dialogue genre co-

existed with the fax genre and the (spoken) genres effected by the telephone. For instance, the email Dialogue messages with the two message types, i.e. opening and response messages, and with the overall purpose of exchanging information could be regarded as a development or extension of the fax genre, with the two sub purposes of requesting and providing information (Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999). Drawing on the comments from the informants, the Noticeboard messages had qualities of genres delivered through fax or internal mail in hard copy, suggesting the memo genre of some kind. The Postman genre with attachments seemed to invoke the Cover letter/fax referring to the enclosed documents. But, to find a predecessor for the Postman genre delivering appended messages, for instance message exchanges, would be more difficult. Consequently, it may suggested that here we are witnessing the emergence of a new genre (see also 6.1.2).

The three email genres combined in different ways in the informants' mailboxes and they thus had relationships with each other, resulting in intertextuality between them. Orlikowski & Yates (1994) and Yates & Orlikowski (2002) have used the notions of *genre repertoire* and *genre system* to refer to some of these relationships. On the basis of the investigation into the three email genres it can be concluded that together the genres represented the English email genre repertoire of Stora Enso. All of the genres were used by Stora Enso employees in their internal communication. Thus the three genres were organizing structures that formed an important part of the established communicative practices in the company, together with oral genres of meetings for instance (see Orlikowski & Yates 1994). As mentioned above in 6.1.3, the Dialogue genre itself could be regarded as a *genre system* (Yates & Orlikowski 2002) in a small scale as the opening and response messages were *interdependent* and in that sense choreographed the interactions of this nature.

A combination of genres not identified before is what I call *genre communities* (in 6.1.2 they were referred to as 'message communities'). A genre community was created when Postman

messages delivered genre exemplars for purposes other than their original one. The exemplars lost their independency when they were 'reused' as reference points and became subordinate to the Postman message. The genre exemplars embedded in such message chains were also *interdependent*, but their relation was still different in comparison to the genre systems discussed by Yates & Orlikowski (2002) since originally these exemplars had been *independent*. The genres in the communities did not form any stable systems as their combinations could not be predicted, and the same message might appear in different communities depending on its travels among the corporate staff members. For example, a Dialogue message containing a question might be forwarded with a Postman message to a new recipient for comments. Thus the original Dialogue message became an appended message. This new recipient might reply, or maybe he/she forwarded the exchange to a third person. Finally, the recipient of the original Dialogue message replied to the question put to him/her. The original Dialogue message could thus be a member in different genre communities in different participants' mailboxes (see Figure 3 in 6.1.2; also examples 21 and 22 in 5.4). As discussed in 5.5 (see also 5.1.2), email messages in different languages also followed each other, which showed that genre communities could be multilingual. Of course, communicative events via telephone calls, faxes, internal mail, etc., genre communities of their time, have always followed each other. Never before, however, could they take place this fast and leave a paper trail as evidence.

In sum, four factors explicitly contributed to the existence of the three email genres: first, the communicative purposes identified in the analysis and recognized by both the informants and the focus group members; second, the informants' views about the action triggered by the messages which supported the purposes; third, the distribution of the spoken and written discourse features in accordance with each genre; and fourth, the occurrence and construction of content moves in each genre. The genres could be

regarded as well-established in the company; they seemed to possess integrity. This became evident since their identification was a smooth exercise and resulted in the classification into the three types which covered 98% of the messages written by over a hundred Finnish and Swedish speakers (n=103).

9 TEXTUALIZATIONS OF SALUTATION, CLOSING AND SIGNATURE MOVES

This chapter discusses the textualizations of Salutation, Closing and Signature moves. It thus contributes to the fourth aim of the study. The three framing moves were studied because the findings of previous research have been contradictory (see 3.1) and because they seemed to play a role in maintaining social relations (see 5.3 and 8.2.2). In addition to the primary corpus, the data comprises Questionnaire (a) giving information about the informants' communication partners, and an interview with one of the informants about email usage in the company.

The primary corpus was limited to the messages found in Henrik's (Vice President) mailbox collected in 2001. Out of the total of 114 internal English messages, Finns wrote 49 and Swedes 65. In total, the writers numbered 50: 27 of them were Finns and 23 Swedes. Of the messages 11% represented the Noticeboard genre, 54% the Postman genre, and 32% the Dialogue genre (see Table 14 in 6.2).

This chapter is divided into three sections: the first one focuses on the Salutation move, the second one on the Closing and Signature moves, and the final one provides a summary.

9.1 SALUTATION MOVE

Salutations, particularly those including the recipients' first name, were common in the present corpus irrespective of the number of the recipients of the message. As pointed out in 8.2.2, the usage evoked the business letter or fax genre in email and also seemed to contribute to amicable social relations by creating a personal tone for the messages.

This section presents the textualizations of the Salutation move in detail to account for the rationale behind its use. In what follows, the textualizations of the Salutation move in the messages to single and multiple recipients are presented first, followed by the use of salutations in the three genres.

9.1.1 MESSAGES TO SINGLE RECIPIENTS

In Henrik's mailbox, 35 of the 46 messages to single recipients had a salutation (76%). Most of the salutations also included the first name of the recipient. The examples in Table 32 show the textualizations of the Salutation move to greet single recipients.

TABLE 32. Salutation moves in messages to single recipients.

Salutations to single recipients	Number of occurrences/46
Hello + first name	16
Dear + first name	8
Hej + first name	4
Hi + first name	2
Good morning + first name	1
First name alone	1 32 with first name
Hello +Mr. + surname	1
Dear +Mr. + surname	1
Hej	1
In total	35

As can be seen in Table 32, the textualizations were conventional in the sense that they belonged to either the business fax or letter genres. The great majority of them included the first name of the recipient, the surname of the recipient was used twice (together with Mr.), and once the salutation was used alone. *Hello* was the salutation most frequently employed but also *Dear* was extensively used; traditionally, it has been used in personal letters with the first name and in business letters with the title and surname of the recipient, of which there was also one example in the corpus. Most of the salutations were informal, the one with *Dear* and a surname formal, and the one with *Hello* and a surname a mixture between the two. A case in point was the Swedish *Hej* + first name,

which occurred as many as four times in the corpus; it was used by both Finns and Swedes to greet both Finnish and Swedish speakers. Since Swedish is a shared language between the Finns and Swedes, its use was most likely motivated by the desire to generate goodwill.

Although the practice of first-naming was almost universal in the company and superiors, subordinates, and colleagues were greeted alike, it was still not standardized or automatic as the use of surnames showed. The selection of an address form seemed to be a dynamic process dependent on contextual features, as examples (1)–(2) suggest. It seems that the relative hierarchical position of the recipient may still play a role as well as the social distance between the writer and the recipient.

Table 32 shows how surnames appear in the salutations only twice. In one of them, a conventional salutation of business letter discourse was used, as is shown in example (1).

- (1) Dear Mr. Svensson,
I am truly sorry, that I haven't answer earlier. I hope anyway the 20th Jan. at 14.00 (Finnish time) still is reserved for the telephone conference. I assume that you are reachable with number +46 65615056, if not could you inform me, please.
--
Kind regards,
Leena Mäki
secretary to Mr. Seppo Salminen (F28)

The writer of example (1) was a secretary, and she represented the business practitioners who should have known the conventional salutations of business letter discourse through their training (see also example 5 in 7.3). Example (1) shows the message which was preceded by two other messages: in the first one, Mr. Salminen asked Mr. Svensson to get in touch with Leena Mäki, his secretary, about his possibility to attend a conference. The two men used first names in their salutations. In the second one, Mr. Svensson informed Leena Mäki of his attendance, but he did not use any salutation in his message and the signature was

preprogrammed (including his full name and contact information). Because of this preprogrammed signature, Leena Mäki did not have any indication as to how Mr. Svensson might prefer to be greeted; for this reason she may have resorted to a salutation of conventional business letter discourse. This decision may have been further enhanced by the fact that she was late with her reply.

The other instance of a surname in the salutation resulted in *Hello Mr. Poncini*, and thus combined elements of an informal greeting with a deferential naming practice, as example (2) shows.

- (2) Hello Mr. Poncini,
Regarding the phone call between you and Mr. Lidström yesterday, would we like get order for Forella latest 26/1. These order will then be booked in this production of DLC.

Kind regards
Johan
Market supervisor - XYZ unit
Tel. +46 12345
Fax. +46 23456
johan.svensson@storaenso.com (S73)

The writer of example (2) refers to his superior's telephone conversation with the recipient and requests some information agreed upon over the telephone. Consequently, the agreement reached on a higher organizational level was put into action by the operational staff member; in Goffman's terms (1974), the superior was the *principal* and the writer of example (2) was the *animator*. Again, without any further background information about the two participants (neither of whom was an informant), more conclusions would be out of place. It may be suggested, however, that the writers of examples (1) and (2) have not met the recipients, which increases social distance, and the recipients seem to possess more hierarchical power. Both of these factors contribute to deferential politeness behavior, the use of surnames rather than first names in the salutation. The salutations with the title and the surname suggest that the textualisation of the Salutation move in

the corporate context, in spite of the domination of first names and informal wording, was still a matter of choice, not a simple automatized behavior.

The extensive use of salutations with first names reflects positive politeness and the textualizations contribute to the atmosphere of collegial interpersonal closeness. However, this collegiality only took place between the sender and the primary recipient of the message. The recipients who were only copied in were ignored in the salutations and were distinctly in the background, not considered 'participants' in the interaction.

9.1.2 MESSAGES TO MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS

Salutations used to greet multiple recipients were common in the present corpus in contrast to e.g. Nickerson's findings (2000: 156). In the mailbox there were 68 messages addressed to more than one primary recipient, of which 50 had salutations (74%). In effect, the equivalent percentage for messages to single recipients was 76%, which would suggest that the use of salutations did not depend on the number of recipients. In Table 33, the salutations to greet multiple recipients are presented.

The most common salutation in messages to multiple recipients was *Hello*, which was used in over half of the messages having a salutation; typically it was used alone or it was combined with words such as *everybody*, *all*, etc. Twice the formal *gentlemen* was combined with the informal *hello*, which resulted in a mixture of formal and informal styles. In both cases the recipients only included men. The conventional formal salutation of business letter discourse, *Dear Sirs*, was also used as many as three times, all of them in the Noticeboard messages dealing with one and the same issue; it was also used by the same person, which suggested idiosyncratic usage (see example 12 in 6.4). The use of *Dear Sirs* and *Gentlemen* excluded female recipients, although some of the messages in question had them, which suggests that the salutations did not serve their purpose of greeting all the recipients and

creating a suitable tone for the message. Nevertheless, when for instance, a male writer used *Hello Gentlemen* to greet all male recipients, the salutation seemed to reflect a humorous attitude. Some of the messages thus drew on the traditional practices of business letter discourse (see also 7.2).

TABLE 33. Salutation moves in messages to multiple recipients.

Salutations to multiple recipients	Number of occurrences /68
Hello	18
Hello + all/everybody/Gentlemen/ friends, etc.	12
Dear Sirs/all/2 first names, etc.	9
Dear friends/colleagues	7
Friends, Hi, Hej+2 first names, Gentlemen	4
In total	50

Most of the salutations were fairly general as expressions, such as *friends* or *colleagues*, indicate. A few times, however, the recipients were specified in more detail. Twice a message was sent to speakers at a seminar, and the salutations reflected this role of the recipients: *Dear Speakers at R&D Seminar* (S17) and *Dear Speakers* (S88). In addition, first names following *Dear*, *Hej*, and *Hello* in the salutations were used in four messages. The first message was sent to three primary recipients, but only two of them were greeted by name in the salutation, *Dear Lars and Markku* (S66). The one who was not included was the superior of both of the recipients and the two writers of the message. It could be that the superior was chosen as the primary recipient of the message because of his hierarchical position rather than his immediate need for the information provided in the message. In other words, it seemed more likely that his actual place in the header of the message should have been in the Copy field. In the second message, the salutation had both recipients' first names, *Dear Ulf and Henrik*, and one of them was also specifically addressed later on in the message: *Henrik, do you have some special interests to take under discussions?* (F43). This type of use, where recipients were singled out in the message, took place a few times. It effectively involved

some of the participants and resembled a meeting situation in which participants were separately addressed. The third message used a Swedish *Hej* (F108) to greet two Swedes by name; the writer was a Finn. The fourth message was a case in point as only one of the three primary recipients was greeted in *Hello Monica* (F86). Monica was the secretary to the two other primary recipients. The sender of the message was another secretary, who informed Monica (and her two superiors) about her own superior's changed visiting schedule (see example 5 in 7.3). In accordance with the traditional role of the secretary, the writer maybe wanted to show that it is part of a secretary's job description to protect the superior from minute details, and by greeting only Monica she implied that the message was actually meant to the secretary, even though the secretary's superiors were also included as primary recipients.

Although the salutations to multiple recipients stayed on a fairly general level, there was still a tendency to specify the recipients in more detail, using words such as *friends*, *colleagues*, etc. which emphasized the closeness of the participants.

9.1.3 USE OF SALUTATIONS IN THE THREE GENRES

The Salutation move was typically used in all three genres, as pointed out in 8.2.2. Both the Noticeboard and Dialogue messages had salutations frequently, 92% and 86% respectively, but in the Postman genre the percentage was somewhat lower, 62%. No systematic differences in their textualizations could be found.

The highest distribution of salutations was found in the Noticeboard genre. As discussed in 7.1.2, the messages were more 'written' than the Dialogue messages and this seemed to be reflected in the nature of some of the salutations used: three occurrences of *Dear Sirs* and one of *Gentlemen*, *Dear colleagues*, and *Dear friends* each accounted for a good half of all the salutations used. The rest could be characterized as more spoken variants involving *Hello*. Only one message appeared without a salutation.

The Postman genre used fewer salutations than the other two genres but they were still used in 62% of the messages. Even though textless messages delivering regular surveys as attachments categorically lacked salutations, a number of other regular messages attaching, for example, visit reports to the same group of people always used them. In addition, messages with other moves than the Indicating enclosure move always had salutations. In (3) one such example is given.

- (3) Hello!
Enclosed is a summary of the price increases 1999 to 2000. It looks good this first year. We don't have estimates for X customer and Y customer for 2000/20001. We will revert with these later on. . . (S112)

In example (3) the Indicating enclosure move is followed by Move Ve which comments on the enclosed documents. The Salutation move ends in an exclamation mark, which was used by both Finnish and Swedish writers and seemed to be transferred from their native tongues (see 8.2.2).

The number of recipients in the Dialogue genre seemed to affect the use of salutations; they were always used in messages to multiple recipients but not always in those to single recipients. The usage could be considered disruptive in the flow of conversation. Below, examples (4)-(5) are messages from the same chain: example (4) shows the beginning of a Postman message sent to two people and example (5) the Dialogue message by Maria to the original sender and to her co-recipient.

- (4) Hej Maria and Peter,
Have you got a request like this or do you know the competitor who has started the project with L?
Best regards,
Taneli (F108)

- (5) Hello,
Not what I have heard of, but I will ask when I visit TP on
Wednesday... (continues)
Kind regards,
Maria (S113)

As example (5) shows, the response message contains an answer to the question posed in (4) and, despite this close link between the two messages, a salutation was used. One of the reasons may be that this was Maria's first contribution to the exchange and she had not yet 'greeted' the people involved. However, this explanation was not supported by the messages in the mailboxes of the other seven informants; long dialogic exchanges contained salutations and/or first names all through the interaction.

As was pointed out above, even though the Salutation move was frequently employed, it was not used in around 25% of all the messages in the mailbox: 24% of the messages to single recipients and 26% of the messages to multiple recipients appeared without it. In the whole corpus of 282 messages, the overall percentage was practically the same, 23%.

All messages to single recipients without salutations represented situations were salutations were typically absent from the mailboxes of the other informants as well. For example, when email functioned as a 'postman', salutations were left out when a brief reference was made to appended messages, as in example (6) or when the writer commented on his/her own message sent just before, as in example (7).

- (6) For info (S52)
(7) sending again as to delivered correctly (S12)

In the Dialogue genre, opening messages always included salutations and this was also frequently the case with response messages. However, when the response message offered a direct response to the opening message, the salutation was left out. In

the mailbox there were five examples of this. Below, three of them are given:

- (8) for sure !!!! (S3)
- (9) As I am out travelling most of next week Friday 19th suits me best (S7).
- (10) Thanks Mike (S35)

Example (8) is a strong reaction to a question in a Swedish message; there was no other text in the message apart from a pre-programmed signature. Example (9) gives an answer to a question about a suitable meeting date, and (10) refers to the information given in the previous message. Still, as example (10) shows, the first name of the recipient was still used. The two other examples without a salutation in the corpus were automatic reply messages (S33, S53) informing about a person's absence from the office (see example 20 in 5.4). It may be argued that these examples support the notion of email as a medium enabling immediate feedback, a feature typical of oral communication (Chafe 1982). Apart from the automatic replies, the response time of examples (8)–(9) was around one hour, and example (10) was sent early morning as a response to a message received late in the evening (the time was 20.48). The immediacy could have been emphasized by the exceptional time of delivery. In the Dialogue messages with salutations the response time was typically longer extending from a couple of hours to over a week.

The messages to multiple recipients without salutations accounted for 26% in the corpus; they included one Noticeboard message confirming a meeting, and the rest were Postman messages attaching documents or appending other messages. For example, when the Indicating enclosure move was realized by using a noun phrase alone, such as *Overdue CKB W.02* (S24), no salutation was used. However, it was still more common to have a salutation in the Postman genre. As was pointed out above, for example, textless messages delivering regular surveys and performance reports as attachments categorically lacked

salutations. In contrast, fairly regular messages attaching visit reports to the same group of people always greeted the recipients. Dialogue messages sent to multiple recipients always had salutations.

When the lack of salutations was investigated in terms of their occurrence in the three genres, some differences were found: 38% of the Postman messages, 14% of the Dialogue ones, and 8% of the Noticeboard ones lacked salutations. The percentages in the whole corpus were similar: 36% of the Postman messages and 13% of the Dialogue ones did not have them. But Noticeboard messages in the whole corpus lacked salutations clearly more often than those in Henrik's mailbox: 32% vs. 8%. One reason for this could be that the Noticeboard messages in Henrik's mailbox did not contain any virus alerts, press releases, appointment news, etc. which typically appeared without salutations.

To summarize, the messages that occurred without salutations shared some characteristics, although in all these cases, apart from textless Postman messages, salutations were also used, as discussed above. The salutation could be missing if the message was

- a Postman message, typically textless or with little text, attaching documents or appending other messages;
- a Postman message commenting on the writer's own previous message;
- a Noticeboard message with a strict format such as an agenda, a press release, etc.; or
- a Dialogue message giving a direct response to a message sent shortly before, including automatic reply messages.

These findings seem to agree with those of Louhiala-Salminen (1999a: 109), whose data came from mostly non-native speaker internal communication in two globally operating companies. Salutations were left out in only 5 messages out of a total of 40. The salutation in her data was sometimes left out for strategic reasons; the writer's irritated tone was strengthened by the absence of the salutation. This usage was not found in the present corpus. Alatalo's (1996:107, 112-3) findings from Finnish email data

showed that, in spite of the frequent use of salutations,¹¹⁴ they were typically missing from dialogic chains where the interlocutors had said their hellos and goodbyes once and maybe simply wanted to be economical in their messages. Nickerson's (2000: 156; see also Alatalo 2002) findings from native and non-native data were also different: salutations were not common in messages to multiple recipients.

The present findings are in clear contrast with those based on native-speaker data. For instance, the data of Orlikowski & Yates (1994: 552), Gains (1999: 85, 91), and Baron (2000) manifested salutations infrequently. One of the reasons for this may be the etymological connection between the email and the memo format. The email format with its *To*, *From*, *Date*, and *Subject* fields in the header is a development from the memo, a document used in internal communication in American business, in particular (Yates & Orlikowski 1992; also 2.3.7). As memos do not typically have salutations or complimentary closes (see e.g. Bovée et al. 2003), the connection has most probably contributed to the more economical use of salutations in email messages in Anglo-American business. Furthermore, one of the respondents in Orlikowski & Yates (1994: 561) explained the reason for the absence of salutations in his email messages by saying that it "would be like saying hello all the time during a conversation". Yet, Finnish and Swedish speakers writing in English in a shared corporate context were doing it.

The low percentage, 14%,¹¹⁵ of the Dialogue messages without salutations was clearly not in accordance with what was expected since the characteristic features of the genre rather supported immediate responses without intervening salutations. However, as was mentioned earlier, the short response time seemed to contribute to the lack of salutations; nevertheless, dialogic exchanges with short lead times also appeared with intervening

114 In Finnish business letters, in contrast, salutations are not conventionally used.

115 13% of all the 282 messages

salutations in the corpus. Thus, it seems that the writers considered salutations an inherent element in email messages of dialogic nature and were not bothered by their intervening character. It may be, rather, that the lack of them might have been regarded as somehow deviant.

9.2 CLOSING AND SIGNATURE MOVES

The Closing move preceded the Signature move in the majority of the messages in the corpus, sometimes the Signature move occurred alone. Their use was similar to that of the Salutation move with the first name of the recipient in particular; together they seemed to provide a frame of a positive relational tone for the message.

The textualizations of the Closing move seemed like default options since there was not much variety, as the list of closings in example (11) shows.

- (11) Best regards
Kind regards
Kindest regards
With regards
With best regards
Regards
rgds
brgds
MVH¹¹⁶
Hälsningar
Med vänliga hälsningar

In the majority of the cases, the Closing move was textualized as either *Best regards* or *Kind regards*, and the other alternatives were distinctly less frequent. In the whole corpus of 282 messages, it was easy to find confirmation to the small range of closings in

¹¹⁶ *MVH* corresponds to the Swedish *Med vänlig hälsning(ar)*, i.e. *with best/kind regards* in English.

active use. *BR*, *B'regs*, *yours sincerely*, *sunny regards*, or similar were the only additions to the list given in example (11). The last three closings listed in example (11) were textualized in Swedish, which conveyed a more personal touch. They were used by both Finnish and Swedish speakers; the use was thus comparable to that of Swedish salutations. Not once was a Finnish closing (or salutation) used, which was understandable as Finnish is not a shared language between Finns and Swedes.

As mentioned above, the Closing move could be missing but not the Signature; it was a standard feature and only the textless Postman messages occurred without it. As pointed out in 8.2.2, this characteristic together with the use of the Closing move entailed that the business letter or fax genre was evoked in email. In Nickerson's (2000: 156) data, complimentary closes¹¹⁷ were also found in almost all messages, but Alatalo (1996: 112) reports that around 10% of her Finnish email messages had no complimentary closes, which, according to her, may be due to the fact that the writers considered them redundant as the sender's identity could be established from the *From* field in the header.

A study of the use of the first versus full names was somewhat problematic, because the complimentary close, including the Closing and Signature moves, could be preprogrammed, which meant that (in this corpus) it appeared in the same form in all the messages written by one and the same person and usually contained the full name of the person (but, see example 2 in 9.1.1).¹¹⁸ In other words, each writer used only one version of their (possibly many) preprogrammed signatures.

In what follows, the Signature moves are first presented in the messages to single recipients and then in the messages to multiple recipients. Finally, the use of the Closing and Signature moves in the three genres is taken up.

117 Complimentary close contained both the Closing and the Signature moves.

118 It was also independent of the language used in the message itself: all preprogrammed complimentary closes in both the primary and secondary corpora were in English.

9.2.1 SIGNATURES IN MESSAGES TO SINGLE RECIPIENTS

In the 46 messages¹¹⁹ addressed to single recipients in Henrik's mailbox, the message was signed off 20 times with an automatic preprogrammed signature, the first name of the writer was used 19 times, and the full name¹²⁰ 5 times. A question remains: which signature was replaced by the preprogrammed option? Was it the first-name signature or the full-name signature? In this corpus, most of the time it was the first-name alternative: Henrik always used a preprogrammed signature, and the majority of his messages were addressed to people he had met and with whom he was frequently in touch with. In similar situations, first names were typically used in the corpus of 282 messages (see also 8.2.2).

In the preprogrammed signatures, either *Kind regards* or *Best regards* was used as the Closing move and, with the exception of one first name, the full name of the person as the Signature move. Typically, telephone and fax numbers, even postal addresses, were included. In all cases, the Closing move preceded the Signature move.

The use of names in salutations and signatures was not always consistent as examples (12)–(13) show. The examples depict an exchange, with an opening (12) and a response (13) message in the Dialogue genre.

(12) Dear Olle and Arvid
--
Kind Regards
Eino (F43)

(13) Hello Eino
--
Regards
Olle Svensson (S44)

119 Two of the 46 messages were textless and thus did not have Closing or Signature moves.

120 If the signature only had the full name of the writer without any other information, it was regarded as a full name signature, not a preprogrammed one.

As can be seen in (13), the writer of a response message signed off with his full name even though in the opening message (12), he was greeted by the first name in the salutation. One explanation might be that the signature was preprogrammed. However, a comparison with the preprogrammed signatures in the corpus suggests that this was not likely since the preprogrammed signatures always had a closing such as *Kind regards* and they also contained some contact information such as telephone numbers. In spite of this practice, nevertheless, if the signature in (13) represented a somewhat unusual sample of a preprogrammed signature, the usage could be understood in view of all the other messages containing such signatures: typically no first names were added to better reflect the relationship between the writer and the recipient. If, however, the signature was written on the spot, Olle did not seem to recognize the implied close relationship indicated by the first names in the Salutation move in example (12). This usage was also contrary to the general practice of using first names in the company.

Once the situation was the opposite: the salutation contained the surname, as in *Hello Mr. Poncini* (S73), but the message was signed off with the first name (see example 2 in 9.1.1). The preprogrammed signature only contained the first name of the writer, which was exceptional in the corpus, together with the job title, the unit, and other contact information. In this case, the use of names seemed to reflect the somewhat complicated relationship between the writer and the recipient, as was suggested when the message was discussed.

Three cases, in particular, reflected some subtle choices that need to be made when signing off. Examples (14) and (15) relate to situations in which the message was sent on somebody else's behalf, which meant that in the Mail Index and in the *From* field of the email template appeared another name from the one in the signature. When secretaries wrote messages on their superiors' behalf, they seemed to imitate the informal relationship between their superior and the recipient but signed off with either their

own full name (see example 14) or a preprogrammed signature (see example 15).

(14) Hello Sven,
--
With regards,
on behalf of Pasi
Satu Suomalainen (F93)

(15) Dear Juha
--
Kind regards from Henrik

Kind regards,
Ida Svensson
Tel: +46 - 54321
Fax: +46 - 65432
e-mail: ida.svensson@storaenso.com (S97)

The textualizations providing the principal's (see Goffman 1974) signature in examples (14) and (15) are different. In example (14), the secretary makes it explicit that she is writing the message on somebody else's behalf (and thus acting as an animator), whereas in (15) the secretary simply adds her own preprogrammed signature last. In addition to simply adding their signature after the superior's name, secretaries also indicated the relationship with their superior (see example 1 in 9.1.1) seemingly to ascertain that it was clear to the recipient who the sender was and what her relationship to the 'principal' was.

9.2.2 SIGNATURES IN MESSAGES TO MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS

Of the 68 messages to multiple recipients in Henrik's mailbox, 43 were signed off with first names, 14 with full names including preprogrammed signatures, and in 10 messages no signatures were used because the messages were textless Postman messages.

It is difficult to elaborate on the reasons for the use of full names versus first names, but three contributing factors may be

relevant in the choice. First, the full name signature seemed to be an established practice among some writers. For example, one market supervisor always used her full name when enclosing visit reports, while the others did not. Second, it could also be motivated by the hierarchical status of the writer. For instance, the secretary of a senior executive Vice President, superior to all the recipients of the message, signed a message with her own full name and the full name of her superior, as example (16) shows.

(16) Maija Lahtinen for Pekka Virtanen (F25)

The third reason for signing off with full names could have been that the writers considered their names, and maybe also their positions, job descriptions, or some other background data not to be familiar to the recipients. The situation was similar to the one discussed in connection with example (1) in 9.1.1. As can be seen from example (17), the writer, in addition to giving her full name, also specifies her unit.

(17) Enclosed the program, please!
Best regards,
Pirjo Vuolle/Business Information, X place (F91)

First-name signatures typically occurred alone; once the first name was complemented by a phrase indicating the base of the writer, as example (18) shows.

(18) Kari, at home forest office (F51)

The message was addressed to three men and was strictly business with product names, code numbers, market areas, and the similar. However, it started with a statement that could be interpreted as humorous when used between men only: *have just been thinking old days when doing ... (wet dream in Xplace that time)*. It seems that both the signature and the beginning of the message

with the metaphoric expression served the same purpose: somehow lightening the heavy informational content of the message.

The number of recipients did not affect the choice of the signature as messages with only a few recipients and those with as many as 30 recipients and two aliases had both first and full name signatures.

9.2.3 USE OF CLOSINGS AND SIGNATURES IN THE THREE GENRES

The Closing move was typically realized in the same way in all three genres (see 9.2), while there was some variation in the textualisations of the Signature move. In all three genres first-name signatures dominated: the Dialogue genre used them most, the Noticeboard genre was close behind, and the third place was occupied by the Postman genre. As mentioned above in 9.2.1, since preprogrammed signatures seemed to replace first-name rather than full-name signatures, the intended usage might indeed have been even higher.

Interestingly, the majority of the Noticeboard messages were signed off with first names in spite of the fact that the number of recipients was always more than one. For example, the writer of a series of four Noticeboard messages first used his full name in the signature (see example 12 in 6.4), but the following two updates were signed off by using the first name only. Similarly, six out of seven Dialogue messages addressed to multiple recipients had first-name signatures, while those addressed to single recipients had them only in around 50% of the messages. The explanation for this may be that there were four persons who used preprogrammed signatures including Henrik, the mailbox owner, and his secretary.

In the Postman messages to multiple recipients first-name signatures dominated, and consequently, the share of the messages with full names, pre-programmed signatures, or without any signatures (because the messages were textless) was about 30%. Once a preprogrammed signature was preceded by the first name

of the sender, which suggests that the writer felt that signing off with the full name would have been somehow inappropriate. When the Postman message was addressed to a single recipient, the relationship was different as first names were in a minority and preprogrammed signatures dominated 2 to 1. As mentioned above, this was partly due to the fact that Henrik always used it.

To summarize, it seems that first-name signature was the first choice in all the three genres but if the message was addressed to multiple recipients also full name signatures were used. The use of preprogrammed signatures blurred this division since it could not be ascertained which one of the two signatures it replaced. However, as mentioned above 9.2.1, the likely alternative was first-name signature since the participants in the situations were frequently in touch with each other; in such situations first names were typically used in the corpus.

The more frequent use of full names in the Closing move as against the Salutation move can be accounted for by two factors: extensive use of preprogrammed signatures and the need to be explicit. Even though the name of the sender could be seen from the *From* field of the header, maybe it was still felt that a full name signature added to the clarity of the message, whereas the use of first names in salutations set an amicable tone for the whole message and thus contributed to the feeling of closeness in general in the corporate environment. Of course, first-name signatures also contributed to this feeling.

As a matter of fact, it may be argued that the reason for the writer's repetition of names both in the Salutation and Signature moves was that the *To* and *From* fields in the email template were regarded as the address on an envelope or on letter paper or the fax number on a fax form. In the same way as the recipient of an English letter or a fax needs to be addressed in the Salutation and the letter or fax needs to be signed, so does the writer of an email message greet the recipient and sign off. The business letter or fax genre with its salutations and closings seemed to be drawn on in writing email messages.

9.3 SUMMARY

The textualizations of the three framing moves, Salutation, Closing, and Signature, contributed to the framing of the email messages as relational and involved. The Salutation move was used in around 80% of the messages, which was a high number in comparison to native speaker usage but seemed to agree with data from studies with non-native speaker subjects. The textualizations were conventional in the sense that they drew on business fax and letter genres and there was not much variation. The use of first names with salutations was a widespread practice in the company even though it could not be considered automatic, as the examples of salutations with surnames indicated. It was not a corporate policy either, as indicated by one of the informants (Erja) in an interview. The use of a person's surname might have been connected to organizational power difference and/or social distance and/or the nature of the imposition, but since the background information available was limited, these considerations could not be probed further.

There seemed to be two reasons for the frequent use of salutations with first names in particular. First, since the email template was developed from the American internal memo, which typically occurs without a salutation, email seems to encourage similar usage by those familiar with the document but not by those who are not familiar with the practice such as the Finnish and Swedish writers (see also Kankaanranta 2005). Second, by using salutations with or without first names the writer constructs a relationship with the recipient and the usage thus contributes to the maintenance of good social relations, as was the case here. The practice was so widely spread that it was likely to feel strange to leave the salutation out. In this way email messages were framed to be relational (see Rogers & Hildebrandt 1993) from the outset, and they did not simply focus on the business at hand. Since most of the salutations were of an informal type such as *hello*, *hi*, etc. they also reflected the involved spoken nature of the discourse.

The fact that salutations were also frequently used in messages to multiple recipients in contrast to Nickerson (2000: 156) could be interpreted against the background of the 1998 merger combining the Swedish Stora and the Finnish Enso. The usage could be considered as a means to create a feeling of togetherness among the employees, which since the early stages of the merger had conventionalized. A feature specific to this corpus, the transference of the Swedish *Hej* + first name, seemed to support this observation. It was employed by Swedish and Finnish speakers alike and used to address representatives of both nationalities. By using a Swedish salutation known to all Finnish speakers, Finnish or Swedish writers created a feeling of togetherness. A Finnish writer might have used it as a sign of goodwill as if saying *I know this phrase in Swedish and want to use it to make you feel good*. A Swedish writer, on the other hand, might have used it as a token of inside humor as if saying that *I know that you know this Swedish phrase and that it does not belong to an English message*. To take that one step further, it may be suggested that both Finns and Swedes used it to signal some sort of humorous dissent about the use of English in the company.

An unexpected outcome in relation to the use of salutations in the three genres was the frequent application of the move in the Dialogue genre. It was used in 86% of the Dialogue messages, which meant that it intervened in the exchange: in a way, the participants repeated their *hellos* at the beginning of each turn in the exchange. In the 14% of the messages without the move, however, the response time was fairly short implying that the feeling of immediacy played a role, although not always. In the Noticeboard messages the move was textualized a few times by forms, such as *Dear sirs* and *Gentlemen*, which represent formal business letter discourse, which could also be found elsewhere in the messages, in Indicating enclosure move in particular (see 8.3.2 and 7.2). These phenomena seemed to be drawing on other genres: old conventionalized phrases were brought from traditional business letter discourse into email discourse. Indicating enclosure

moves with textualizations such as *please find enclosed* differed from the formal salutations, however, since they served their purpose well, whereas the salutations categorically excluded female recipients and thus might have failed in creating a positive tone with all the recipients.

The two other framing moves, Signature and Closing, occurred in almost all the messages in the corpus. Consequently, the use resembled that of the Salutation move; together the moves seemed to provide a frame of positive tone for the message, which contributed to the maintenance of social relations in the company. First names were used most of the time but also full names were common. Against the expectations, first name signatures were more common in the messages to multiple recipients than in those to single recipients (63% vs. 41% respectively). This, however, would seem to be due to the number of messages addressed to single recipients by the four writers who always used a preprogrammed signature, in particular Henrik and his secretary. Overall, full names were used more often in signatures than surnames in salutations; this resulted partly from the fairly extensive use of preprogrammed signatures combining the Closing and Signature moves and partly from the potential desire to make the sender explicit.

The fact that names, in particular first names, were used to this extent in the messages in which it was possible to establish the sender and the recipient from the email template suggests that their use was motivated by factors other than simple repetition of the recipient and sender. The use of such in-group identity markers implied common ground and familiarity with the recipient of the message; it was one of the ways to create a feeling of closeness and solidarity in the shared corporate environment. This observation is in agreement with that of Alatalo (2002: 197), who maintains that the usage represents an effort to focus on the personal relationship between the interactants emphasizing orientation to person, typical of spoken interactions, rather than to position, typical for written business letter discourse. Indeed,

it may be that the header of the email message has assumed the same function as an address on an envelope, an inside address on a letter paper, or the fax number on the fax form. Thus, salutations and closings with first names (or surnames/full names) meet the same functions as they do in business letter or fax discourse. Salutations would create a suitable tone for the message, and closings establish the person responsible for the contents. In the business letter genre the tone created is usually rather formal with *Dear + Mr./Ms + surname*, whereas in the fax genre more informal greetings such as *hello* or *hi* are used together with first names. The frequent use of informal salutations and closings with first names, in particular, in the present email corpus reflected corporate closeness among the communicators and emphasized amicable relations between them.

10 TEXTUALIZATIONS OF REQUESTING MOVE

This chapter discusses the textualizations of the Requesting move to account for the prospective differences between Finnish and Swedish writers. It thus contributes to the fifth aim of the study. Since both Finnish and Swedish respondents in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey in *Stora Enso* experienced differences in each other's communication, i.e. Finnish communication was characterized as direct and Swedish communication as discussion-oriented, it was decided to examine whether these characterizations were reflected in the actual language use. Previous research has also shown that cross-cultural differences exist in how requests are worded (see 3.2.2; also 3.2.3). In addition to Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey, the data used in this chapter consists of Questionnaire (b) to the informants, an interview with one of them, and the 114 internal English email messages in Henrik's mailbox.

The investigation of the Requesting move did not attempt to be exhaustive because of limited information about the writers' hierarchical status in relation to the recipients, their social distance, and the exact nature of the impositions, which is relevant in a study of a social phenomenon such as politeness (see 3.2). Nevertheless, an attempt was made to exploit the contextual information as much as possible. Since the focus was on individual requests, a number of important features were not addressed. Such features included the co-occurrence of the requests and the position of the moves in the text, which function together to invoke (im)politeness. In spite of these limitations the investigation of individual requests was still able to address the question about the nature of the imposition and the (in)directness realized in the Requesting move.

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, the chapter introduces the definition of request (see Akar 1998) used in the analysis. Second, it focuses on the nature of impositions and third, on the directness of the Requesting move. Finally, a summary is given.

10.1 DEFINITION OF REQUEST

The definitions of request abound in linguistic research. Researchers in written English business communication have produced definitions of their own suitable for business contexts (see e.g. Yli-Jokipii 1994, Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris 1996, Akar 1998, Alatalo 2002). For the present study, I adopted Akar's (1998) definition of request. According to the definition, a request is an expression of a need with which the writer wants the reader to perform either a verbal or a physical act. Yli-Jokipii (1996: 60) also includes a third element in her definition: the writer attempts to change the reader's cognitive state of mind (see also Alatalo 2002: 55). But, as Akar (1998: 81) aptly states, the definition is very broad-ranging: "If a cognitive change is requested, then all informative texts can be defined as requests, because by giving information we are asking the reader to change his/her cognitive state." For this reason, utterances such as *Please note* were not included in the present analysis. Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris's (1996: 640) definition incorporates "the reader's need for compliance on the grounds of corporate and personal motivators such as necessity, duty and goodwill". As the data about the participants' corporate or personal motivators was limited, it was believed that Akar's definition was more appropriate for the purposes of the present study.

For the identification of requests, Yli-Jokipii's (1994: 70–71; see also Lainio, forthcoming) practical insights were useful: some requests have specific labels identifying them as requests, such as the politeness marker *please*, the imperative form, the interrogative,

etc.; in others the requestive force may be found by a paraphrase resulting in, for instance, *X asks/requests/wants Y to do Z*; or by adopting the business reader's role and answering the question: Can the function of the utterance be interpreted as requestive in its context? Yli-Jokipii (1994: 71) gives *thanking* as an example: whether it counts as an attempt to influence the recipient's future behavior (thus implying that a request has been made) or as an ordinary expression of gratitude referring to the recipient's past behavior is dependent on its context.¹²¹ Finally, the easiest criterion for the identification of a request is to find a response in the corpus, as was the case a few times in this study. Example (1) shows a request and (2) the response to it.

- (1) Please communicate the times that suit you to Leena Mäki. (F6)
- (2) As I am out traveling most of next week Friday 19th suits me best. (S7)

Example (1) also satisfies other criteria of requests: it was explicitly marked by the imperative form and *please*.

Below, seven examples of requests are given to illustrate the three versions of the Requesting move introduced in 8.3.3: Move VIa represented a request for a physical act, Move VIvr for a verbal response, and Move VIif represented a request made under certain conditions.

- (3) Kindly change your arrangements accordingly. (F86)
- (4) Could I pls have cc of mail discussed. (S89)
- (5) If somebody needs more info, please call me, JP or OJ. (F45)
- (6) Please comment by 24th of January. (F48)
- (7) Did you try out different levels of tension? (S29)
- (8) Give also your estimates that how much different producers were producing LPB last year? (F105)
- (9) It would be appreciated if you could let B know the type of accommodation when known. (S39)

121 For a detailed discussion of the challenges in the identification and interpretation of requests, see Yli-Jokipii (1994: 72-78).

Examples (3)-(4) express a need for a physical act and thus represent Move VIa. Example (5) represents Move VIif, in which the request is made under certain conditions. These moves occurred in any of the three genres, but they were the only Requesting moves that could occur in the Noticeboard genre for the obvious reason that no verbal response was typically in order. Examples (6)-(9), on the other hand, seek verbal responses and thus represent Move VIvr. Following Akar's (1998) definition, questions, such as example (7), were regarded as requests because they were employed to pursue verbal responses. Examples (6) and (8) appeared in the Postman genre and (7) and (9) in the Dialogue genre.

The identification of the requests in the data was not unproblematic. The main problem was revealed by the email questionnaire administered to the informants (see Appendix 3). It turned out that some of the messages triggered action as if they had contained a request, but no request was marked lexicographically (see 6.1). The phenomenon seemed to depend on the shared corporate environment, in which this type of knowledge was tacit, embedded in situations, and only members of the discourse community, i.e. insiders, knew how to act accordingly. These 'requests' were not accounted for in the analysis because there was no way of recognizing them without resorting to the help of the insiders. Because of their large number, it was not possible.

Another problem was related to certain conventional business phrases (see 7.2) that contained the politeness marker *please*. Such phrases included those used in the Indicating enclosure move, such as *Please find enclosed*, *Enclosed please find*, etc., which typically occurred in the first sentence of the Postman message. Although Kankaanranta (2001: 307) argues that they should be classified as requests because in business "no documents are enclosed for fun - they are enclosed because they are somehow relevant to the matters at hand" and thus action is expected, the present study recognized their function as indicating enclosure and replacing a

more modern alternative *Here is* (for recommended usage in modern business communication, see Locker 1998, Bovée et al. 2003, Munter 2003). However, as the informants' comments on their own messages showed (see Table 12 in 6.1.2), for the insiders some of these attachments called for action even though no verbalized request was present in the Postman message delivering them. As there was no way of detecting such requests, they were not accounted for in the analysis.

Although the conventional business phrases textualizing the Indicating enclosure move were excluded from the Requesting moves, examples (10)–(11) were included in the category because they occurred later in the text and did not only indicate enclosure; they gave some extra information to the reader, which could be found if the enclosure was 'seen'.¹²²

(10) See file for additional information. (S17)

(11) See details in enclosed file. (S88)

There was one more problem which concerned another popular business phrase, *to look forward to something*, which was sometimes classified as a Requesting move and other times as a Pre-closing move (see 8.2.2). The following two examples illustrate its usage:

(12) As I am traveling most of next week Friday 19th suits me best.

Look forward to receiving confirmation by tomorrow (S7)

(13) We look forward to seeing you in London! (S49)

In (12) the writer needs to know if the planned meeting will be held on the day that suits him best and is asking for confirmation and thus making an explicit request, whereas in (13) the phrase is used as a Pre-closing move, which provides a positive closure for the message.

¹²² Alatalo (2002: 122) also questions the primary communicative function of imperatives used similarly and concludes that they are "multifunctional utterances, since the utterance evidently includes the communicative purpose of informing the addressee".

Sometimes it was also difficult to decide if a request was to be classified as one for a physical act, Move VIa, or for a verbal response, Move VIvr. Examples (14)–(15) illustrate two such situations.

- (14) Here is the draft. Please check it. (F4)
- (15) Stora Enso XY would be grateful if you could send them 8 English maps as “tube” version:
Stora Enso XY
(address follows) (F159)

Example (14), referring to the enclosed draft, clearly represents Move VIa, but it also seems to call for a verbal response. If the draft needs changing, it needs to be explained; if it does not need any changes, also this view should be communicated to the requester. Requests of this type were classified as Move VIvr. However, if Move VIa appeared in a Dialogue message involving only the sender and the recipient, as in example (15), the move was classified as VIa although it seemed to presuppose a verbal reaction of some kind (see 8.3.3). The different treatment of the moves depended on what could be regarded as an appropriate fulfillment of the request. The act of ‘checking’ could only be communicated verbally, whereas the act of ‘sending’ could be accomplished by sending the maps in spite of the fact that typically orders are verbally acknowledged in business.

Finally, because the number of the writers in the requestive situations in the corpus was large, in total 29 of whom 16 were Finns and 13 Swedes, and background information about them and their relations to the requestees was limited,¹²³ the application of the variables of social and power distance was possible only a

123 Even though the informant whose mailbox was under investigation indicated his hierarchical position and social distance in relation to the people with whom he was in direct contact with (see Appendix 2), there was a number of messages whose writers’ and recipients’ relation to each other was not known. In addition, if the contact was in another unit, the informant did not indicate the relative hierarchical position at all.

few times in the investigation (but see e.g. Sproull & Kiesler 1986 for status equalization in email communication).

However, an attempt was made to weigh the seriousness of the impositions (of which no first-hand data was available) by investigating the frequency of what House & Kasper (1980: 169; see also Brown & Levinson 1987: 145-172) call 'downgraders',¹²⁴ that is, modality markers that play down the impact of the request. In example (16), the downgrader used, the adjective *short*, can be further specified as an 'understater' because it attempts to play down the effort needed for writing a reply.

(16) It could be nice if you drop me a short line confirming. . . (S9)

'Grounders', i.e. supporting moves that give a reason for the request, were used only seven times. Example (17) shows a message with two requests and a grounder between them; the writer and the recipient were on the same hierarchical level (the Requesting moves underlined).

(17) Hej Pasi
Ref y-days phone call-Could I pls have cc of mail discussed. Will have meeting this afternoon and it could be nice to know what you said! (S89)

The grounder used as a reason for the requests was realized as Move V: there was going to be a meeting in the afternoon and the information was needed there.

The small number of downgraders in the corpus suggests that the requests originated from routine-like situations where the employees were performing their tasks within their job roles in the shared corporate context. In other words, when people exercised their corporate power by making legitimate requests within the boundaries defined by their job roles, other employees

124 The downgraders were classified as Move V (Providing information).

within their job roles were expected to meet the requests; such situations could be considered routine.

The 106 requests found in the corpus, of which 52 occurred in 21 messages written by 16 Finns and 54 in 32 messages written by 13 Swedes, were classified according to what was requested and how the requests were textualized. The impositions involved in the requests are discussed first, and after that, the use of direct and indirect requests is taken up.

10.2 IMPOSITIONS

The requests were classified according to the impositions involved to find out possible differences between the Finnish and Swedish speakers. First, following the division into Moves VI_{vr}, VI_a, and VI_{if}, requests were divided according to the type of response expected, i.e. a verbal response, a physical act, and a response depending on the met conditions in the case. As was mentioned above, the division was not unproblematic: some requests were classified as VI_{vr} because of their pragmatic force even though the strictly semantic interpretation seemed to call for a physical act only. Thus *Please check it (F4)*, referring to the enclosed draft, seemed to represent Move VI_a but since it simultaneously invited comments because the checking would be useless without them, the move was classified as VI_{vr}.

The distinction between Moves VI_a and VI_{vr} was important from the point of view of genre classification. All the three versions of the Requesting move occurred in the Dialogue and Postman genres, but only VI_a and VI_{if} in the Noticeboard genre, as the genre did not presuppose any verbal response by definition. Table 34 illustrates the distribution of different versions of the Requesting move among Finnish and Swedish writers.

TABLE 34. Distribution of Requesting moves according to the imposition, i.e. a physical act (VIa), a verbal response (VIvr), and a conditional request (VIif).

Mother tongue of writer	Move VIa	Move VIvr	Move VIif	Total No of Requesting moves
Finnish	15	29	9	53
Swedish	13	32	8	53
Total	28	61	17	106

Differences in the impositions among Finns and Swedes were practically non-existent. Indeed, it may be argued that the impositions were nearly identical. The majority of the requests were for verbal responses, representing Move VIvr, which was the only content move of the three. It was always needed in the opening messages of the Dialogue genre. Moves VIa and VIif occurred in any one genre but were the only versions of the Requesting move possible in the Noticeboard genre.

In addition to the type of response expected, the impositions were investigated from the point of view of what the specific action requested was. When the request was textualized in the interrogative form, two issues needed to be taken into account. First, answering to a specific question as such was not included in the investigation. In other words, *wh*-questions, as in example (18), were typically excluded from the analysis. However, if the *wh*-questions seemed to seek something else than a specific reply, such as an explanation of the opinion, as in example (19), they were included. Second, although *yes-no* questions seek either *yes* or *no* answers by definition, it was evident that in some cases a more extensive reply, such as commenting, was sought. Example (20) illustrates one such case.

(18) What was the outcome of your discussion with MW? (S20)

(19) What do you think? (F51).

(20) Do you have any comments on Philipp's mail? (S11)

The impositions involved in the requests in the corporate context tended to repeat themselves: the same actions were requested. The impositions which only appeared once in the corpus accounted for 40% of all the requests, including the interrogatives in search of specific answers to questions with a share of 20%. In about 60% of the requests the same impositions occurred twice or more frequently.

The impositions occurring only once included, for example, the following specific actions:

- fixing the day for a meeting (F6),
- modifying computer links (F14),
- taking care of proposals (S26),
- booking a meeting room (S46),
- forwarding a message (S46),
- entering orders into computer files (F79),
- changing meeting arrangements (F86),
- listing customers (F105), and
- giving estimates of production (F105).

In Table 35 all the impositions/impositive verbs occurring twice, or more frequently, are presented with their number of occurrences. The classification was based on the verbs used, not on the researcher's interpretation of the meaning possibly intended, although this is also referred to in the commentary.

As can be seen from Table 35, all the impositive verbs were somehow connected to communication, exchanging information. For example, some of them referred to concrete activities of getting in touch with somebody (contact, call), of delivering something (send), and of informing somebody of something (inform, let somebody know, advise). Some activities specifically focused on texts (comment, confirm, reply, check, see), on search of opinions (think, give opinion), and exchange of ideas (discuss). In other words, almost 60% of the requests called for communication-related activities. This finding seems to be in agreement with Reinsch's (2000) claim that business is a communication-based activity. The fact that the requests in the corpus were made by 29

writers in different organizational positions implies that communication-related activities were integral for corporate jobs in the company. As can be seen from Table 35, Finnish and Swedish writers did not differ much in the distribution of these impositions. For some reason, Finnish writers did not use *let somebody know* or *see* at all, while Swedish writers did not request *calling, checking, or giving opinion*. Under Table 35, each imposition is briefly accounted for.

TABLE 35. The most common impositions and their number according to the mother tongue of the writer.

Imposition (impositive verb)	No of occurrences (n=106)	By Finnish writers (n=52)	By Swedish writers (n=54)
Comment	11	5	6
Send	8	3	6
Inform	6	4	2
Let somebody know	6	-	6
Confirm	5	1	4
Contact	4	1	3
Reply	4	2	2
Think (= give opinion)	4	2	2
Call	3	3	-
Check	3	3	-
Discuss	3	2	1
Advise	2	1	1
Give opinion	2	2	-
See	2	-	2
TOTAL	63	28	35
% of all requests	59%	53%	65%

Half of the *comments* were sought on documents enclosed (n=6), and another half (n=5) on issues related to business. The objectives of *sending* were proposals, files, orders, presentation material, copies of documents and mail. *Informing* was used interchangeably with the less formal *let somebody know*, but the two were kept separate as the focus was on the actual verbs used rather than the semantic value of each utterance. *Advise* was the most formal alternative of the three. Although the differences between the three individual verbs were related to formality, it was difficult to detect

any such differences on the basis of the rest of text in the relevant messages. *Confirmation* was sought on meeting times, reception of messages, and on matters being in order. Once the usage was ambiguous, and it was difficult to establish what the object of confirming was: the general content of the issue presented in the message or an answer to a more specific question expressed in the previous sentence. It seemed that the verb was used as a synonym for commenting. *Contacting* was used four times, of which two in automatic reply messages in the following way:

(21) If urgent, please contact P L +46 54 876543 or M O +46 54 67890 (S33)

Replying was requested once by employing a need statement (example 22) and three times by employing the conventional (business) phrase *look forward to*,¹²⁵ as examples (23) and (24) show:

- (22) [I] need the reply by. . . (F79)
- (23) Looking forward to your reply (S2)
- (24) I look forward to hearing from you (S67)

All but one of the occurrences of replying could be interpreted as requests for comments rather than simply answers. The verb *think* was only used in questions in the meaning of 'give opinion'; the opinions were sought on business issues. Also, *calling* was requested in similar situations and made conditional. *Checking* was only sought on documents enclosed. *Discussing* was requested three times: only once did the sender of the message express a request for a discussion with the recipient, twice the request concerned a third party (see example 25). *Opinions* were once sought on documents and once on business issues. The verb *see* was used to refer to some specific information to be found in the enclosed document, as example (26) shows.

125 As was discussed in 8.2.2, *look forward to* could also be interpreted as a Pre-closing move, as in *Look forward to soon coming down to the Xcity office* (S40).

- (25) please discuss with john, how do they see the possibilities (F63).
- (26) See details in enclosed file (S88)

Of the 63 impositions listed in Table 35, 27 called for comments or opinions either on texts or business issues in general. The figure equals to around 25% of all the requests in the corpus (n=106). Below, examples (27)–(33) illustrate the phenomenon. The examples were chosen to show as clearly as possible what the imposition involved.

- (27) Please check the list from your business unit's point of view and comment if some changes should be done. (F48)
- (28) ... before forwarding this message to the customer I would appreciate your comments to a few questions: Is this price level going to work or is further price pressure likely to happen? Is there any data as to where P and the other competitors price levels are now in relation to their historical lowest prices in the market? In other words are we damned if we go for this price decrease? (S67)
- (29) ... a proposal from A ... meeting in the afternoon – and dinner in the evening. Do you think this is OK? Please confirm as soon as possible. (S85)
- (30) Here is the draft. Please check it (F4)
- (31) but alexia discuss with don and come back (F63)
- (32) pls give your opinion about the codes for us. . . so that we can prepare for the meeting (F47)
- (33) What do you think? (F51) (after a lengthy description of a new procedure)

As can be seen from examples (27) and (30), the verb *check* is used to impose two different types of activities: in (27) it involves only checking a list and a request for comments is given separately, while in (30) the verb seems to incorporate both checking and giving comments on the draft. For this reason, *check* in (27) was not regarded as a request for comments but (30) was. This entails that the occurrences of verbs in Table 35 do not necessarily match with the information in Table 36 below, which shows the number of verbs used by Finnish and Swedish writers when requesting comments or opinions.

TABLE 36. Verbs requesting *comments, opinions*, etc. and their number as used by Finnish and Swedish writers.

Verbs requesting comments, opinions, etc.	No of occurrences by Finnish writers (/n=52)	No of occurrences by Swedish writers (/n=54)
Comment	5	6
Think (= give opinion)	2	2
Confirm	-	2
Reply	1	2
Check	1	-
Discuss	2	1
Give opinion	2	-
Inform	1	-
Total	14	13

As can be seen from Table 36, Finnish and Swedish writers made practically the same number of requests for comments and opinions. In comparison to Table 35, all occurrences of verbs *comment, think, discuss*, and *give opinion* specifically requested comments or opinions and were thus included in Table 36, but of the occurrences of *confirm, reply, check*, and *inform* only those specifically doing it were included. Consequently, for instance, when the verb *confirm* was used in connection with meeting times or flight schedules, it was not included in Table 36, but when it followed another request for opinions, as in examples (34) and (35), it was regarded as a reinforcement of the preceding request for a comment or opinion.

- (34) Do you think this is OK? Please confirm as soon as possible (S85)
 (35) ... should you have another approach in this issue, pls let me know asap. Pls confirm (S100)

The fact that 60% of the requests called for communication-related activities suggests that the interaction among the employees in the company with texts and each other was frequent, as was discussed in 5.2 and 5.3. These activities varied from concretely sending documents, replying to questions, providing information, or contacting and telephoning the other party (see Table 35) to activities calling for more cooperation in giving comments,

discussing, and giving opinions (see Table 36). On the basis of the messages and the contextual information available, it seems that this type of interaction did not follow any corporate hierarchical structures in the sense that it was the superiors who asked their subordinates to do something. Rather, interaction among the staff members took place between different organizational levels in both directions, from top down and vice versa. This phenomenon was also reflected in an informant's (Erja) comments in the interview; she felt that the atmosphere at work was open and it was easy to approach all Stora Enso staff members irrespective of their hierarchical status in the organization. These findings also seem to support Nikko's (in press) findings from oral interactions in the company of how meaning is co-constructed in interaction among corporate employees.

10.3 DIRECT AND INDIRECT REQUESTS

The Requesting moves in the corpus were classified as direct or indirect by drawing on Brown & Levinson's (1987) classification into bald-on-record versus other politeness strategies (see 3.2), and complemented by other researchers' insights (e.g. Labov & Fanshel 1977, Leech 1983, Blum-Kulka et al. 1989, Rogers & Lee-Wong 2003). The imperative and interrogative forms were identified as direct, and all the other realizations, including modal initials, as indirect requests. As the division into direct and indirect is somewhat contentious (on different interpretations on this, see Trosborg 1995: 207–208), the above classification with lexicogrammatical features as a decisive criterion was considered sufficient for the purposes of this study. Within the categories, however, some requests were more direct or indirect than others, as examples (36)–(39) suggest.

- (36) Inform Ulla about your participating. (S17)
- (37) Pls give your opinion about the codes for us in any case by Wed 24.2. so that we can prepare for the meeting. (F47)
- (38) Have you had a chance to make a budget/country and customer based on 40000 tonnes WSK? (S78)
- (39) What was the outcome of your discussion with MW? (S20)

Example (36) represents a conventional bald-on-record strategy but (37) contains a politeness marker, *please*, which means that the FTA has been mitigated. Example (38) is not as direct as (39) since it opens by inquiring about the requestee's chance of making a budget rather than asking for a specific answer to the question, as is the case with example (39). Both of them were classified as representing direct strategies because of the linguistic form of the interrogative. In the following, this division into direct and indirect requests is discussed together with some pragmatic considerations. Below, a few examples illustrate the division.

- (40) Please check it. (F4)
- (41) Do you have any comments on Philipp's mail? (S11)
- (42) Could I pls have cc of mail discussed. (S89)
- (43) Please comment if any doubts or further comments. (S38)
- (44) We now need to clear this stock as soon as ever possible and would like to discuss with you what actions that can be taken. (S76)
- (45) Hope you can accept this proposal and it could be nice if you drop me a short line confirming your possibility to join the possible meeting. (S9)

In the present study, examples (40)–(41) represent direct requests; they were realized in the imperative and interrogative, and (42)–(45) represent indirect requests, realized in a number of forms, such as modal initial in (42), imperative together with a conditional if-clause in (43), representing Move VIif, expression of desire in (44), and request preparatory statement, i.e. *it could be nice if*, in (45). Although example (43) has an imperative form, it was classified as indirect since its realization as a request is dependent on the condition in the if-clause being met.

In addition to the imperatives and interrogatives, some other realizations of the requests could have been included in the direct category such as the following:

- (46) JP, as usual you take care of these proposals and send them to S for eventual corrections (S26)
- (47) orders in LATEST BY 15.2. FOR FEBRUARY PRODUCTION (F79)

The classification of examples (46)–(47) depended on their interpretation. For example, although, in its context, example (46) seemed to assume the function of a request, it could also represent Move V (Providing information), reminding one of the participants, JP, of the given procedure. Alternatively, if taken as a Requesting move, the phrase *as usual* could be interpreted as a mitigating device reflecting the routine nature of business at hand. Similarly, what was left out from the elliptical alternative in (47) could be the imperative, e.g. *Send*, or it could be a statement expressing desire, as in *I would like to have the orders in LATEST BY 15.2.*, which would have made it an indirect request. As examples (46)–(47) were the only occurrences of requests whose form suggested alternative interpretations, they were placed into the Indirect category, which contained declaratives. And, since their number was small, they did not have any impact on the general trend found in the study.

Below, Table 37 shows the distribution of direct and indirect requests among Finnish and Swedish writers.

TABLE 37. Distribution of direct and indirect requests among Finnish and Swedish writers.

Mother tongue of writer	Direct % (No)	Indirect % (No)	Total % (No)
Finnish	63% (33)	37% (19)	100% (52)
Swedish	46% (25)	54% (29)	100% (54)

Finnish writers favored direct requests, whereas Swedish writers favored more indirect alternatives. These findings are in agreement with those of Sipilä (1997), in which 60% of Finnish

speakers' requests in English internal messages were made using the imperative and the interrogative.¹²⁶ Interestingly, the informant (Erja) who was interviewed felt that Swedes were more indirect and polite in their requests than Finns, but she was not able to expand on her opinion. This opinion seemed to be contradicted by another comment from her; she doubted that she could distinguish between a Finnish and Swedish writer's English message (see 5.5.1). However, when she commented on her inability to distinguish the messages, her focus was on their linguistic (in)correctness and not on the requests and their (in)directness.

As was discussed above in 8.3, downgraders were hardly used to play down the impact of the requests in the corpus. The seven grounders giving reasons for requests distributed among direct and indirect requests, which was not what was expected. Namely, if a request needs a grounder, it suggests that it is not a routine request. If it were not a routine request, the writer would expend more effort in communicating his/her desire to save the recipient's face (see Brown & Levinson 1987: 93–94) and would be inclined to use more indirectness. In the corpus, however, grounders also accompanied direct requests in the interrogative form as example (48) shows.

(48) Have you received answers from the various countries yet so that we can have an overview? (S80)

Example (48) was the only sentence in the message in addition to the salutation and closing, and it was related to an earlier message where the recipient had asked a number of people in various countries for information about their customers. The writer of example (48) was making the inquiry since he seemed to assume that the recipient had received all the data and might be ready to give a summary.

126 It must be remembered, though, that Sipilä's (1997) definition of request also included requests for a change in cognitive state of mind.

Most grounders still co-occurred with indirect requests. Example (49) shows one such case and the message in which it occurred (Requesting moves underlined).

(49) Dear Olle and Arvid,
Ville Vallaton and me have planned to visit our competitor XYZ during feb/march, time still open. The main interest is their new ABC concept and results to get more knowledge for future plans. Thats why I ask, if Sven Räsänen could come with us as an expert. Of course we do also other benchmarking and technical discussions.
Arvid, do you have some special interests to take under discussions?
Kind Regards

Eero (F43)

The indirect request in example (49) is preceded by an explanation about why Sven should join the group visiting a competitor but it is also followed by another reason explaining how Sven might be useful in other respects during the visit.

Since downgraders were not frequently used, it can be concluded that most requests in the corpus represented what could be termed as routine requests: because of his/her professional role, the requester was entitled to make the request and the requestee had a professional duty to comply with it. In these situations, Finns were more direct than Swedes.

Below, the direct and indirect requests are discussed separately.

10.3.1 DIRECT REQUESTS

Over 50% of all the requests were classified as direct since they were realized using the imperative or interrogative forms. Table 38 below illustrates the divisions between the forms and between the Finnish and Swedish writers.

TABLE 38. Distribution of direct requests (in the imperative and interrogative) of all requests by Finnish and Swedish writers.

Mother tongue of writer	Imperative	Interrogative	Direct requests/ All requests (106)
Finnish	48% (25)	15% (8)	63% (33/52)
Swedish	22% (12)	24% (13)	46% (25/54)

The Finnish writers used more direct requests than the Swedish writers in the present corpus. In addition, the Finnish writers used more imperatives, and the Swedes preferred interrogatives. As the division between direct and indirect requests was controversial (see Trosborg 1995: 207–208), it may be argued that even if the requests in the interrogative were classified as indirect and only those in the imperative as direct, the Finnish writers would still exhibit more directness in their requests than their Swedish colleagues. Indeed, the difference would be somewhat more conspicuous since almost half of the Finnish writers' requests and only less than one fourth of the Swedish writers' requests would then be direct. Below, imperatives and interrogatives are discussed separately.

Imperatives. – Imperatives represent the most direct form of imposition according to Leech (1983: 119). They stand as a distinct example of issuing an FTA 'bald-on-record' (Brown & Levinson 1987: 95), and the reason for doing so is that efficiency is more important than face redress, politeness. As discussed above in 10.1, in task-oriented situations, face redress may be considered unnecessary (Brown & Levinson 1987: 94–97). The issuer of the request thus simply ignores the FTA or considers it irrelevant. However, it is vital that both participants recognize the urgency or task-oriented nature of the situation; if they do not, the usage may be identified as abrupt or impolite.

In the corpus, imperatives were used by subordinates in the messages to their superiors, as example (50) shows, and by superiors to their subordinates, as example (51) shows, and between two colleagues (see example 52).

- (50) Here is the draft. Please check it. (F4)
 (51) Pls send out with copy to me and Monica. Thanks (S10)
 (52) Please confirm and have a nice weekend. (S29)

In example (50) a Finnish team member asks his team leader Henrik to check a draft of a memo. In example (51) Henrik asks the Finnish team member to send a copy of the revised memo back. In example (52) Henrik's secretary asks the recipient, another secretary, to confirm his flight schedule.

Table 39 below shows how the politeness markers *please* and *kindly* were used with the imperatives in the corpus. In addition, the occurrences of the 1st person plural *let's* are shown.

TABLE 39. Use of imperatives alone and with *please*, *kindly*, and *let's* by Finnish and Swedish writers.

Mother tongue of writer	Imperative alone	With <i>please</i>	With <i>kindly</i>	With <i>let's</i>	Total No of imperatives
Finnish	24% (6)	52% (13)	12% (3)	12% (3)	100% (25)
Swedish	50% (6)	42% (5)	-	8% (1)	100% (12)

Both Finnish and Swedish writers used the imperative frequently with a politeness marker, either *please* or *kindly*, which plays down the impact of the request (see House & Kasper 1980: 166). Finns used the politeness markers somewhat more.¹²⁷ The use by Finnish writers of *kindly* can be accounted for by transference from the Finnish business language, in which the equivalent word *ys-tävällisesti* is in frequent use. *Kindly* was not used once by the Swedish writers in the rest of the corpus either.

The number of the occurrences of *please/kindly* in requests by Finnish writers could be regarded somewhat higher than indicated in Table 39. Example (53) illustrates the phenomenon (imperatives underlined).

¹²⁷ Since the corpus was small, a small number of requests could change the percentages. That is why it must be pointed out that the Swedish writers used the imperative without *please* in two requests whose imposition was very light, as in *See details in enclosed file* (S88).

- (53) ... so please be in contact with lars and include pekka and anders in the distribution of you messages ... (F63)

The first imperative appears in column 'With please' in Table 39, but the second appears in column 'Imperative alone' although it seems to be governed by the politeness marker in front of the first imperative. Repeating *please* would have unnecessarily emphasized the other request (see also example 27 in 10.2).

Table 39 also shows that the imperative form including both the writer and the recipient, i.e. *let's*, was used a few times. As pointed out by Brown & Levinson (1987) the usage reflects positive politeness; it is an indication of cooperative attitude. One Finnish writer used it twice as a downgrader, as examples (54)-(55) show:

- (54) I know it's not always easy but lets try our best with the following. please indicate wtl 140 gsm sales plan per customer for ... what are the main reel widths used. ... is the business regular monthly or ... need the reply by 19.1. from all (F79)
- (55) so please be in contact with lars and include pekka and anders in the distribution of you messages concerning this matter. lets do the best we can. (F63)

In both (54) and (55) the writer involves himself in the action by using *let's*, either before or after the other imperative forms that inherently focus on the recipient only. In (54) the writer softens the, evidently difficult, issue by starting with the utterance *I know it's not always easy*, then proceeds with *let's* and only subsequently uses the 2nd person imperatives. The issue handled in (55) was complicated and also involved other requests than the ones immediately preceding *let's*. The strategy employed in both cases produced a rather successful combination of requests, in which the writer, by actively involving himself, seemed to share the burden with the recipient.

Although it was sometimes difficult to establish the weightiness of the burden on the recipient, in most cases the imposition did not seem heavy. As was discussed in 10.2, many of the impositions were related to exchanging information, which

involved sending documents, calling or contacting people, checking or confirming documents and business issues, and commenting on various issues. These actions represented inherently light burdens on the recipient since they did not seem to require much effort, time, or physical or mental strain. For this reason, they could be placed at the lower end of the continuum on Leech's (1983) Cost-Benefit scale.

In two similar cases, the imposition was seemingly considered so light in its context that the requests appeared in the imperative form without politeness markers. Examples (56)-(57) illustrate the usage; the messages are given in full (the Requesting moves underlined).

(56) Welcome to XYZ, January 30 for R&D rehearsal, see file for additional information.
Inform Ulla about your participating.
Kalle (S17)

(57) Dear Speakers,
A small Reminder, I would like material for your presentation electronically sent to: lena.olsson@storaenso.com no later than March 3. Please also inform if you will use LCD projector or OH projector. See details in enclosed file.
Kalle (S88)

The requests in the examples are multifunctional since they also provide the recipient with some extra information, which can be found in the enclosure (see 10.1 for the definition of the request). At first sight, the burden in example (58) also seems light.

(58) Please look at the box Rules for full 100% yield, too (F15)

However, on the basis of the contextual information, the verb *look* was used in the meaning of 'study', and thus the request involved study of certain examples to calculate the 100% yield figures. It was evident that the imposition on the recipient was heavier than in examples (56)-(57).

The burden of the requests in examples (59)-(60) is more difficult to establish in their context without information from the requester and the requestee, which was not available (imperatives underlined).

- (59) Please modify that link or replace it by direct manual input and you can build your own version for actual 2001 figures. (F14)
- (60) Could you list your customers and inform me that which suppliers are delivering for them and how much (fresh/aseptic)? Give also your estimates that how much different producers were producing KRC last year? Or you can estimate and update the whole attached 1999 table according to your best estimates. (F105)

Example (59) is concerned with the calculation rules for bonus targets in the recipient's mill. The writer first clarifies the method with the help of two test examples and then expresses the request given in (59). What the imposition involves is not transparent for an outsider. Example (60) presents the requests from a message dealing with the updating of the table about KRC producers and customers. The first request has been textualized as a modal initial, the second one as an imperative, and the the third one offers an alternative solution to the procedure. The imperative *give* could also be interpreted as an infinitive with the modal initial *could* missing. In both examples of (59) and (60) optionality (Leech 1983) increases the politeness of the requests although the exact nature of the impositions remains unclear.

According to Yli-Jokipii (1994: 230), an interesting discourse characteristic, reader-perspective, emerges as a by-product of the use of the imperative form. The form ties the utterance almost automatically to the recipient, as he/she is the one performing, or supposed to perform, the action, as in *Please (you) confirm*. The request thus conveys reader-perspective, which again is connected to involvement typical of oral discourse (Chafe 1982; see also 7.1).

A message chain in the corpus illustrated the change in directness and also in the participant-perspective when an imposition, checking a list of codes, remained the same but the

relationship of the participants changed (see also example 23 in 5.4). Example (61) is part of a message which comes from outside the P&P division to some employees of the division. Following a grounder, the textualizations of the requests read as follows (imperatives underlined):

- (61) We would like you to a) Check the list from your business unit's point of view . . .
- b) Inform us about how your divisions want to use the codes. . . Kindly inform us about your participants in due course. Pls give your opinion about the codes. . . by Wed 24.1. If you have any questions, pls call me or xx. (F47)

The same imposition, but without a grounder, is then explained to the staff in one unit within the division by a division employee by using the following textualizations:

- (62) Please check the list from your business unit's point of view and comment if some changes should be done. Please comment also if your business unit wants the codes to be mandatory. . . Or do you think that the business unit won't use these codes. . . Please comment by 24th of January. (F48)

Even though direct requests are used in both messages, the message coming from within the P&P division, example (62), opens and closes with them and does not use a grounder, whereas in example (61) indirect requests open and close the message. The examples show that when the corporate or social distance is greater, as in (61), indirect requests occupy the emphatic positions at the beginning and at the end of the message, whereas when the corporate distance is smaller, as in (62), sent from within the division, direct requests occupy the emphatic positions. In addition, the change in participant perspective is illustrating: (61) opens with writer perspective, whereas in (62) the perspective is clearly that of the reader.

Interrogatives. – Interrogatives elicit verbal responses and therefore are identified as requests in this study. According to Labov and Fanshel (1977: 98), the FTA in the interrogative is great, as a response is explicitly expected. Leech (1983: 120) posits that a yes-no question has the force of a request, and in giving the recipient the freedom of saying *no*, it can be regarded as more tactful, that is indirect, than the imperative. Table 40 shows the distribution of interrogatives by Finnish and Swedish writers.

TABLE 40. Distribution of interrogatives, i.e. yes-no and wh-questions, by Finnish and Swedish writers.

Mother tongue of writer	Yes-no question	Wh-question	Total No of Interrogatives
Finnish	75% (6)	25% (2)	100% (8)
Swedish	77% (10)	23% (3)	100% (13)

As Table 40 shows, both Finnish and Swedish writers seem to prefer yes-no questions to more specific wh-questions. However, the expected answer to yes-no questions was not always simply *yes* or *no* but some elaboration was expected, which suggests that when textualizing the request into yes-no, the writer wanted to make it less costly to the recipient. Example (63) illustrates this usage.

(63) Do you have any comments to Philipp's mail? (S11)

In example (63) it is evident that the requester does not expect either *yes* or *no* as an answer. If the requestee does not have any comments, a simple *no* will likely suffice. But, in the case of an affirmative answer, the requester would also expect some comments and consequently, would not be satisfied with a simple *yes*. Indeed, an affirmative alone would look unprofessional.

A few times yes-no questions were used to prepare for the request proper and consequently, play down the impact of the interrogative (see House & Kasper 1981: 166). The following two examples illustrate this usage.

- (64) Do you think this is OK? (S85)
(65) Is it okay if they take a look at your reports?(F31)

Example (64) avoids making the question *Is this OK?* by incorporating the preparatory phrase *Do you think* at the beginning of the question, and example (65) that of *Can they take a look* by incorporating *Is it okay if*. Both of the phrases can be classified as request preparatory (see Blum-Kulka et al. 1989) whose function is to soften the request itself. In spite of this preparatory ‘indirectness’, both requests were identified as direct because of their interrogative form although in their context their imposition force was very different. Example (64) appeared after information about Henrik’s flight schedule and suggestions about meeting and dinner times with the hosts. Thus, it seemed that the imposition as such was not particularly heavy, whereas that in example (65) was. Example (65) was the final sentence in a message in which the writer thanked for the reports he had received and clarified some issues related to them and then finally asked if a customer (referred to as *they* in the example) could have a look at them. In the subsequent message exchange it became clear that the recipient was annoyed about the request since in his opinion the reports contained confidential information and were not meant for outsiders. It seemed that this should also have been clear to the requester; anyway, the request would have needed much more indirectness to be even considered.

Three of the five wh-questions (see Table 40) looked for specific, one-word answers, as in example (66) and two called for more elaboration as example (67) suggests.

- (66) what are the main reel widths used (F79)
(67) What do you think? (F51)

Example (66) comes from a list of three requests including an imperative and a yes-no question. The requester’s aim was to find out the details concerning the nature of customer orders by clarifying the quantity, reel width, and regularity of orders for a

particular product. The interrogative in (67) comes after a lengthy description of a new procedure.

The fact that one fifth of all requests in the data were made in the interrogative form seems to support Nickerson's (2000: 183) observation about the importance of the participants' proximity to each other within the social system of a shared organization. Nickerson (2000: 183; see also Sipilä 1997: 70) suggests that "it seems plausible that a decrease in the corporate distance between participants and an increase in their shared context, will lead to the incorporation of more of those features, such as direct questions, that would otherwise be associated with spoken communication". In addition, the fact that Swedish speakers made more questions can be explored in the light of the findings of Charles & Louhiala-Salminen (in press) from internal meetings in the same company. They argue that the strategies of Swedish speakers to construct their professional expertise involve making questions, requesting clarifications, repeating previous speakers' utterances, etc. These strategies entail that their expertise is enacted in interaction and communication, in which the experts present the issue to be considered by the rest of the group. Finnish speakers, in contrast, bring their expertise to bear on issues at hand through monologues focusing on hard facts and they tend to present well-thought arguments to be decided upon by the group. They do not make as many questions as the Swedish speakers do.

10.3.2 INDIRECT REQUESTS

Indirect requests accounted for 45% (n=48) of the 106 requests in the corpus; 37% (n=19) of the Finnish writers' requests and 54% (n=29) of the Swedish writers' requests were indirect. Structurally they represented modal initials and declaratives and were textualized in different forms. On the whole the textualizations bore resemblance to the requests traditionally used in buyer-seller transactions in business discourse (see e.g. Yli-Jokipii 1994). Table 41 concerning the textualizations of indirect requests mainly

draws on Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), but some categories have been amalgamated as the number of instances was small (see e.g. the category Other); the category of Conditional request has been added.

TABLE 41. Textualizations of indirect requests by Finnish and Swedish writers.

Textualizations	By Finnish writers	By Swedish writers	In total
Conditional request: If . . . , please contact . . .	9	8	17
Want/desire: I would appreciate . . . We would like . . . Look forward to . . . We want . . .	5 (1) (3) (1) -	10 (2) (3) (3) (2)	15
Modal initial: Could you please . . .	1	5	6
Request preparatory: it could be nice . . .	-	2	2
Ellipsis	2	-	2
Obligation/need: [I] need the reply . . .	1	-	1
Hint	-	1	1
Other: JP, as usual you take care of . . . I ask if M could . . ./ I trust you to do . . .	1 - (1) -	3 (2) - (1)	4
Total	19	29	48

As can be seen from Table 41, the first two categories, i.e. the requests made under certain conditions and those that represent the writer's want or desire, numbered 32 in total; this means that they accounted for three fourths of all indirect requests. The modal initials ranked third. The conditional requests were distributed evenly between the Finnish and Swedish writers but the Swedish writers favored want/desire statements and modal initials.

The conditional requests were thus named because the request realized in the imperative form was meant to be complied with under certain specified conditions only, as the following two examples show:

- (68) If you have any questions, pls call me or Maija Svensson. (S47)
(69) Please send your comments latest Friday, 19.1. to me if you want something to be changed (F27)

Most of the conditional requests seemed to represent somewhat formulaic usage, a pre-closing formula, as they typically occurred at the end of the messages. In the present study, most of them were multifunctional and had been classified as Pre-closing moves. The pragmatic force of such utterances was often that of an offer, as was the case with the first example above, indicating cooperative outlook (see Yli-Jokipii 1994: 150). Consequently, although their form was that of the imperative and strictly speaking they should have been classified as direct requests, they were placed into the indirect category.

Most of the want/desire statements were textualized in forms that could be identified as typical for business discourse in business communication textbooks (e.g. Bovée et al. 2003), as can be seen from examples (70)–(72).

- (70) I would appreciate your comments (S73)
(71) Look forward to receiving confirmation (S7)
(72) We would like you to check the list (F47)

The passive construction (see example 73), however, is not recommended for situations where there seems to be no reason to avoid responsibility or de-emphasize the writer (e.g. Bovée et al. 2003).

- (73) It would be appreciated if you could let Anne know the type of accommodation when known (S39)

Example (73) does not reflect a common practice in the corpus since usually people are actively present in the messages (see e.g. 7.1). However, the passive form can be interpreted as avoidance of mentioning any specific people since Anne was the one who needed the information about the accommodation. Since Anne's superiors were here negotiating the terms of her employee exchange with another unit, the request suggests that the focus is

on appreciation, not on any specific people appreciating. The request was preceded by a grounder further emphasizing its non-routine nature. The message was highly relational (in spite of the passive) with a number of first and second person pronouns, hedging, and appreciative tone, conveyed through expressions like *it is much appreciated, I would like to confirm, I hope this will be ok, thank you for your efforts*.

Unconventional business usage (see e.g. Yli-Jokipii 1994) was reflected in two requests, which were formed by using the writer-focused want statement. The requests occurred in the same message, though, which may suggest idiosyncratic usage or repetition as a tool for emphasis. Examples (74)–(75) illustrate this usage.

- (74) Please note that we want you to send: Text summary and Presentation as word and powerpoint files to Leena Mäki no later than February 2. (S18)
- (75) We also want to know what technical equipment you are to use, PC or OH-projector – please advise. (S18)

The modal initial requests, i.e. expressions starting with modal verbs, such as *could, can, may* and *might*, represent a conventional indirect way of issuing requests (see Brown & Levinson 1987: 132–145). Because of efficiency and rationality inherent in business writing it is quite obvious that the issuer of an utterance such as *Can you please book a meeting room* (S46) was asking the recipient to book a room (and was not asking about her ability to do it). Consequently, to meet the request the requestee would need to book the room and not reply *Yes, I can*, which would reflect unprofessionalism and unfamiliarity with the practices of the business discourse community. As Leech (1983: 121, see also Brown & Levinson 1987: 70) points out, modal initials are “pragmatically highly specialized towards the function of indicating ‘on the record’ politeness”. In reference to business writing, Yli-Jokipii (1994: 165) suggests that modal initials represent formulaic and routine requests; the fact that in her corpus Americans use them less than

Brits makes her suggest that American business writing is more open for innovation and individualism. With a small corpus like the present one, it would be too daring to draw such conclusions about Finnish writers, who used modal initials clearly less. On the basis of the Swedish writers' preference for modal initials and interrogatives (see Table 38), it may be suggested that when the Finns used the imperative, the Swedes preferred either a question or a request starting with *could* or *would*.

More than one request concerning the same imposition could occur in the same message, as the following message sent to a colleague shows:

- (76) Ref y-days phonecall – Could I pls have cc of mail discussed.
Will have meeting this afternoon and it could be nice to know what you said! (S89)

In example (76) the first request is realized by using a modal initial and the second by the request preparatory. Between the two a grounder is found, giving a reason for the requests. It seems that the writer wanted to soften his initial request by providing a reason for it and also by specifying it.

With the exception of most modal initials, the majority of the indirect requests employed the writer-oriented perspective, thus referring either to the writer him/herself or to what Yli-Jokipii (1994: 225) calls the corporate *we*, including the writer and other employees in the unit or division, maybe the headquarters. Finnish and Swedish writers used the writer-perspective in similar situations and with the same frequency.

An impersonal perspective was only used by Swedish writers, and the usage resulted in three requests, as shown in examples (77)–(79).

- (77) it could be nice if you drop a short line (S9)
(78) It would be appreciated if you could let Anne know (S39)
(79) it could be nice to know what you said! (S89)

In this corpus Swedish writers showed a tendency towards a higher level of indirectness than their Finnish colleagues but a larger corpus would be needed to verify the tendency; a similar finding was obtained with a different set of email messages from the same company, though (Kankaanranta 2001: 334).

One request was identified as a hint; the implication of the request was that the reply form be returned (see example 80). The rest of the message contained the agenda of a meeting taking place in London and example (80) was found at the end of the message.

(80) Enclosed please find a reply form regarding arrival / departure times, room and other requests. In case you need additional hotel overnights we will also also arrange for that. (S49)

In sum, the indirect requests employed in the corpus showed a great deal of variation but, for the most part, they resembled conventional business usage in buyer-seller transactions although the corpus also contained unconventionally textualized requests.

10.4 SUMMARY

Even though the corpus was limited to 106 Requesting moves, it still gave an indication as to how individual requests were textualized in the three genres of internal English email communication. Most of the moves occurred in the Dialogue genre, representing version VI_{vr}, requesting a verbal response, while Requesting moves for a physical act (VI_a) or those representing conditional requests (VI_{if}) remained a minority. Move Vr was essential for the exchange of information in the Dialogue genre.

Some 60% of the impositions involved actions related to communication, which suggests that business today is a communication-based activity, as is claimed by, for instance, Reinsch (2000). In addition, one fourth of all the Requesting moves called for comments or opinions and were equally distributed among the Finnish and Swedish writers. This finding clearly

implies that collaboration and interaction was extensive among the employees on all organizational levels in the company as texts and business issues were in the center of negotiation in everyday communication to this extent. The equal distribution of the impositions seems to contradict the questionnaire survey carried out in the company in which only Swedish communication was characterized as discussion-oriented and consensus-driven, whereas Finnish communication was described as direct and hierarchical (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b). Louhiala-Salminen's (2000b) findings suggest that Swedish writers' requests for comments would be more numerous than those made by Finnish writers. This was not the case, however. The discrepancy between the opinions of the Finnish and Swedish respondents in Louhiala-Salminen's (2000b) questionnaire survey and the actual language use may be accounted for by three reasons. First, it may be that the difference between the Finnish and Swedish speakers cannot be detected when individual requests are investigated; it may be that an analysis of the exchanges in the chains of messages in the Dialogue genre might produce different results. Second, it is possible that the question about Finnish and Swedish communication in the questionnaire survey invited comparison and juxtaposition derived from the stereotypical image of the characteristics of the two nationalities (see e.g. Ekwall & Karlsson 1999, Karlsson 2005), not to be found in everyday communication and interaction between colleagues in a shared corporate environment. This point is supported by the fact that the respondents in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 46) survey identified themselves most strongly with their own work unit; professional identification with the nationality was at the weak end of the scale also including division and Stora Enso group. The third reason for the discrepancy between the opinions of the respondents in the questionnaire survey and the actual language use may be that the respondents described situations of oral communication in which the other party's unusual silence or abundant discussion was likely to be noticed, rather than those of written

communication. Whatever the reason, Finnish and Swedish writers' impositions involving commenting were alike both in quality and quantity in their email communication.

About half of the textualizations of the Requesting move were direct: they were realized in the imperative and the interrogative, which may be explained by the routine nature of the requests in the shared corporate environment, on the one hand, and email technology, on the other. Since grounders were seldom used with the requests, it suggests that the requests were warranted through the job role of the requester and the requestee. In other words, situations such as these could be defined as routine and so could the requests. Leech (1983: 82) posits that there are situations in which politeness can take a back seat. Typically, such situations involve both the requester and requestee in a collaborative activity in which the exchange of information is equally important for both of them. The shared corporate environment, by definition, creates this type of situation involving collaborative activity, which was reflected in the type of impositions described in 10.2 and in the extensive use of salutations and first names discussed in 9.1. The success of the communicative exchanges would benefit everybody concerned in the pursuance of common corporate goals. Consequently, Trosborg's (1995: 188) view that "in a request, the act to be performed is *solely* in the interest of the speaker and, normally, at the cost of the hearer" (author's emphasis) does not necessarily hold in shared organizational contexts. Furthermore, recent research into internal email communications also supports the finding that use of direct, minimalist politeness forms has become a shared value among communicators (see Mulholland 1999:77, Nickerson 2000: 175, Kankaanranta 2001: 331, Alatalo 2002: 123).

The frequent use of direct requests in internal communication, as shown by the present study, may also reflect the relevance of organizational needs in internal communication, such as displaying sufficient level of personal confidence, direction, and individuality (see Rogers & Lee-Wong 2003; also 3.2.3). A focus

on these organizational needs resulted in the use of direct rather than indirect politeness strategies and had to be balanced out with the relational needs of deference, non-imposition, and solidarity. Drawing on Rogers & Lee-Wong (2003), successful internal communication depends on employees' ability to negotiate the dynamic interplay between the organizational and relational needs.

The findings indicate that, despite the fact that direct requests were more common in the corpus on an average, there were some differences between the Finnish and Swedish writers. Around 60% of Finnish and 46% of Swedish requests were direct. Almost half of the direct requests by Finns were made by using the imperative alone, whereas Swedes were more balanced between the imperative and the interrogative form. On the whole, Swedish writers favored more indirect requests with modal initials and various types of want/desire statements, including impersonal alternatives not found in the Finnish requests at all. Some mother tongue transference was detected in the Finnish use of *kindly*. To simplify, it can be argued that when the Finns wrote *Please/Kindly comment on this*, the Swedes favored *Could you please comment on this*.

Despite the small size of the corpus, the directness of the Finnish writers' requests supported Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 48) questionnaire survey in the company, in which Finnish communication was described as more direct and factual than the consensus-driven and discussion-oriented Swedish communication. This suggests that for the Finnish writers the organizational needs of confidence, direction, and individuality were in the forefront, whereas for the Swedish writers the relational needs of deference, non-imposition, and solidarity focused on in politeness literature outweighed the organizational needs (see Rogers & Lee-Wong 2003). This 'democratic' perception of Swedish culture as opposed to more hierarchical Finnish culture was also revealed by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 44) questionnaire survey. In addition, the suggestion by Charles & Louhiala-Salminen (in

press) derived from meeting data from the company about the issue orientation in Finnish communication and interpersonal orientation in Swedish communication was supported by the present findings. Overall, the Finnish adherence to the needs of the organization, getting the *job* done, rather than to those focusing on the relations of its members, getting *people* do it, can be interpreted as issue orientation, whereas the Swedish appreciation of the relational needs including solidarity and deference can be interpreted as interpersonal orientation. Interestingly, both job-orientation and people-orientation foster collaboration in the company: both Finns and Swedes requested comments in every fourth of their requests.

11 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored an area in the textual world of a multinational corporation through its electronically transmitted documents. It has focused on internal English email messages written by Finnish and Swedish employees in Stora Enso, a globally operating paper company. In its process, the case study has centered around three less researched, but increasingly central, areas of business communication today. It has been concerned with the communication that takes place within the company via email and in lingua franca English. The significance of internal communication, in lingua franca English in particular, has gained momentum because of the surge in cross-border mergers and acquisitions since the early 1990s. Communication between colleagues based in different units of globally operating corporations is possible because email and other communication technologies have advanced enormously in the past few years.

The study was motivated by the recent changes affecting communication practices in multinational companies. In particular, it was motivated by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 15, 25–26, 20) questionnaire survey carried out in Stora Enso: internal communication accounted for 80% of all communicative events, every fifth of those events took place in English, and email exchanges accounted for around one fourth of the employees' time spent on various communication media/situations.

The overall aim of the study was to investigate the nature of the genre in an internal English email corpus which consisted of 282 messages written by 103 Finnish and Swedish Stora Enso corporate employees. As the writers represented a diverse group in terms of age, sex, organizational position, and corporate function, this glimpse into the textual world of Stora Enso reflected the work and activities of the discourse community producing and using the email genres. By analyzing the discourse of the messages from the genre perspective, this study attempted to show

how that discourse works and how the work gets done through that discourse. The genre perspective also meant that the messages were not only investigated as textual products but also as embedded in their context of production and use.

The five specific aims of the study are presented below together with the summarized findings and a reference to the methods of analysis.

- (1) identify shared features of the organizational context in which the genres are produced and used, that is,
 - corporate and social contexts, and
 - content, medium, and use of lingua franca English, Finnish, and Swedish in the messages

The shared features of the organizational context were identified and analyzed with the help of insights offered by Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993), Fairclough (1992a), Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993), Suchan & Dulek (1998), and Johnson & Bartlett (1999). In addition, questionnaires to the informants, an interview with one of them, and the focus group survey complemented the analysis. The corporate and social contexts in which the email messages were produced and used were in constant interaction with each other and the messages. In particular, the messages reflected the job roles of the writers and the close relationships between them and the other discourse community members since the amount of shared knowledge and intertextuality in the messages was distinct. The content of the messages was dominated by both the Informational and Relational orientations supporting the overall purposes of internal communication: furtherance of corporate activities and maintenance of social relations. Email technology enabled efficient and personal contacts among the discourse community members. The shared code of the messages, i.e. Business English Lingua Franca (BELF), did not exhibit many of the features identified as typical of non-native oral business discourse. Swedish featured somewhat more than Finnish in the messages although their presence overall was weak.

- (2) identify the genres by focusing on their communicative purposes and the action they accomplish

The identification of the communicative purposes and the action accomplished in the messages was conducted with the help of an analysis of the corpus, Questionnaire (b) to the informants, and the focus group survey. The recognition of the three dominating purposes was a smooth exercise, which was also emphasized by the fact that 98% of the messages fell into one of the categories; the remaining 2% combined some of the purposes. On the basis of the purposes, three message types (prospective genres) were identified: Noticeboard messages informed their recipients of corporate issues, Postman messages delivered other documents for information and/or for comments, and Dialogue messages exchanged information about corporate issues. The purposes were supported by the action triggered by the messages, but not by the names used for them.

- (3) identify salient discourse features of the genres, that is
 - the features contributing to the spoken and/or written quality of the messages, and
 - the moves contributing to the communicative purposes.

The identification of the salient discourse features was conducted with the help of Bhatia's (1993) framework focusing on the three linguistic levels of unknown genres; comments from the informants, an interview with one of them, and the focus group survey complemented the inquiry. Within the framework, the first two levels of the lexico-grammatical features and textualizations were investigated with the help of the notions of involvement and constitutive intertextuality (Chafe 1992, Fairclough 1992a) and a list of features identified as incorporating spoken involved quality in the messages by previous research (e.g. Nickerson 2000). The written quality was identified by comparing the usage to traditional business letter discourse (e.g. Bovée et al. 2003).

Although all the messages contained features of involved spoken language, the distribution was different in the three genres: their presence was the highest in the Dialogue genre, whereas the Postman messages attaching other documents contained the highest distribution of phraseology of traditional business letter discourse. The Noticeboard genre ranked between the two. The use of the third level in Bhatia's (1993) linguistic analysis, i.e. move analysis, enabled the identification of nine moves, six of which were responsible for the beginning and ending of the messages (framing moves) and three for contributing to the communicative purposes of the genres (content moves). The use of framing moves contributing to the physical layout was similar in all messages, but the content moves distinguished the three genres. The content moves were typically placed conspicuously at the beginning of the messages and some of them were supported by premoves provided by the email system. Frequent referencing manifest in the moves to other communicative events, corporate employees, and previous messages, i.e. manifest intertextuality (Fairclough 1992a), also positioned the messages in their corporate context.

- (4) describe how Salutation, Closing, and Signature moves are textualized and to what purpose.

Bhatia's (1993) second level of linguistic analysis, i.e. that of textualizations, was continued by a close investigation of the textualizations of Salutation, Closing, and Signature moves; Questionnaire (a) to the informants and an interview with one of them were also used in defining the relationships between (some of) the writers and recipients. The three moves contributed to the framing of the email messages as relational and involved. In particular, the use of first names in salutations and signatures involved the recipient and automatically contributed to the spoken nature of the discourse. Although the textualizations did not manifest much variety, the frequent use of informal alternatives

with first names created a positive frame for the message and thus contributed to maintaining amicable social relations in the company.

- (5) describe how the Requesting move is textualized and to account for the prospective differences between Finnish and Swedish writers

The analysis of textualizations of the Requesting move drew on politeness research in general (e.g. Brown & Levinson 1987) and some business communication research in particular (e.g. Akar 1998). The linguistic analysis was complemented by comments from the informants and an interview with one of them. The impositions present in the Requesting moves were practically identical among Finns and Swedes: the majority of the moves invited verbal responses and consequently, represented one of the content moves in the Dialogue genre. Further, the majority of the impositions dealt with communication-related issues, and one fourth of them specifically invited comments. Thus, differences between Finns and Swedes were not found in how the impositions were textualized, but in how directly the requests were worded. Although, overall, the majority of the requests were direct, realized in either the imperative or the interrogative, the Finnish writers used them somewhat more than their Swedish colleagues. Finns favored the imperative, whereas Swedes were more balanced in their usage of different forms.

As the above summary of the findings shows, genre study complemented with a number of other methods of analysis was able to meet the five specific aims of the study as well as the overall aim of exploring the nature of the genre in Stora Enso's internal English email communication. The methodology allowed for a detailed linguistic analysis of the prospective genre exemplars, while it was simultaneously possible to account for the shared contextual features of the organizational context in which the messages were embedded by using ethnographic-like methods

of, and data provided by, questionnaires, an interview, a focus group survey, and literary sources. The analysis of discourse benefited from Bhatia's (1993) framework explicating the three levels of linguistic analysis. The analysis of structural elements in the messages, i.e. move analysis, was adopted as such, but the analysis of lexico-grammatical features and their textualizations exploited the insights from previous research into the hybrid nature of email and the guidelines offered in business communication textbooks. The question about alternative media choice presented to the informants shed additional light on the hybrid nature of the messages. The overall analysis of corporate context was performed with the help of Suchan & Dulek's (1998) Business Communication Systems Framework, and its specific features, such as the practitioners, medium, content, and language of the messages benefited from the concepts and frameworks developed by Swales (1990), Rogers & Hildebrandt (1993), and Johnson & Bartlett (1999). In addition, questionnaires to the informants, an interview with one of them, Stora Enso's webpages, and Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) communication survey in the company were invaluable.

To enhance the trustworthiness of this qualitative study, the strategy of triangulation was applied. A variety of data sources were used to illustrate the researched phenomenon from different perspectives: a primary corpus of 282 internal English email messages written by Finns and Swedes, a secondary corpus of all the other email messages in the eight informants' mailboxes, two questionnaires to the informants concerning background information and the informants' views of some messages either written or received by them, a focus group survey involving international business practitioners, an interview with one of the informants, and some literary sources, including Louhiala-Salminen's (2000b) communication survey in the company. In this way, for example, the purposes of the messages could be established in a more reliable way than if only one of these data sources had been used. In addition to data triangulation, another

genre analyst provided independent analysis about the purposes and moves of some messages. My own identification of the three genres and the nine moves were thus confirmed.

The corpus-based text analysis did not only focus on the concrete texts but also on what emerged from the texts. On the one hand, it was used to identify the communicative purposes of the messages and their salient discourse features, including the textualizations of the moves. On the other hand, the texts revealed features related to the corporate and social context, the medium, content, and language use in the messages. Without the information from the genre users themselves, provided by the questionnaires and the interview, and the background information provided by Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) survey of communication and language use in *Stora Enso*, the analysis of the messages would have been limited to a surface-level textual analysis, whereas now the combination of the methods and different types of data enabled the positioning of the genre texts in their context of use and, consequently, the interpretation of the genres as components in business professionals' daily work. Further, the focus group views of the messages shed light on what was shared knowledge among the Finnish, Swedish, and international business practitioners, i.e. the purposes of the messages, and what was not shared, i.e. the possible action triggered by the messages, alternative media choice, and some discourse features of the messages. This dichotomy shows that although the messages and the genres realized in them were authentic for the writers and recipients, they were not authentic to the focus group members who had not been participants in their production or use. The unshared features of the genres may reflect differences in, for instance, professional, organizational, or national cultures of the focus group members and the Finnish and Swedish employees of *Stora Enso*.

Although Rogers (2001), in her address as the receiver of the 1999 Researcher Award of the Association for Business Communication, criticized genre theory for ignoring the interplay of writer, genre, reader, and the influence of context, it can still be argued

that the theory has come a long way from a text-driven analysis of the form towards an analysis of action as grounded in the knowledge of its users in particular organizational contexts. In business communication research, this seems to be the path genre theory needs to follow to make sense of the way the work gets done in business organizations when language is used to accomplish it. As this study suggests, genre theory seems well suited for the investigation of the goal-oriented actions of business practitioners in their work environment because it is able to combine the broad goals of business communication with a detailed study of their linguistic realizations in the messages. However, it is essential to combine different data sources and different research methods to be able to account for genre use in its context. For example, the views from the genre users themselves are, and were, essential in the present study since much of what goes into genre production, use, and response seems to be tacit knowledge among the users, not accessible to the researcher without research methods focusing on context. In other words, if the informants had not been specifically asked about their reactions to some of the messages that they had received, the analysis would have stayed on a rather general (maybe even superficial) level because the outside researcher was deprived of the tacit knowledge between the participants. The informants' replies revealed that some reactions triggered by the messages seemed to be deeply embedded in the particular situations. Membership of the relevant discourse community, knowledge of the particular corporate context and the situations in which messages were exchanged were prerequisites for interpreting the genres in their entirety.

Finally, it can be argued that this study has shown that it is possible to apply genre theory in the investigation of email messages embedded in message chains although it has been regarded as somewhat problematic in genre theory by Bhatia et al. (2002). The three email genres identified and their combinations in what I have called *genre communities* can contribute to our

understanding of what action is accomplished and how it is done in the chains.

Nevertheless, genre as a concept tends to be abstract in all its diversity as it presupposes knowledge, either tacit or explicit, of a number of different factors influencing its use. In this situation, it is understandable that genre approaches in the three traditions of applied linguistics are selective in characterizing their focus. Drawing primarily on two of them, an attempt to account for a genre requires knowledge about its purposes, actions in particular situations, users, names, contents, and forms with medium, code, and specific discourse features; on top of this an understanding of its evolutionary potential is needed. In addition, as this study suggests, genres can also occur on different levels of abstraction: on the one hand, we can argue for the existence of one email genre as opposed to business letter or fax genres, and on the other hand, an argument for the existence of three different email genres can be defended. Thus, genre theory does not allow for neat categorizations or taxonomies, but rather establishes genres as relative constructs whose status is determined by the needs of the genre users in particular situations.

One of the challenges for genre theory in the future may be the shifting of some of its focus. As there seems to be unanimous agreement now among genre analysts that genres cannot center on the textual form alone, as the traditional approaches claimed, but should account for the context of their use, repeating this point as such does not seem to add to the theoretical discussion, although the findings of the studies applying this notion increase our knowledge of genre use in different settings. Drawing on Devitt (1996), genre theory needs to start defining itself against related concepts, such as discourse community. This discussion seems to have started, as is indicated by Swales (1993) and Bloor (1998) (see also 2.3.3). However, the discussion may also die before it has even properly started; for instance, Askehave & Swales's (2001) challenge concerning the primacy of communicative purpose as a genre criterion has remained practically unquestioned (see 2.3.1).

Also, the further the theory has moved from the identification of textual form with genre, the fuzzier the distinction between genre and context has become (see e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995 for duality of structure). As Devitt (1996: 610) argues, this blurring “often results in confusion over what genre theory is and how it differs from other approaches to understanding writing”.

Another challenge which may be ahead is related to the multidisciplinary nature of genre theory: since genre theory has learned to tolerate and make effective use of different theoretical approaches, methodologies, and foci, it may lose its integrity in the end. Although the term is used in a variety of meanings in everyday talk, it does not need to endanger its meaning potential in academic discourse. However, if the same phenomenon expands into academia, *genre* may become as multifaceted a term in academic discourse as the concept of *discourse* (for different definitions of discourse, see e.g. Luukka 2000) requiring qualifications as to its particular meaning in a particular context. If this is the future for the concept, genre is bound to lose some of its explanatory force.

This chapter is divided into four sections. First, the chapter discusses the nature of the genres in the present study in terms of the findings displayed in (1)–(5) above. Then, it presents the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research. Third, the focus is on the implications of the study for business practitioners and the teaching of English business communication. This final chapter of the study ends with some concluding remarks.

11.1 NATURE OF GENRES IN INTERNAL EMAIL COMMUNICATION IN LINGUA FRANCA ENGLISH

The nature of genres in internal English email communication depends on the level of abstraction on which the identification is performed. In the present study, both *one email genre* and *three separate email genres* could be identified. This finding reflects the

views of some genre researchers who argue that the process of investigation is more enlightening, valuable, and illuminating for the researcher than the final answer about the genre status of discourse (see Swales 1990:7; Louhiala-Salminen 1997: 331; Nickerson 2000: 22).

When all the messages in the corpus are considered as representative of *one email genre*, the argument is equivalent to those, for example, of Mulholland (1999) and Yates & Orlikowski (1992): all email messages have certain features in common. To begin with, the genre exemplars are exchanged within the discourse community consisting of Stora Enso's Finnish and Swedish employees, and their content is related to the organizational systems of the company reflecting both the Informational and Relational message orientation. In other words, the messages share the all-encompassing purposes of both the furtherance of corporate activities and maintenance of social relations in support of the objectives established in the vision of the company.

The question about the names of these messages caused some confusion among the discourse community members although most of the time the members used *info(rmation)* combined with a summary of the contents. It may well be that a label such as *email message* is in common use, but was considered too mundane as a reply to a question asking for a name for a particular message. Nevertheless, email messages play a major role in the company's internal communication since they account for one fourth of such communication in Stora Enso (see Louhiala-Salminen 2002b: 20).

The form of the genre is characterized by the same code, Business English Lingua Franca, and similar physical layout determined by the email technology. There is also another factor contributing to the similar layout: the fact that the messages are framed to look like traditional business letters or faxes with their salutations and closings. The analysis of the framing moves, i.e. Salutation, Closing, Signature, and Pre-closing, showed similar usage in all the messages. Furthermore, the practice of identifying the subject is enforced by the email template with its Subject line;

very few messages appear without it. The discourse features of the genre support previous research into email communication (see e.g. Collot & Belmore 1996; Gains 1999; Baron 2000), according to which the language of email represents a hybrid between spoken and written language. A situation in which both the corporate and social contexts are shared by the discourse community members will likely further encourage the spoken involved nature of the messages. Such corporate closeness between the participants was reflected in the frequent use of first names in salutations and signatures, and that of first and second person pronouns.

The instability of the genre was evidenced by messages in which involved spoken features co-existed with expressions of traditional business letter genre. The discourse represented a somewhat confusing mixture of spoken and written, or formal and informal, language. This was most evident in the messages written by people who must have received training in business English prior to entering the workforce, and who were used to the conventions of traditional business communication. When the new medium and the traditional conventions are integrated, the emergent texts combine business correspondence phraseology such as *kindly be informed*, *please find enclosed*, and *kindly change...accordingly* with very informal features such as *hello* with the first name of the recipient in the salutation and a semi-formal closing with *Kindest regards* and the full name signature, both of which can be found in prototypical fax messages (see example 5 in 7.3). The findings thus suggest that the email genre has assimilated characteristics from the discourse of genres effected through other communication media such as fax and hard-copy business letter.

When the email messages in the corpus are considered as representative of one genre, the investigation unavoidably remains on a fairly general level. As a concept, however, genre is suitable when comparisons are made with other genres on the same level of abstraction such as the business letter or fax genre (see e.g. Louhiala-Salminen 1999a for use of metadiscourse in letters, faxes,

and email messages). However, although the genre is labeled by using the name of the medium, each email genre used would still need a qualification of some kind, e.g. *Stora Enso* email genre, to disclose its specific characteristics (cf. 'organizational voice' in Rogers 2003). The label *email message* only reveals the medium, although it may arouse expectations about the linguistic features most likely manifested in the message. As we have seen, for example, in the *Stora Enso* discourse community the Salutation move functions almost like a default option, an unmarked alternative. However, its status is different in messages exchanged in US corporations, reflecting the close link with the memo genre, which typically does not have salutations (see e.g. Yates & Orlikowski 1994, also Kankaanranta 2005). In the same vein, the purposes of the genre would depend on the discourse community using it, as would the actions accomplished by the genre, the languages used, and the contents of the messages.

When the corpus-based text analysis combined with the views from the expert members of the discourse community was performed on a more concrete level to identify the communicative purposes, the action effected by the messages, and their discourse features, it was not difficult to identify the *three email genres* used in the company. The Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue genres are used to respond to the various situations arising in the corporate context, and they operationalize *Stora Enso's* mission and strategy into everyday activities of its employees. In other words, the genres *do* something rather than *be* something (see Devitt 1996: 606). The Noticeboard messages are used to inform the recipients of corporate issues, the Postman messages deliver either attachments or appended messages for information and/or for comment, and the Dialogue messages exchange information about corporate issues. Around 2% of the messages could not be placed into the three genres as they represented different combinations of the purposes in one message. The marginality of these messages reinforces the integrity of the three genres in the company's communicative practices. There was no doubt about the purposes

of the three genres among the users, either. As pointed out above, some further clarification to the issue was sought by asking the users to explain what they did/would have done on receipt of a particular message. This was done for two reasons. First, in this way some understanding of audience response to the genres could be gained. Consequently, this study contributed to meeting the challenge posed by Rogers (2001: 18); she argues that genre approaches still tend to ignore the value of audience response in genre analysis. Second, since Askehave & Swales (2001: 195–196) question both the privileged role of communicative purpose as the criterion for genre membership and the reliability of insiders' own opinions, it was decided to test the purpose indicated by the informants by examining whether it matched the action triggered by the message. The replies from the informants supported the classification of the genres, as did those from the focus group of international business practitioners. All the business professionals thus had a clear understanding of the purposes of the genres, which suggests that this genre knowledge can be regarded as an inherent part of their professional competence. However, since only the users of the genres knew what to do on receipt, it suggests that the Stora Enso genres contained knowledge which was not shared by non-members of the corporate discourse community.

The move analysis supported the classification into the three email genres in terms of the content moves, but as pointed out above, the use of the framing moves was similar in all three genres. Although the same three content moves could be found in different genres, the versions in which they appeared were different. The Providing information move supports the overall communicative purpose of informing the recipients of corporate issues in the Noticeboard genre and the Indicating enclosure move the purpose of delivering attachments or appended messages for information and/or for comments in the Postman genre. Neither of the moves can appear alone in any other genre. In the Dialogue genre, two content moves are responsible for the exchange of information; however, the versions in which they can be realized are limited.

In the opening messages, the Requesting move must appear in the version which requests a verbal response since it triggers the exchange. In the response messages, the Providing information move appears in either of the two versions: Providing requested information or Providing a reaction since it brings the exchange to a closure. In no other genre do these moves occur in the same way.

For a recipient, the identification of a genre is fairly easy for two reasons. First, since the email system provides three premoves such as *RE*, *FW*, and the paper clip symbol that are displayed in the Mail Index, the recipient can recognize the purpose of the message before he/she has even opened the message itself. Second, the content moves tend to be placed conspicuously at the beginning of the messages. This practice is the most salient in the Postman genre attaching documents; the message is typically opened with an Indicating enclosure move including a conventional phrase such as *please find enclosed*, which further reinforces the recognition of the genre. Furthermore, when an expert member of the discourse community only receives a textless message or one with the text *for your information*, he/she would know that a reference is made to the attachment or appended messages that are brought to his/her attention.

The alternative media indicated by the informants for delivering the messages before email technology showed differences between the three genres: the Dialogue messages would have been either delivered by telephone or fax, whereas the Noticeboard genre would have been effected via fax, telephone, or internal mail. The comments on the Postman genre reflected the delivery function of the genre; the informants only paid attention to the document enclosed, not the message enclosing it. This interaction with alternative media supports the dynamic and evolutionary potential of the genres and suggests that the email genres draw on pre-existing genres for certain features resulting in some email genres being more 'spoken' than others. This can be interpreted as intertextuality as new genres do not emerge from

nothing, but are based on or draw on existing genres. The genre perspective thus allows for two interpretations: users may be invoking other, existing genres or they may be modifying existing genres in ways that may ultimately lead to the emergence of new genres in response to new recurrent situations (see Yates & Orlikowski 1992: 319).

The informants' replies to the question about alternative media choice suggest that, for instance, the Dialogue genre co-exists with the fax genre and the (spoken) genres effected by the telephone. Further, since they can replace each other, the Dialogue genre will likely draw on some features of the fax genre. For instance, email Dialogue messages with the two message types, i.e. opening and response messages, and with the overall purpose of exchanging information can be regarded as a development or extension of the fax genre, with the two subsidiary purposes of requesting and providing information (see Akar & Louhiala-Salminen 1999). Drawing on the comments from the informants, Noticeboard messages have qualities of genres delivered through fax or internal mail in hard copy, suggesting a memo genre of some kind. The Postman genre with attachments seems to invoke the Cover letter/fax referring to the enclosed documents; in this function it also invokes the business letter genre for some (outdated) phraseology.

It would be difficult to find a predecessor for the Postman genre delivering appended messages such as Dialogue exchanges, Noticeboard messages, or other Postman messages. Never before has it been possible to append other documents like this and then print them all out in a sequence. It may be suggested that here we are witnessing the emergence of a totally new genre. Because of this new genre, we are also witnessing a combination of, or interplay between, genres which does not have a predecessor, either. Since the Postman genre can append all the other genres and forward them, it entails that various genre exemplars can exist in a chain in no predetermined order and the same exemplar may appear in different chains. In addition, the 're-use' of these

independent Dialogue, Noticeboard, and Postman genres means that they lose their original purposes and only serve as reference points in their new function. The independent genres thus become *interdependent* and their purposes become secondary to the purpose of the Postman genre, which delivers them for information and/or for comments. I call these dynamic combinations *genre communities* (see Figure 3 in 6.1.2). Although typewriter, telephone, fax machine, and voicemail revolutionalized communication practices in their own time, it has never been possible to combine the messages delivered via these media in such a way that we could return to the communication process by simply viewing the evidence on the computer screen or by printing a paper trail as evidence of the events or by deleting all the evidence by pressing one button on the keyboard. In email, the Postman genre assumes this function.

Interestingly, the alternative media choice indicated by the informants reflected the frequency of the features of involved spoken language in the genres. The Dialogue genre reflected the alternative media choice of fax and telephone, and contained the highest frequency of the features of involvement, while the Postman messages only including a phrase indicating attached documents, such as *Please find enclosed*, exhibited characteristics of outdated business letter discourse. The Noticeboard genre ranked somewhere between the Dialogue and the Postman genre (see Figure 4 in 7.3). In other words, when the messages were investigated as representative of the three genres, similarities between them emerged and their internal stability became obvious. This was also evidenced by the content moves in the three genres as they supported their communicative purposes, while simultaneously helping in the identification of the genres because of their conspicuous placement at the beginning of the messages.

Together the three genres represent one section of the *email genre repertoire* of Stora Enso. All three genres are needed by Finnish and Swedish Stora Enso employees in their internal English

communication. The three genres are organizing structures that form an important part of the established communicative practices in the company, together with oral genres of meetings for instance (see Orlikowski & Yates 1994).

Let us now move to the investigation of the textualizations of the four specific moves in the 114 messages in Henrik's mailbox, that is, the Salutation, Closing, Signature, and Requesting moves. Investigation of the salutations revealed that the usage of Finnish and Swedish writers seems to conform to other non-native speaker practices but disagree with those of native English writers in the USA (see e.g. Orlikowski & Yates 1994, Gains 1999, Nickerson 2000). There may be two explanations for this difference. First, Finnish and Swedish writers cannot evoke the memo genre in email because they are not familiar with it, whereas the US business practitioners familiar with it may do it and follow the relevant genre rules of not including a salutation. Second, by using salutations with first names in particular the writers construct an amicable relationship with the recipients. The practice is so widespread in the company that it may even feel deviant to omit the salutation. Hence, email messages are framed to be relational from the outset. A feature specific to this corpus, that is, the transference of Swedish salutations and closings into otherwise English messages, such as *Hej Seppo* and *Med vänliga hälsningar*, supports this observation. By using Swedish phrases known to all Finnish speakers, the Finnish or Swedish writer creates a feeling of togetherness and solidarity.

The Requesting move was realized somewhat differently by the Finnish and Swedish writers. Around 60% of the requests by the Finnish writers were direct, while only 46% of those by the Swedish writers were. Almost half of these direct requests by the Finns were made by using the imperative, whereas the Swedes were more balanced between the imperative and the interrogative form. The Finnish directness finds support in Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 48) questionnaire survey, in which Finnish communication was described as more direct and factual than the consensus-

driven and discussion-oriented Swedish communication. To simplify, when the Finns are inclined to write *please/kindly comment on this*, the Swedes would rather use *could you please comment on this*. These findings support Meierkord (2002: 110), who claims that speakers using lingua franca also express their cultural identity in the language. Drawing on this, it can be suggested that for the Swedish writers the relational needs of deference, non-imposition, and solidarity focused on in politeness literature still outweigh the organizational needs of confidence, direction, and individuality more prevalent in Finnish speakers' communication (see Rogers & Lee-Wong 2003). In other words, the Finnish emphasis on the needs of the organization, that is, on getting the *job* done, rather than on relations between its members, that is, on getting *people* to do it, can be interpreted as an issue orientation. In contrast, the Swedish appreciation of the relational needs, including solidarity and deference, can be interpreted as an interpersonal orientation.

However, this image is challenged by other findings of the study. First, as pointed out above, the extensive use of salutations with first names in particular suggests that the interpersonal (or relational) orientation is explicitly imported to the messages by both Finnish and Swedish writers. Another feature reinforcing this interpersonal orientation and the appreciation for discussion is the fact that both writer groups request comments and opinions in 25% of their requests. This finding does not seem to agree with the stereotypical image of the silent Finns and talkative Swedes.

How can these contrastive findings be accounted for then? Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b: 46) survey provides a possible explanation: the fact that the Stora Enso respondents identify themselves most strongly with their work unit (not with nationality or Stora Enso as a group) can explain the emphasis on the relational aspects in communication. The common corporate goals and shared work environment challenge the stereotypical images. In addition, as the directness of the requests is considered a shared value among email communicators, as suggested by Mulholland

(1999: 77), it may suggest that Finnish writers appreciate the specific value more than Swedish writers, who prefer adhering to more deferential forms in their requests. This claim also finds support in the fact that Finns spend more time on email than their Swedish colleagues, who favor meetings (see Louhiala-Salminen 2000b), and would likely be more familiar with its conventions, such as use of direct requests. However, it may also be suggested that Finns enjoy using email since it suits their direct communication style: they know how to express ideas concisely and economically (see also Munter et al. 2003 for recommended email usage). Meetings, in contrast, seem more to suit the alleged discussion-orientation of the Swedes. Finally, it may be argued that both the job-orientation of Finns and the people-orientation of Swedes can be seen to enhance collaboration: both Finns and Swedes requested comments in every fourth of their requests.

It may be concluded that in the end, the differences between the Finnish and Swedish writers are smaller than those between them and the writers from other multinational companies or other cultural backgrounds. This was reflected in the replies from the focus group of international business practitioners, which seem to suggest that the 'organizational voice' (Rogers 2003; also Rogers, personal communication 2003) of Stora Enso, or the Finnish-Swedish variety of it, has some unique features that were not shared by the nine representatives of other corporate discourse communities in other countries.

Since the contacts within the company are so frequent (80% of the communication now takes place in-house and almost one fourth of the communicative events are effected via email), the organizational voice of Finnish and Swedish Stora Enso employees can be regarded as fairly well-established in the company, especially in view of the wide variety of the message writers (n=103) in the primary corpus and also the fairly high number of the writers (n=50) in the messages collected from Henrik's mailbox. The voice emerges from the communication between the members of the organization and it is constructed in constant

interaction. Since internal communication is affected by pre-existing genres, but also by the behavior of colleagues, the voice is learned, and it evolves through collaboration. New organizational entrants must learn it to be able to operate as members of the organization. Rogers (2003) includes media choices, genre use, and rhetorical and linguistic patterns into the concept. Although the aim of the present study was not the investigation of the organizational voice of Stora Enso, some related aspects emerged during the research process. It can be suggested that the following features are related to the organizational voice of the company:

- use of the three email genres,
- distribution of the features of involvement in accordance with the genre,
- linguistic choices favoring remnants of business correspondence in wording some of the moves,
- directness of the requests,
- frequency of requests for comments, and
- relational orientation of the messages.

The organizational voice of Stora Enso, as reflected in the three email genres, may have contributed to the opinions of the focus group about the unfamiliar features of the messages presented to them. Although they recognized the purposes of the genres, the discourse and content caused some uncertainty and hesitation.

11.2 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Although the corpus of the study consisted of 282 messages written by 103 Finnish and Swedish writers, it is still a small number in comparison with the number of Stora Enso employees, which totals about 22,000 in Finland and Sweden and around 45,000

worldwide (in late 2004). The writers represented a diverse group of employees with different ages, sexes, and job roles, but it is quite evident that a larger number of writers could have expanded the diversity, and some features of the email genres might have emerged that were not discovered in the present study. In this perspective, the study can only provide a glimpse into the textual world of the company. However, three factors appear to make up for the small volume of data: first, all corporate levels of employees were represented as writers and recipients of the messages; second, the number of Finnish and Swedish writers was equal; and third, a variety of methods and frameworks was used to analyze the data.

Since the study focuses on the messages from one company and in doing so represents a case study, care should be taken when its findings are generalized. Nevertheless, it can be expected that the three genres of internal communication can also be found in other multinationals; there was no hesitation among the international business practitioners in their recognition. But since the discourse and content of the messages caused some uncertainty among the outsiders to the Stora Enso community, such matters may be influenced by the corporate, organizational, and/or national contexts and contribute to the specific organizational voice of the company. This means that the findings can provide answers to some questions about internal email communication conducted in lingua franca English and the genres in use but are still limited in their ability to account for the specific features of discourse or content.

A major limitation to the study was the inadequate background information about the informants and, even more so, about the other participants in the communicative events. In an ideal situation, background information about all the 103 writers and the recipients of their messages would have produced a truly 'thick' description of the email genres in the company. However, time- and effort-wise the collection of that information was not feasible. In contrast, more background information on the

informants and their opinions about the messages would have been possible. The study would have benefited from information such as the nature of the informants' everyday work, the relationships they had with their communication partners, and the topics presented and discussed in the messages as well as the particular situations in which the genres were used. Since the nature of this type of information depends on the variables of the situation in which the message is used, interviews rather than questionnaires would have served this purpose more effectively. As pointed out in the present study, much of this information seems to be tacit knowledge shared among the discourse community members in the company. There is no need for the participants to make it explicit in their messages and thus for a researcher the only way to reach that knowledge is by asking. If this type of information had been available, the context and content of the genres could have been probed in more detail. For example, the tasks effected in email could have been compared to the requirements of a particular job role in a more reliable manner than what was possible now. Similarly, the professional and social relationship between the participants could have been drawn upon in the analysis of the communicative situations and the discourse of the messages more effectively. In particular, the lack of this type of information became evident in the analysis of the requests and their impositions. More data about the nature of the imposition, the social and power distance between the requester and the requestee would have enabled a more comprehensive investigation of the requests in their context rather than that of individual textualizations, as was the case now.

Furthermore, the question about the alternative media choice in Appendix 3 could have been expanded. For example, the informants could have been asked to explain why they chose a particular medium to replace a particular email message. The answers could have given some indication of the differences between the media as experienced by the informants. Or, the informants could have been asked about the experienced

effectiveness of email communication as opposed to other media, which would have given an insight into the discussion of alternative media choice and the benefits and drawbacks of email in relation to the other media. Although the value of the opinions of the discourse community members themselves can be questioned, the fact that the opinions still represent the interpretation of the business at hand of either the writer or the recipient, or both, cannot be denied.

Suggestions for further research are partly linked to the limitations of the study. First, as the secondary corpus consisting of all the other email messages in the informants' mailboxes was available, it could have been exploited to identify the genres realized in the Finnish and Swedish internal messages and those in external messages. This would have also enabled an identification of typical features of internal vs. external communication. As was suggested in Chapter 1, English in today's multinational corporations assumes the same functions as the mother tongue in monolingual work environments. This view is supported by Nickerson's (2000: 45) notion of *code*, which refers to the choice of an appropriate language for the genre, e.g. English, Finnish, Swedish, etc., implying that the code is subordinate to the genre in question. This would suggest that the Noticeboard, Postman, and Dialogue genres could also be identified in the mother tongue messages; maybe even in external messages. A comparison of the English lingua franca genres with the mother tongue genres of internal communication could give insights into the prospective similarities and differences of the kind of action realized in the genres. For example, it would be interesting to investigate whether Josephson's (2000) concern about such situations in which the work is done in Swedish (or Finnish) but people are led in English is real. In addition, an investigation into the use of English in the mother tongue genres would shed light on the interplay of the languages in the corporate context. Finally, access to the messages written in different languages would enable

investigation of the multilingual genre communities and ultimately provide a more comprehensive picture of internal English email communication and of the interplay between the mother tongues of the writers and lingua franca English.

Second, as the present study has shown, the email messages were not isolated incidents but tightly intertwined occurrences in the flow of information containing a number of intertextual references to other corporate communicative events such as meetings, it would be useful to investigate both types of events. This would also be possible since an extensive meeting corpus was collected from the company and a number of analyses have also been carried out (see e.g. Kangasharju, in press; Nikko, in press; Charles & Louhiala-Salminen, in press). If the meeting corpus was combined with the email corpus, the two data sets would lend themselves well to a comparison between the use of these media. For example, what kind of tasks are handled by email and what tasks require a meeting or what kind of similarities and dissimilarities can be found in the BELF used in meetings versus in email messages?

Third, the nature of the discourse in lingua franca English in the company also warrants more research. An attempt has already been made to use the findings from Louhiala-Salminen's (2002b) questionnaire survey as a starting point for the analysis of the meeting and email data to discover cultural traits in BELF (Business English Lingua Franca) used between Finnish and Swedish speakers (see Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005). Studies of this nature would not only serve academia, but also the business practitioners themselves since their interactions with colleagues and business partners are increasingly carried on in lingua franca English in the business domain.

Finally, inspired by Maynor's (1994: 53) prediction about the changing relationship between e-writing and traditional writing, I would suggest further research into the effects of email messages on the traditional forms of writing. Since email now accounts for such a notable share of all media use in Stora Enso (and Nordea;

see Louhiala-Salminen 2002b), it can be assumed that the situation would also be similar in other multinational companies. As this study has shown, the email genres draw on already existing business genres; since email is ubiquitous in the corporate world, maybe the time has come for traditional business genres to start drawing on email genres.

11.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS PRACTITIONERS AND FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

To evaluate the implications of this study for business practitioners in Stora Enso, or in other multinational companies, is a challenging task, especially in view of the fact that the study has clearly shown that internal lingua franca English email communication in the company seems to work well. There were hardly any indications to the contrary effect in the corpus. However, as a trainer of business professionals it is important for me to look beyond the obvious effectiveness of the communication and think how this study can contribute to the professional success of business practitioners.

Maybe the most valuable contribution of a study like this is that it can bring some questions of communication into corporate discussion. In other words, it may help make tacit knowledge and assumptions about communication explicit by naming, analyzing, and discussing them. As the producers and users of the email genres become aware of how they use them to carry out their daily work and what other options are available, they would be better equipped to take advantage of their own skills and the opportunities offered by the technology. In other words, they might choose to exploit the potential for change if they considered it appropriate.

As internal communication involves a great deal of shared knowledge, it is difficult to recommend any specific changes that would benefit the business practitioners in Stora Enso, or in any

other multinational company, making use of the three genres. However, when the effectiveness of the messages is observed from the recipient's viewpoint, either within or outside the company, three recommendations could be made. First, acknowledging receipt of a Dialogue message requiring a response would mean that nobody needs to wait for the reply and in the end receive an apology for a late reply. These apologies were surprisingly common in the corpus. Second, the Subject line of the email template could be better exploited to indicate, for instance, the main purpose of the message. In this way, the two genres that were difficult to distinguish but whose purposes were clearly different, that is the Noticeboard genre only informing the recipients of corporate issues and the opening message of the Dialogue genre requiring a verbal response, could be distinguished more easily and it would be easier for the recipient to prioritize his/her messages. Finally, special attention should be paid to the messages addressed to outsiders representing different cultural backgrounds since the messages may be experienced differently than what the writer intends. As the replies from the focus group consisting of outsiders to the Stora Enso discourse community suggest that the organizational voice of the company, or its Finnish-Swedish variety, has some unfamiliar features related to the formality and informality of the messages, this may have a bearing on how the messages addressed to outsiders would be experienced. Before going further, however, it must be noted that external email communication was not examined and its differences in relation to the present corpus are not known.

However, if features apparent in the present corpus were used in messages to outsiders, for example, the overall directness of requests might be experienced in a way not intended by the writer. By the same token, the frequent use of salutations and complimentary closes combined with the incorporation of outdated phraseology might identify the writer as conventional as his/her conventional business letter discourse. And, when the direct requests appear in a message resembling a formal business letter,

the effect may be impolite or blunt. All in all, when the recipients find discrepancies in texts that are in contrast to their expectations, their perceptions of the quality of the text will suffer (see Shelby 1998: 392). If the quality of the text is regarded as inferior, this may also reflect on the writer, which runs contrary to the interests of any business enterprise.

Although teaching was not in focus, the implications of this study for teaching cannot be ignored since the present writer has been teaching English, Business English, and English Business Communication for nearly a quarter of a century to both university students and business professionals. For the instructor of something so practical and simultaneously so influential, it has been a discovery to gain a deeper understanding of what is going on in the real world and, even more so, how it bears on the theories and practices of English business communication. This research work, along with a number of business communication studies discussed, adds two new dimensions to the traditional trade school approach of *knowing how*; it contributes to the integration of the aspects of *knowing about* and *knowing why* in the professional expertise of the business communication instructor (see Reinsch 2000).

The findings of this study lend support to, for instance, Nickerson (2000) and Louhiala-Salminen (1999a, 1999c), who emphasize the value of genre approach in teaching business English and business communication. As this study has shown, by focusing on the genres it is possible to make sense of the sometimes confusing embedded message chains in email. Genre knowledge is more essential for employees' professional success than having impeccable English language skills without an understanding of how the language works in particular corporate contexts.

As the findings of this study have shown, internal English email communication is deeply embedded in the corporate and social contexts of its use. The content of the messages including corporate-bound lexis and shared knowledge may be incompre-

hensible for outsiders, but function without a hitch in their context. As the comments from the focus group not familiar with the genre repertoire/organizational voice of Stora Enso showed, some features of the messages were considered somehow deviant in spite of the fact that the communicative purposes were recognized. To capture and reflect the complexities of such interactions requires more than exercises focusing on finished textual products.

For teaching interactions of this type prevalent in today's rapidly changing, hectic corporate environment the case-study approach offers a possible solution (see e.g. Rogers 1999; see also Tammelin 2004 for network-based learning environments). With the help of a business (communication) case imitating the complexities of the real business life, many characteristics of the communication situations could be identified and discussed, such as who should be included in the audience, what medium to use, when to communicate, how to word the message, what cultural issues need to be considered, maybe even what language to use, etc. The case approach lends itself well to engaging students to perform communicative actions in a complex corporate and social environment with a multitude of variables at play. In spite of its advantages, however, it must be admitted that acquiring a working knowledge of genres and adopting the specific genre rules in a specific organization takes time because it is only through membership in the relevant discourse community that they can be learned. Consequently, it would only be in the on-the-job situations that the student, or an apprentice in the discourse community, would acquire the genre knowledge of the expert members (see e.g. Kankaanranta 2000, Nikko & Kankaanranta 2000).

When internal communication takes place in English used as the lingua franca between the writer and the recipients, it creates new challenges for instructors and their organizations. To take an example close at hand; in the leading business school in Finland, the Helsinki School of Economics, the name of one of the ten language subjects taught at the Department of Languages and

Communication was changed from *English* into *English Business Communication* in 2001. This change was the final step in a long process that extended from teaching English as a business language via teaching English as an instrument to do business, to teaching English as part of the student's future professional competence needed in interactions with both native and non-native speakers of English. Earlier the focus was on ESP, English for Specific Purposes, and at the time the concentration was on business terminology and specific skills. With the change of the name, the focus shifted towards English used as a lingua franca between non-native speakers of the language.

The change of the name from English into English Business Communication also meant that although first-year business students study business communication strategies by means of an American textbook, the text functions as a starting point rather than as an end in itself. The theories are investigated from the point of view of an efficient communicator who would be dealing with a number of other native and non-native business professionals whose variety of English is different from that of the Finnish variety. Following House's (2002: 262–263) suggestions, the aim is to train students to be flexibly competent and realize that no fixed or rigid norms exist in lingua franca communication. For example, the assessment of case assignments is based on the student's comprehension of the different variables at play and the ability of the final communicative product to meet the needs of the hypothetical business audience, consisting of either native or non-native speakers of English. Although the assigned textbook is written by an American, the students are encouraged to keep their own personal communication styles and not to try to imitate anything else. The more the students are aware of their own styles the more they are able to analyze others' styles as well, and their sensitivity to different alternatives would increase. In addition to this awareness raising, however, the students should still be trained in general principles of pragmatic fluency that would help them to express what they intend to say effectively

and coherently. In spite of the danger involved in simplifying matters, the findings of this study could be captured in three pragmatic recommendations for students using email for professional purposes in internal English lingua franca communication: (1) make the main point early, (2) make it explicitly, (3) make the recipient feel good.

Traditionally, business genres have been modified slowly, which was reflected in the 'commercial correspondence' textbooks and syllabuses of English business correspondence courses. There is not much difference between the model letters found in books published in the 1910s and the 1980s (see e.g. Afzelius 1914, Ashley 1984). Attention was paid to the conventional layout of the letter with matching salutations and closings, mastering of business phraseology, politeness formula, and the correct use of the English language. Now, because of the technological advances, genres are in a constant move; new genres are born, old ones die, and some are modified to fit the new circumstances. Nobody knows yet what will happen when mobile email or in-boxes integrating streams of spoken and written data are in everyday use. Flexibility is the key; this suggests that the only criterion to be used in the assessment of the quality of English lingua franca messages is their ability to perform their task. For example, this study has shown that business phrases imported from business letter genre and characterized as outdated in business communication textbooks are in every-day use and meet the needs of the particular situations well. Thus the ideal world presented in the business communication textbooks, or on business communication courses, does not necessarily conform to the real world of a business professional.

In sum, the contribution of a study like this to business practitioners on the one hand, and to business students on the other, is related to the seemingly unavoidable dichotomy between the real world and the ideal world. The business practitioner may end up writing his/her messages out of habit, not necessarily questioning the practices in the busy work environment, whereas

the student may adopt too idealistic a picture of effective communication with its all-encompassing principles applicable in all situations. Viewing the real-life practices through an appropriate theoretical lens can simultaneously contribute to a deeper understanding of business communication among the practitioners and students alike. It can, on the one hand, ideally enrich the practitioners' understanding of the different aspects of communication and, on the other, provide the student with understanding of the complexities of the real world as opposed to the guidelines offered in literature.

11.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The notion of genre has been the compass during my journey through 282 English email messages; it also provided the lens for examining life at Stora Enso and making sense of what was going on there. Without genre, this journey would have been different; another compass would have led me elsewhere, to other places of interest, and resulted in findings not necessarily revealed by the present study.

Genre has not only served as the compass and lens during the journey, but it has also guided me in writing this 'travel report', which looks very different from those I encountered during the explorations of the email messages written by business professionals in Stora Enso. This academic travel report has been the venue for my journey and for the construction of its meaning. Before the journey, it was a blank spot on the map; now at the end of the journey, it is a place I know only too well. As a genre it is unusual in the sense that it is typically produced only once by the same person. It does not surprise me, however, since it is a place best left behind for new adventures.

SUMMARY IN FINNISH

“Hej Seppo, could you pls comment on this!” - monikansallisen yrityksen sisäistä sähköpostiviestintää englanniksi suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten kesken

Käsittelen tutkimuksessani monikansallisen yrityksen sisäistä englanninkielistä sähköpostiviestintää suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten kesken. Tutkimuksen taustalla ovat liike-elämän muutokset: ensinnäkin viestintä on muuttunut sähköpostin ansiosta ja toiseksi englantia pidetään neutraalina vaihtoehtona yhteiseksi kieleksi - lingua francaksi - jolla hoidetaan monikansallisten yritysten sisäistä viestintää.

Tarkoitukseni on selvittää, millaisia ovat sähköpostin tekstilajit, genret, yrityksen sisäisessä viestinnässä, kun kielenä käytetään non-natiivien englantia. Toisin sanoen, mitä viesteillä tehdään, millaista on niiden diskurssi ja millainen on se ympäristö, jossa niitä käytetään? Sen lisäksi tarkoituksena on selvittää, heijastuuko suomalaisten väitetty suoruus ja ruotsalaisten keskustelevuus viesteissä.

Tutkimuksen pohjana on 282 yrityksen sisäistä englanninkielistä sähköpostiviestiä, jotka on kerätty monikansallisesta yrityksestä ja joiden 103 kirjoittajaa (ja suurin osa vastaanottajista) ovat suomalaisia ja ruotsalaisia. He edustavat kaikkia organisaatiotasoja eli johtajia, päälliköitä, asiantuntijoita, ja sihteereitä. Viestit koottiin kahdeksan henkilön sähköpostilaatikosta noin viikon ajalta.

Menetelminäni käytän genreteorian mukaista tekstin analyysia sekä viestien kontekstia kartoittavia kyselyitä kahdeksalle sähköpostilaatikon omistajalle, haastattelua yhden kirjoittajan kanssa, kyselyä viesteistä yhdeksälle non-natiiville liike-elämän ammattilaiselle sekä kirjallista aineistoa. Erityisesti yrityksessä tehty viestintäkyselytutkimus (Louhiala-Salminen 2002b) antoi arvokasta taustatietoa.

Monipuolisen viitekehyksen tutkimukselle tarjoaa genre-teoria, jonka avulla tekstejä voi tarkastella osana laajempaa kokonaisuutta. Viestien ja kontekstin analyysissä käytetään erilaisia malleja. Keskeisiä työn kannalta ovat esimerkiksi Suchanin & Dulekin (1998) ja Rogersin & Hildebrandtin (1993) mallit, jotka on kehitetty erityisesti liikeviestinnän tutkimuksen tarpeisiin. Tekstejä ei katsota ainoastaan tuotteina, vaan ne nähdään toimintana ja osana sitä sosiaalista ympäristöä, jossa ne tuotetaan ja tulkitaan.

Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että viestit voidaan jakaa kolmeen tekstilajiin, joilla hoidetaan yrityksen asioita. Kutsun näitä kolmea tyyppiä nimillä, jotka kuvaavat niiden tavoitteita. Ensinnäkin yrityksen asioista informoivat viestit edustavat *ilmoitustaulugenreä*. Toiseksi viestit, joilla toimitetaan liitetiedostoja tai vanhoja viestejä edelleen tiedoksi tai toimenpiteitä varten, edustavat *postinkantajagenreä*. Ja kolmanneksi *dialogigenreä* edustavat viestit, joiden avulla vaihdetaan tietoja yrityksen toimintaan liittyvistä asioista ja joissa esimerkiksi kysytään ja vastataan tai pyydetään ja reagoidaan pyyntöön.

Odotusten mukaisesti kolmesta genrestä löytyy yhteisiä piirteitä. Ne ovat esimerkiksi sekä informatiivisia että henkilösuhteita ylläpitäviä, mikä ilmenee mm. runsaana tervehdysten ja etunimien käyttönä. Kirjoittajien äidinkielisiä ilmauksia löytyy viesteistä vähän; ruotsalaisia tervehdyksiä käyttävät sekä suomalaiset että ruotsalaiset, ja niiden funktio tuntuu olevan yhteisyyden korostaminen muuten englanninkielisessä viestissä. Ilmeisesti kirjoittajien suhteellisen hyvän kielitaidon takia viestien lingua franca englannista ei löydy samanlaisia piirteitä kuin suullista vuorovaikutusta kartoittavissa tutkimuksissa.

Toisaalta viesteillä on myös ominaispiirteitä, jotka heijastelevat niiden erilaisia tavoitteita. Kun viestin tavoitteena on yhdensuuntainen toiminta eli informoiminen tai dokumenttien välittäminen, kuten ilmoitustaulu- ja postinkantajagenressä, viesti puetaan usein sanoiksi "kirjakielen" mallin mukaan. Esimerkiksi liikekirjeenvaihdon perinteisiä fraaseja, joita nykyaikaiset viestinnän oppaat pitävät vanhentuneina, löytyy erityisesti postin-

kantajagenrestä. Kun toiminta taas on kahdensuuntaista, kuten dialogigenressä, teksti tuntuu usein lähenevän puhuttua ilmaisu. Tämä hybridimäisyys sai tukea myös viestien kirjoittajilta: ennen sähköpostia ilmoitustaulu- ja postinkantajaviestit olisi pääsääntöisesti faksattu, ja dialogigenren tilanteet olisi hoidettu puhelimitse.

Mahdollisten erojen kartoittamiseksi suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten kirjoittamien viestien välillä keskityin siihen, kuinka suorasti tai epäsuorasti pyynnöt sähköpostiviesteissä esitetään ja mitä niissä pyydetään eli millaisia ovat impositiot. Suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten kirjoittajien välillä on eroa suorien strategioiden määrässä: suomalaiset käyttivät enemmän imperatiivia ja ruotsalaiset interrogatiivia sekä epäsuoraksi pyynnöksi luokiteltua modaali-muotoa *Could you pls comment on this!* Impositioiden analyysi paljasti, että niin suomalaiset kuin ruotsalaisetkin pyytävät toisiltaan usein kommenttia tai mielipidettä erilaisista yrityksen hoitoon liittyvistä asioista. Tämäntyyppistä vuorovaikutusta löytyy noin neljäsosasta pyyntöjä. Väitöskirjani otsikko, *Hej Seppo, could you pls comment on this!*, kuvaa hyvin näitä tilanteita. Näyttää siis siltä, että sekä suomalaiset että ruotsalaiset keskustelevat yhteisistä asioista ja tekevät päätöksiä yhdessä. Tältä osin tutkimus ei siis vahvista raportoituja eroja suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten viestinnästä, mutta suomalaisten suoruus saa tukea tämän aineiston perusteella.

Tutkimuksen tulosten perusteella voidaan päätellä, että sähköpostiviestintä lingua franca englanniksi toimii hyvin. Sitä edesauttaa yhteinen ympäristö, jossa viestintä tapahtuu: jaettua, hiljaista tietoa on tällaisessa ympäristössä paljon. Tämä ilmeni myös yrityksen ulkopuolisten liike-elämän ammattilaisten kommentteista; kolmen tekstilajin tunnistaminen oli yksinkertaista, mutta viestien kieli ja sisältö olivat jossain määrin outoja. Vaikka opetus ei ollut tutkimukseni keskiössä, tutkimuksen merkitys englanninkielisen liikeviestinnän opetukselle on ilmeinen: tekstilajituntemus on bisnesopiskelijalle tärkeämpää kuin täydellinen kielitaito.

REFERENCES

- Afzelius, J.A. 1914. *Englantilainen kauppakirjeenvaihto kauppakouluja ja itseoppimista varten*. Porvoo: Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö.
- Akar, D. 1998. *Patterns and Variations in Contemporary Written Business Communication in Turkey: A Genre Study of Four Companies*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Michigan.
- Akar, D. & L. Louhiala-Salminen 1999. Towards a new genre: A comparative study of business faxes. In Bargiela-Chiappini F. & C. Nickerson (eds.), *Writing Business: Genres, Media and Discourses*, London and New York: Longman, 227–254.
- Alatalo, P. 1996. *Oisko mun tarttenu maksaa teräsmyyntin ale siitä kaupasta? – Puhutun kielen varianttien esiintyminen Outokumpu Polarit Oy:n sähköpostiviesteissä*. An unpublished Master's Thesis. Helsinki: Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu.
- Alatalo, P. 2002. *Repair work interaction in business e-mail messages – with special reference to interpersonal metadiscourse*. Licentiate Thesis. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Alatalo, P. forthcoming. *Directive utterance functions in intra-corporate email interaction in English*. Manuscript for a Ph.D. dissertation, University of Jyväskylä.
- Ali-Yrkkö, J. & P. Ylä-Anttila 2002. *Pääkonttorien sijainti, kansainvälistyminen ja verotus*. Keskusteluaiheita/Discussion papers No. 831. ETLA/The Research Institute of the Finnish Economy.
<http://www.etla.fi/finnish/research/publications/searchengine/pdf/dp/dp831.pdf>. Downloaded 15 April 2004.
- Alkio, J. 2005. Pikaviestit ja sähköposti haastavat tekstiviestit, *Helsingin sanomat*, 13 June 2005, B8.
- Andrews, D. 2003. Big i/Little Hyphen, *The Journal of Business Communication* 37, 7–8.
- Ashley, A. 1984. *A Handbook of Commercial Correspondence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Askehave, I. & J.M. Swales 2001. Genre Identification and Communicative Purpose: A Problem and A Possible Solution, *Applied Linguistics* 22, 195–212.
- Baker, S., I. Resch, K. Carlsisle & K.A. Schmidt 2001. The Great English Divide, *BusinessWeek*, 13 August 2001, 36–40.
- Bakhtin, M.M. 1986. *The Problem of Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Barbara, L., M.A.A. Celani, H. Collins, & M. Scott 1996. A survey of communication patterns in the Brazilian business context, *English for Specific Purposes* 15, 57–72.
- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & S. Harris 1996. Requests and status in business correspondence, *Journal of Pragmatics* 28, 635–662.

- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & C. Nickerson 1999. Business writing as social action. In Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & C. Nickerson (eds.), *Writing Business: Genres, Media and Discourses*, London and New York: Longman, 1–32.
- Baron, N.S. 1998. Letters by phone or speech by other means: the linguistics of email, *Language & Communication* 18, 133–170.
- Baron, N.S. 2000. *Alphabet to Email. How Written English Evolved and Where It's Heading*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bazerman, C. 1994. Systems of genres and the enactment of social intentions. In A. Freedman & P. Medway (eds.), *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, London: Taylor and Francis, 79–101.
- Bazerman, C. 1997. The Life of Genre, the Life in the Classroom. In W. Bishop & H. Ostrom (eds.), *Genre and Writing*, Portsmouth, NH: Boynton & Cook, 19–26.
- Beneke, J. 1991. Englisch als lingua franca oder als Medium interkultureller Kommunikation? In R. Grebing (ed.), *Grenzenloses Sprachlernen. Festschrift für Reinhold Fredudenstein*, Berlin: Cornelsen and Oxford University Press, 54–66.
- Berkenkotter, C. & T.N. Huckin 1995. *Genre Knowledge in Disciplinary Communication: Cognition/Culture/Power*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Berger, P. & T. Luckman 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Bhatia, V.K. 1993. *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings*. London: Longman.
- Bhatia, V.K. 1997a. Genre Analysis Today, *Revue Belge De Philologie Et D'Histoire. Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie En Geschiedenis* 75, 629–652.
- Bhatia, V.K. 1997b. The power and politics of genre, *World Englishes* 16, 359–371.
- Bhatia, V.K. 2000. Genres in Conflict. In A. Trosborg (ed.), *Analysing Professional Genres*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 147–162.
- Bhatia, V.K. 2002. Applied Genre Analysis: Analytical Advances and Pedagogical Procedures. In A.M. Johns (ed.), *Genre in the Classroom: Multiple Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 279–283.
- Bhatia, V.K. 2005. Interdiscursivity in Business Letters. In P. Gillaerts & M. Gotti (eds.), *Genre Variation in Business Letters*, Linguistic Insights Vol. 24, Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 33–54.
- Bhatia, V.K., C.N. Candlin, P. Gillaerts & J.M. Swales 2002. *Genre Workshop*. The 4th European Convention of the Association for Business Communication. Århus, Denmark, 23–25 May.
- Bialystok, E. 1988. Psycholinguistic Dimensions of Second Language Proficiency. In W. Rutherford & M. Sharwood Smith (eds.), *Grammar and Second Language Teaching*, New York: Newbury House, 31–50.
- Biber, D. 1988. *Variation across speech and writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bitzer, L.F. 1968. The Rhetorical Situation, *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1, 1–14.
- Björkman, I., J. Tienari & E. Vaara 2003. Trapped in the past or making use of experience? On learning in post-merger integration. In A-M. Søderberg & E. Vaara (eds.), *Merging across borders. People, cultures and politics*, Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 203–228.

- Bloor, M. 1998. English for Specific Purposes: The Preservation of the Species [Some notes on a recently evolved species and on the contribution of John Swales to its preservation and protection], *English for Specific Purposes* 17, 47–66.
- Blum-Kulka, S., J. House & G. Kasper (eds.) 1989. *Cross-cultural pragmatics: requests and apologies*. Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.
- Blyler, N.R. & C. Thralls (eds.) 1993. *Professional Communication: The Social Perspective*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Bové, C.L., J.V. Thill & B.E. Schatzman 2003. *Business Communication Today*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.
- Brouwers, W. 1998. A Linguistic Analysis of the Generic Macrostructure of the Business Letter of Request, *Proceedings of the 11th European Symposium on Language for Special Purposes: LSP; Identity and Interface; Research, Knowledge and Society*. Volume II, Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School, 537–545.
- Brown, G. & G. Yule 1983. *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, P. & S.C. Levinson 1987. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bruffee, K. 1986. Social construction, language, and the authority of knowledge: A bibliographic essay, *College English* 48, 773–790.
- Börestam, U. 2005. Culture and culture again: An Inter-Nordic merger in the banking sector. In B-L. Gunnarsson, (ed.) *Communication in the Workplace, TeFa Nr 42*, Uppsala: Uppsala University, 60–77.
- Cartwright, S. 1998. International Mergers and Acquisitions. The Issues and Challenges. In M.C. Gertsen, A-M Söderberg & J.E. Torp (eds.), *Cultural Dimensions of International Mergers and Acquisitions*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 5–15.
- Chafe, W. 1982. Integration and involvement in speaking, writing and oral literature. In D. Tannen (ed.), *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy*, Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 35–53.
- Chang, Y. & Y. Hsu 1998. Requests on E-mail: A Cross-Cultural Comparison, *RELC Journal* 29, 121–151.
- Charles, M. 1994. *Layered Negotiations in Business: Interdependencies between discourse and the business relationship*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Birmingham.
- Charles, M. 1996. Business Negotiations: Interdependence between Discourse and the Business Relationship, *English for Specific Purposes* 15, 19–36.
- Charles, M. 2002. Corporate policy and local realities in communication. The case of Nordea. In B.E. Lambertsson (ed.), *Life-long Learning in Business and Industry: Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*, Proceedings of the 13th Annual Conference of ENCoDe 5-7 July 2001 at Ostfold University Colle, Halden, Norway.
- Charles, M. & R. Marschan-Piekkari 2002. Language Training for Enhanced Horizontal Communication Training: A Challenge for MNCs, *Business Communication Quarterly* 65, 9–29.

- Charles, M. & L. Louhiala-Salminen, in press. Kenen kieltä puhutaan, missä kulttuurissa toimitaan: suomalais-ruotsalaiset yritysfiisiot. In O. Kangas & H. Kangasharju (eds.), *Sanojen valta ja vallan sanat. Tutkimusohjelma Kahden puolen Pohjanlahtea, osa 4*, Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Coe, R.M. 1994. Teaching genre as process. In A. Freedman & P. Medway (eds.), *Learning and Teaching Genre*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann/Boynton-Cook, 157-172.
- Cohen, A. 1996. Across the language gap, *Financial Times*, 23 December 1996, 7.
- Collot, M. & N. Belmore 1996. Electronic language: a new variety of English. In S. Herring (ed.), *Computer-mediated communication: linguistic, social and cross-cultural perspectives*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 13-28.
- Connor, U. 1996. *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U. 1999. "How Like You Our Fish?" Accommodation in International Business Communication. In C. Nickerson & M. Hewings (eds.), *Business English: Research into Practice*, London and New York: Longman, 113-128.
- Crystal, D. 1997. *English as a global language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. 2001. *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- De Rycker, T. 1987. Turns at writing: The organization of correspondence. In Verschueren, J. & M. Bertucella-Perpi (eds.), *The pragmatic perspective. Selected papers from the 1985 international pragmatic conference*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 613-647.
- Devitt, A.J. 1991. Intertextuality in tax accounting: Generic, referential and functional. In C. Bazerman & J. Paradis (eds.), *Textual dynamics of the professions: Historical and contemporary studies of writing in professional communities*, Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 336-357.
- Devitt, A.J. 1993. Generalizing about Genre: New Conceptions of an Old Concept, *College Composition and Communication* 44, 573-586.
- Devitt, A.J. 1996. Genre, genres, and the teaching of genre, *College Composition and Communication* 47, 605-616.
- Driskill, L.P. 1989. Understanding the writing context in organisations. In M. Kogen (ed.), *Writing in the Business Professions*, Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English/The Association for Business Communication, 125-145.
- Duranti, A. & C. Goodwin 1992. Rethinking context: an introduction. In A. Duranti & C. Goodwin (eds.), *Rethinking context. Language as an interactive phenomenon*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-42.
- Ekwall, A. & S. Karlsson 1999. *Mötet. En bok om kulturskillnader och ledarskap*. Via: Storkamp Media.
- El-Shinnawy, M. & M.L. Markus 1998. Acceptance of Communication Media in Organizations: Richness or Features?, *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication* 4, 242-253.
- Fairclough, N. 1992a. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. 1992b. Intertextuality in critical discourse analysis, *Linguistics and Education* 4, 269-293.

- Fairclough, N. 1993. Border crossings: discourse and social change in contemporary societies. In H. Coleman & H. L. Cameron (eds), *Change and Language*, Clevedon: British Association for Applied Linguistics, 3-17.
- Ferrara, K., H. Brunner & G. Whitemore 1991. Interactive written discourse as an emergent register, *Written Communication* 8, 7-34.
- Firth, A. 1996. The discursive accomplishment of normality: On 'lingua franca' English and conversation analysis, *Journal of Pragmatics* 26, 237-259.
- Flowerdew, J. 2002. Genre in the Classroom: A Linguistic Approach. In A.M. Johns (ed.), *Genre in the Classroom: Multiple Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 91-104.
- Freedman, A. & P. Medway (eds.) 1994. *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Gains, J. 1999. Electronic mail – a new style of communication or just a new medium: an investigation into the text features of e-mail, *English for Specific purposes* 19, 81-101.
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gertsen, M.C. & A. Søderberg 1998. Foreign Acquisitions in Denmark: Cultural and Communicative Dimensions. In M.C. Gertsen, A. Søderberg & J.E. Torp (eds.), *Cultural Dimensions of International Mergers and Acquisitions*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 168-196.
- Giddens, A. 1984. *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gimenez, J.C. 2000. Business e-mail communication: some emerging tendencies in register, *English for Specific Purposes* 19, 237-251.
- Gimenez, J.C. 2005. *Unpacking Business Emails: Message Embeddedness in International Business Email Communication*. In P. Gillaerts & M. Gotti (eds.), *Genre Variation in Business Letters*, Linguistic Insights Vol. 24, Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 235-255.
- Goffman, E. 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Goffman, E. 1967. *Interaction ritual: Essays on Face to Face Behavior*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday.
- Graddol, D. 1999a. What will English look like in 2050?, *IATEFL Issues* 149, 5-6.
- Graddol, D. 1999b. The decline of the native speaker, *AILA Review* 13, 57-68.
- Gumperz, J.J. 1987. Foreword. In P. Brown & S. Levinson, *Politeness. Some universals in language use*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, xiii-xiv.
- Gunnarsson, B-L. 1997. The writing process from a sociolinguistic viewpoint, *Written Communication* 14, 139-188.
- Gunnarsson, B-L. 2001. Swedish Tomorrow – A Product of the Linguistic Dominance of English? In S. Boyd & L. Huss (eds.), *Managing Multilingualism in a European Nation-state*, Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 51-69.
- Hagge, J. & C. Kostelnick 1989. Linguistic politeness in professional prose. A discourse analysis of auditors' suggestion letters, with implications for business communication pedagogy, *Written Communication* 6, 312-339.

- Halliday, M.A.K. 1978. *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & R. Hasan 1989. *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & J.R. Martin 1993. *Writing science: Literacy and discursive power*. Bristol, P.A.: Falmer Press.
- Harrington, F. 1992. *The memo as a genre: a paradigm of context and community*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Rhode Island.
- Heikkinen, V. (2004). *Tekstin kanssa. Kohti kielitieteellisen (kon)tekstintutkimuksen yleismallia*. <http://www.kotus.fi/tutkimus/tekstit/tekstintutkijoidenverkosto>. Downloaded 2 December 2004.
- Henry, A. & R.L. Roseberry 2001. A narrow-angled corpus analysis of moves and strategies of the genre: "Letter of Application", *English for Specific Purposes* 20, 153–167.
- Herring, S. (ed.) 1996. *Computer-mediated communication: linguistic, social and crosscultural perspectives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Herring, S. 2004. *Gender and Politeness in Computer-Mediated Communication: A Decade of New Evidence*. Plenary lecture at International Conference on Language, Politeness and Gender: The pragmatic roots. University of Helsinki, 2–5 September.
- Hiidenmaa, P., S. Lohtaja, S. Samaledtin & R. Tainio 2003. Vieraskynä: Eliitti puhuu englantia, rahvaalle jää suomi, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 1 September 2003, A2.
- Hirsto, H. 2002. *Puheenjohtajan ja osallistujien välinen vuorovaikutus yrityksen sisäisessä kokouksessa*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Helsinki: Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu.
- Holden, N.J. 2001. *Cross-Cultural Management: A Knowledge Management Perspective*. Financial Times Management. London: Prentice Hall.
- Huckin, T. 1995/6. Cultural aspects of genre knowledge, *AILA Review* 12, 68–77.
- Holm, J. 1988. *Pidgins and Creoles. Vol.1: Theory and Structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- House, J. 2002. Developing pragmatic competence in English as a lingua franca. In K. Knapp & C. Meierkord (eds.), *Lingua Franca Communication*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 245–268.
- House, J. & G. Kasper 1980. Politeness Markers in English and German, *Journal of Pragmatics* 4, 157–185.
- Hyland, K. 1998. Exploring corporate rhetoric: Metadiscourse in the CEO's letter, *The Journal of Business Communication* 35, 224–245.
- Hyon, S. 1996. Genre in Three Traditions: Implications for ESL, *TESOL Quarterly* 30, 693–722.
- Jameson, D.A. 2000. Telling the Investment Story: A Narrative Analysis of Shareholder Reports, *The Journal of Business Communication* 37, 7–38.
- Jenkins, J., M. Modiano & B. Seidlhofer 2001. Euro-English, *English Today* 68, 17, 13–19.
- Jenkins, S. & J. Hinds 1987. Business-letter writing: English, French and Japanese, *TESOL Quarterly* 21, 2, 327–354.

- Johns, A.M. 1997. *Text, Role, and Context. Developing Academic Literacies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johns, A.M. 2002. Introduction: Genre in the Classroom. In A.M. Johns (ed.), *Genre in the Classroom: Multiple Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 3–13.
- Johnson, C. & C. Bartlett 1999. International Business English – What should we be teaching? *BESIG Business Issues* 3, 8–10.
- Josephson, O. 2000. Arbetslivets språkval, *Språkvård* 4, 3.
- Josephson, O. 2004. Olika Språkkulturer möts när EU vidgas, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 18 April 2004, http://www.svd.se/dynamiskt/kultur/did_7310868.asp. Downloaded 26 November 2004.
- Jung, Y. 2002. *The Use of (Im)Politeness Strategies in Korean Business Correspondence*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Edinburgh.
- Kallionpää, K. 2005. Suomalaiset yritysostot ulkomailta kääntyivät reippaaseen kasvuun, *Helsingin sanomat*, 14 April 2005, B3.
- Kangasharju, H., in press. Kokous päättää ja puhuttaa. Uudistaako fuusio kokouskäytänteitä? In O. Kangas & H. Kangasharju (eds.), *Sanojen valta ja vallan sanat. Tutkimusohjelma Kahden puolen Pohjanlahtea, osa 4*, Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Kankaanranta, A. 2000. What makes the reader tick? - Business professionals' reactions to first-year business students' writing. In M. Charles & H. Kangasharju (eds.), *New Orientations and Developments. Business Communication Research and Teaching Working Papers*. Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration Working Papers W-269, Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics, 153–179.
- Kankaanranta, A. 2001. "Check the figures" – variation in English email requests by Finnish and Swedish writers. In M. Charles & P. Hiidenmaa (eds.), *Tietotyön yhteiskunta – kielen valtakunta*. AFinLAN vuosikirja n:o 59, Jyväskylä: Suomen soveltavan kielitieteen yhdistys AFinLA, 304–337.
- Kankaanranta, A. 2005. English as a corporate language: Company-internal e-mail messages written by Finns and Swedes. In B-L. Gunnarsson, (ed.) *Communication in the Workplace, TeFa Nr 42*, Uppsala: Uppsala University, 42–59.
- Kankaanranta, A., in press. "Could you pls comment on this!" – suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten sähköpostiviestintää englanniksi. In O. Kangas & H. Kangasharju (eds.), *Sanojen valta ja vallan sanat. Tutkimusohjelma Kahden puolen Pohjanlahtea, osa 4*, Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Kankaanranta, A. & J. Nordlund 1998. *English for Communication in Business*. Helsinki: Otava.
- Karlsson, S. (ed.) 2005. *Suomi-Ruotsi -johtamismaottelu – Puheenpuoroja yrityskulttuurien eroista*. Helsinki: Gummerrus.
- Knapp, K. 2002. The fading out of the non-native speaker. Native speaker dominance in lingua-franca-situations. In K. Knapp & C. Meierkord (eds.), *Lingua Franca Communication*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 217–244.
- Koistinen, O. 2004. Pikaviestit tehostavat työntekoa yrityksissä, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 20 August 2004, B.

- Kong, K.C.C. 1998. Are simple business request letters really simple? A comparison of Chinese and English business request letters, *Text* 18, 103–141.
- Kortetjärvi-Nurmi, S., M-L. Kuronen & M. Ollikainen 2002. *Yrityksen viestintä*. Helsinki: Edita Prima Oy.
- Kress, G. 1993. Genre as social process. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (eds.), *The Powers of Literacy: A Genre Approach to Teaching Writing*, London and Washington, D.C.: The Falmer Press, 22–37.
- Kristeva, J. 1986. Word, dialogue and novel. In T. Moi (ed.), *The Kristeva reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 34–61.
- Ku, L. 1996. Social and Nonsocial Uses of Electronic Messaging Systems in Organisations, *The Journal of Business Communication* 33, 297–325.
- Kuronen, M-L. 1984. *Liikekirjeiden toimintakehoitukset puheakteina*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Helsinki: Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu.
- Kuronen, M-L. 2004. *Vakuutusehtotekstin uudistamisprosessi: matkalla alamaaisesta asiakkaaksi*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Helsinki: Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu.
- Labov, W. & D. Fanshel 1977. *Therapeutic Discourse*. London: Academic Press.
- Lainio, S-L., forthcoming. *Sprachliche Realisierungsformen der Aufforderungshandlungen in deutschen und finnischen Geschäftsbriefen*. Licentiate Thesis. Kieli ja käännöstieteiden laitos. Tampereen yliopisto.
- Lainio, S-L. 2000. Die schriftliche Unternehmenskommunikation in deutsch-finnischen Geschäftskontakten. In M. Charles & H. Kangasharju (eds.), *New Orientations and Developments. Business Communication Research and Teaching Working Papers*. Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration Working Papers W-269. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics, 69-86.
- Lan, L. 2000. Email: a challenge to Standard English? *English Today* 64, 16, 23–29.
- Leech, G.N. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*. Harlow: Longman.
- Lengel, R. & R.L. Daft 1988. The Selection of Communication Media as an Executive Skill, *Academy of Management EXECUTIVE* 11, 225–232.
- Lesznyák, A. 2002. From chaos to the smallest common denominator. Topic management in English lingua franca communication. In K. Knapp & C. Meierkord (eds.), *Lingua Franca Communication*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 163–193.
- Locker, K. 1998. *Business and Administrative Communication*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1995. *“Drop me a fax, will you?” A Study of Written Business Communication*. Reports from the Department of English No. 10. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1996. The Business Communication Classroom vs Reality: What Should We Teach Today?, *English for Specific Purposes* 15, 37–51.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1997. Investigating the Genre of a Business Fax: A Finnish Case Study, *The Journal of Business Communication* 34, 316–333.

- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1999a. *From Business Correspondence to Message Exchange: The Notion of Genre in Business Communication*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Jyväskylä: Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Jyväskylä.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1999b. "Was there life before them?" Fax and Email in Business Communication, *The Journal of Language for International Business* 10, 24–42.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 1999c. From Business Correspondence to Message Exchange: What is there left? In C. Nickerson & M. Hewings (eds.), *Business English: Research into Practice*, London and New York: Longman, 100–114.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 2002a. The Fly's Perspective: Discourse in the Daily Routine of a Business Manager, *English for Specific Purposes* 21, 211–231.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. 2002b. *Communication and language use in merged corporations: Cases Stora Enso and Nordea*. Helsinki School of Economics Working Papers W-330. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., M. Charles & A. Kankaanranta, 2005. English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies, *English for Specific Purposes. Special issue: English as a lingua franca in international business contexts*, C. Nickerson (ed.), 24/4, 401–421.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. & A. Kankaanranta 2005. "Hello Monica – kindly change your arrangements": Business Genres in a State of Flux. In P. Gillaerts & M. Gotti (eds.), *Genre Variation in Business Letters*, Linguistic Insights Vol. 24, Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 55–84.
- Luukka, M-R. 2000. Näkökulma luo kohteen: diskurssintutkimuksen taustaoletukset. In K. Sajavaara & A. Piirainen-Marsh (eds.), *Kieli, diskurssi & yhteisö*, Jyväskylä: Soveltavan kielentutkimuksen keskus, 133–160.
- Maier, P. 1992. Politeness Strategies in Business Letters by Native and Non-Native English Speakers, *English for Specific Purposes* 11, 189–205.
- Markus, L. 1994. Electronic mail as the medium for managerial choice, *Organization Science* 5, 502–527.
- Martin, J.R. 1985. Process and text: two aspects of human semiosis. In J.D. Benson & W.S. Greaves (eds.), *Systemic perspectives on discourse, Volume 1*, Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 248–274.
- Mauranen, A. 1993. *Cultural differences in academic rhetoric*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Mauranen, A. 2003. Lingua franca englanti – tuntematonta kieltä? In M. Koskela & N. Pilke, *Kieli ja asiantuntijuus*. AFinLAn vuosikirja 2003/n:o 61, Jyväskylä: Suomen soveltavan kielitieteen yhdistys AFinLA, 117–133.
- Maykut, P. & R. Morehouse 1994. *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. London: Falmer Press.
- Maynor, N. 1994. The language of electronic mail: written speech. In G.D. Little & M. Montgomery (eds), *Centennial Usage Studies* No 78, Tuscaloosa: The American Dialect Society, 48–54.
- McArthur, T. 1998. *The English Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McArthur, T. 2003. World English, Euro-English, Nordic English?, *English Today* 73, 19, 54–58.

- Meierkord, C. 2002. 'Language stripped bare' or 'linguistic masala'? Culture in lingua franca conversation. In K. Knapp & C. Meierkord (eds.), *Lingua Franca Communication*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 109-133.
- Meierkord, C. 2000. Interpreting successful lingua franca interaction. An analysis of non-native-/non-native small talk conversation in English. In A. Fetzer & K. Pittner (eds.), *Conversation analysis: New Developments. Linguistic online* 5, 1/00 (http://www.linguistik-online.com/1_00/MEIERKOR.HTM). Downloaded 23 March 2004.
- Meierkord, C. 1998. Lingua franca English: Characteristics of successful non-native-/non-native-speaker discourse. *Erfurt Electronic Studies in English (EESE)* 7. (<http://webdoc.sub.gwdg.de/edoc/ia/eese/eese.html>). Downloaded 23 March 2004.
- Miller, C. 1984. Genre as social action, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70, 151-167.
- Miller, C. 1992. *Rhetorical Community: The Cultural basis of Genre*. Paper presented at the Re-thinking Genre Seminar, Carleton University, Ottawa, April 1992.
- Modiano, M. 2003. Euro-English: A Swedish perspective, *English Today* 74, 19, 35-41.
- Morand, D. A. 1996. What's In A Name? An Exploration of the Social Dynamics of Forms of Address in Organizations, *Management Communication Quarterly* 9, 422-451.
- Mulholland, J. 1999. E-mail: uses, issues and problems in an institutional setting. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini & C. Nickerson (eds.), *Writing business: genres, media and discourses*, London: Longman, 57-84.
- Munter, M. 2003. *Guide to Managerial Communication. Effective Business Writing and Speaking*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.
- Munter, M., P.S. Rogers & J. Rymer 2003. Business E-mail: Guidelines for Users, *Business Communication Quarterly* 66, 26-40.
- Murray, D.E. 1991. *Conversation for action. The computer terminal as medium of communication*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Neumann, I. 1997. Requests in German-Norwegian business discourse: Difference in directness. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini & S. Harris (eds.), *The Languages of Business: An International Perspective*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 72-93.
- Nickerson C. 1998. Corporate Culture and the Use of Written English Within British Subsidiaries in The Netherlands, *English for Specific Purposes* 17, 281-294.
- Nickerson, C. 1999a. The use of English in electronic mail in a multinational corporation. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini & C. Nickerson (eds.), *Writing business: genres, media and discourses*, London: Longman, 35-55.
- Nickerson, C. 1999b. The usefulness of genre theory in the investigation of organizational communication across cultures. In M.Gessitsen (ed.), *Een huldebundel voo Ger Peerbooms*, Nijmegen: KUN Press, 1-11.
- Nickerson, C. 2000. *Playing the corporate language game. An investigation of the genres and discourse strategies in English used by Dutch writers in multinational corporations*. Utrecht studies in language and communication. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

- Nickerson, C. & F. Bargiela-Chiappini 1996. At the intersection between grammar and pragmatics: a contrastive study of personal pronouns and other forms of address in Dutch and Italian, *Language Sciences* 18, 743–764.
- Nikali, H. 1998. *The substitution of letter mail in targeted communication*. Helsinki: Oy Edita Ab.
- Nikko, T., in press. Merkitysten rakentaminen suomalais-ruotsalaisten fuusioyriyten kokouskeskusteluissa. In O. Kangas & H. Kangasharju (eds.), *Sanojen valta ja vallan sanat. Tutkimusohjelma Kahden puolen Pohjanlahtea, osa 4*, Helsinki: Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura.
- Nikko, T. & A. Kankaanranta 2000. Tavoitteena professionaalinen kielitaito. In P. Kalaja & L. Nieminen (eds.), *Kielikoulussa – kieli koulussa*. AFinLAN vuosikirja 2000, n:o 58, Jyväskylä: Suomen soveltavan kielitieteen yhdistys AFinLA, 245–264.
- Nikula, T., S. Leppänen & A. Piirainen-Marsh 2003. Mieli-pide: Englannin kielen käyttö arkipäiväistynyt, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 25 September 2003, A3.
- Nissinen, V. 2001. *Yhteisöllisyyden luomisen keinoja Stora Enson konsernilehdessä*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Helsinki: Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu.
- Nurmela, J., L. Parjo & M. Ylitalo 2002. *Suuri muutto tietoyhteiskuntaan*. Tilastokeskuksen katsauksia 2002/4. Helsinki: Tilastokeskus.
- Nurmi, T. 2002. Say it in English, please, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 25 August 2002, E3.
- Norrmén, T. 2003. En värld, ett språk?, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 2 February 2003, 26.
- Okamura, A. & P. Shaw 2000. Lexical phrases, culture, and subculture in transactional letter writing, *English for Specific Purposes* 19, 1–15.
- Orlikowski, W. & J. Yates 1994. Genre Repertoire: The structuring of communicative practices in organizations, *Administrative Science Quarterly* 39, 541–574.
- Paarlahti, S. 1998. *Politeness strategies in business letters written by non-native and native speakers of English*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Paatola, U. 2002. *Interlanguage and Interdiscourse System Communication Approaches to Nordic English: Turn-initial But*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Department of English. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.
- Paltridge, B. 1997. *Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Patton, M. Q. 2002. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Peltonen, B., forthcoming. *Parallella svenska texter i företagsintern kommunikation i två olika kulturer*. Vaasa University.
- Phillipson, R. & T. Skutnabb-Kangas 1999. Englishisation: one dimension of globalization, *AILA Review* 13, 19–36.
- Piekkari, R., E. Vaara, J. Tienari & R. Sääntti 2005. Integration or disintegration? Human resource implications of a common corporate language decision in a cross-border merger, *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 16, 330–344.
- Pilegaard, M. 1997. Politeness in Written Business Discourse: A textlinguistic perspective on requests, *Journal of Pragmatics* 28, 223–244.
- Pinto dos Santos, V.B.M. 2002. Genre analysis of business letters of negotiation, *English for Specific Purposes* 21, 167–199.

- Poncini, G. 2002. *Business relationships and roles in a multicultural group: An investigation of discourse at an Italian company's meetings of its international distributors*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Birmingham.
- Ramanathan, V. & R.B. Kaplan 2000. Genres, authors, discourse communities: Theory and application for L2 writers, *Journal of Second Language Writing* 9, 171–192.
- Rauto, E. 2003. *Välikielen kehitys vieraskielisessä opetuksessa. Tutkimus muutoksista insinööriopiskelijoiden englannin kieliopin hallinnassa*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Jyväskylä: Soveltavan kielentutkimuksen keskus.
- Reinsch, L. 2000. *Presidential Address*. Paper presented at the 24th Annual Convention of the Association for Business Communication, Atlanta, USA, 18–21 October.
- Rice, R. P. 1997. An analysis of stylistic variables in electronic mail, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 11, 5–23.
- Rogers, P. 1999. Management Communication – Everything, nothing or something? Text/context as a disciplinary unit of analysis. In T. Nikko & P. Nuolijärvi (eds.), *Talous ja kieli III: seminaari 9.–10.5.1996*, Helsinki: Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu, 11–26.
- Rogers, P. S. 2000. CEO Presentations in Conjunction with Earnings Announcements: Extending the Construct of Organizational Genre Through Competing Values Profiling and User-Needs Analysis, *Management Communication Quarterly* 13, 426–485.
- Rogers, P.S. 2001. Convergence and Commonality Challenge Business Communication Research, *The Journal of Business Communication* 38, 14–23.
- Rogers, P. 2003. Organizational Voice: Explicit Factors Enabling Assimilation and Participation, *University of Michigan Working Paper 03-001*. <http://www.hti.umich.edu/b/busadwp/images/b/2/0/b2081088.0001.001.pdf>. Downloaded 27 June 2003.
- Rogers, P.S. & J.M. Swales 1990. We the people? An analysis of the Dana Corporation Policies Document, *The Journal of Business Communication* 27, 293–313.
- Rogers, P.S. & H.W. Hildebrandt 1993. Competing Values Instruments for Analyzing Written and Spoken Management Messages, *Human Resource Management* 32, 121–142.
- Rogers, P. & J. Rymer 2001. Analytical Tools to Facilitate Transitions Into New Writing contexts: A Communicative Perspective, *The Journal of Business Communication* 38, 112–145.
- Rogers, P. S. & S.M. Lee-Wong 2003. Reconceptualizing politeness to accommodate dynamic tensions in subordinate-to-superior reporting, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 17, 379–412.
- Rogers, P. S., M.L. Ho, J. Thomas, I. F. H. Wong & C. O. L. Cheng, 2004. Preparing New Entrants For Subordinate Reporting: A Decision-Making Framework For Writing, *The Journal of Business Communication* 41, 370–401.
- Rosch, E. 1978. Principles of categorisation. In E. Rosch & B. Lloyd (eds.), *Cognition and categorization*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 27–48.

- Rubin, D.L. 1988. Introduction: Four Dimensions of Social Construction in Written Communication. In B.A. Rafoth & D.L. Rubin (eds.), *The social construction of written communication*, Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing, 1-37.
- Sajavaara, K. 1999. Kontrastiivinen kielentutkimus ja virheanalyysi. In K. Sajavaara & A. Piirainen-Marsh (eds.), *Kielenoppimisen kysymyksiä*, Jyväskylä: Soveltavan kielentutkimuksen keskus, 103-128.
- Säntti, R. 2001. *How Cultures Interact in an International Merger*. Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 819. Tampere: Tampereen yliopisto.
- Seidlhofer, B. & J. Jenkins 2001. Teaching English as a lingua franca for Europe. Accents of English in Europe. Bringing Europe's lingua franca into the classroom. In A. Pulverness (ed.), *IATEFL 2001. Brighton Conference Selections*, Kingsdown Park, Whitstable: IATEFL, 87-90.
- Shelby, A. 1998. Communication quality revisited: exploring the link with persuasive effects, *The Journal of Business Communication* 35, 387-404.
- Shelby, A. & L. Reinsch Jr. 1995. Positive Emphasis and You-Attitude: An empirical study, *The Journal of Business Communication* 32, 303-327.
- Sims, B.R. 1996. Electronic Mail in Two Corporate Workplaces. In P. Sullivan & J. Dautermann (eds.), *Electronic Literacies in the Workplace*, Urbana, Illinois: The National Council of Teachers of English, 41-64.
- Sipilä, S. 1997. *Requests in business messages written in English by Americans and Finns*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration.
- Søderberg, A-M. & E. Vaara (eds.) 2003. *Merging across borders. People, cultures and politics*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Sproull, L. & S. Kiesler 1986. Reducing Social Context Cues: Electronic Mail in Organizational Communication, *Management Science* 32, 1492-1512.
- Suchan, J. & R. Dulek 1998. From Text to Context: An Open systems Approach to Research in Written Business Communication, *The Journal of Business Communication* 35, 87-110.
- Sullivan C.B. 1995. Preferences for electronic mail in organizational communication tasks, *The Journal of Business Communication* 32, 49-64.
- Sutherland, J. 1994. Ad-hoc English and Creolized Corporate Culture: Translingual and Intercultural Communication in a Japanese Computer-assembly Plant in Germany, *TESL-EJ* 1, 1-18 (<http://www-writing.berkeley.edu/TESEJ/ej02/a.2.html>). Downloaded 21 March 2004.
- Svartvik, J. 2000. *Engelska - öspråk, världspråk, trendspråk*. Falun: Norstedts Ordbok.
- Swales, J.M. 1990. *Genre Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J.M. 1993. Genre and engagement. *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* 71, 687-698.
- Swales, J.M. 1998. *Other Floors, other voices. A textography of a small university building*. Mahwah, New Jersey, London: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Swales, J.M. 2002. *Where Are We in Genre Theory? And Where Should We Be?* Plenary lecture at the 4th European Convention of the Association of Business Communication, Århus, Denmark, 23-25 May.

- Swales, J.M. & P. Rogers 1995. Discourse and the projection of corporate culture: the mission statement, *Discourse and Society* 6, 223–242.
- Taavitsainen, I. & P. Pahta 2003. English in Finland: globalisation, language awareness and questions of identity, *English Today* 76, 19, 3–15.
- Tammelin, M. 2004. *Introducing a Collaborative Network-based Learning Environment into Foreign Language and Business Communication Teaching. Action Research in Finnish Higher Education*. Media Education Publications 11. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.
- Thralls, C. & N.R. Blyler 1993. The Social Perspective and Professional Communication: Diversity and Directions in Research. In Blyler, N.R. & C. Thralls (eds.), *Professional Communication: The Social Perspective*, Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 3–34.
- Tienari, J. & E. Vaara 2001. Kieli on valtaa fuusioissa(kin) – Uusia haasteita organisaatioiden kehittämistyölle, *Aikuiskasvatus* 3, 250–256.
- Trosborg, A. 1995. *Interlanguage Pragmatics. Requests, Complaints and Apologies*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Trosborg, A. 2000. *Analysing Professional Genres*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Uhlířová, L. 1994. E-mail as a New Subvariety of Medium and its Effects upon the Message. In S. Čmejrková & F. Šticha (eds.), *The Syntax of Sentence and Text, A Festschrift for František Daneš*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 273–282.
- Upton, T.A. & U. Connor 2001. Using computerized corpus analysis to investigate the textlinguistic discourse moves of a genre, *English for Specific Purposes* 20, 313–329.
- Vaara, E. 1999. *Towards a rediscovery of organizational politics: Essays on organizational integration following mergers and acquisitions*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration.
- Vaara E. 2002. Constructions of Cultural Differences in Postmerger Change Processes: A Sensemaking Perspective on Finnish-Swedish Cases, *M@n@gement* 32, 81–110.
- Vaara, E., J. Tienari, R. Piekkari & R. Sääntti 2005. Language in the Circuits of Power in a Merging Multinational Corporation, *Journal of Management Studies* 42, 595–623.
- Vandermeeren, S. 1999. English as a lingua franca in written corporate communication: findings from a European survey. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini & C. Nickerson (eds.), *Writing business: genres, media and discourses*, London: Longman, 273–291.
- Vollstedt, M. 2002. English as a language for internal company communications. In K. Knapp & c. Meierkord (eds.), *Lingua Franca Communication*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 87–108.
- Widdowson, H.G. 1997. EIL, ESL, EFL: global issues and local interests, *World Englishes* 16, 135–146.
- Widdowson, H.G. 1998. Communication and community: the pragmatics of ESP, *English for Specific Purposes* 17, 3–14.
- Witte, S. 1992. Context, text, and intertext: Toward a constructionist semiotic of writing, *Written Communication* 9, 237–308.

- Wittgenstein, L. 1958. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Yates, J. & W. Orlikowski 1992. Genres of organizational communication: A structurational approach to studying communication and media, *Academy of Management Review* 17, 299–326.
- Yates, J. & W. Orlikowski 2002. Genre Systems: Structuring Interaction through Communicative Norms, *The Journal of Business Communication* 39, 13–35.
- Yli-Jokipii, H. 1994. *Requests in Professional Discourse: A Cross-Cultural Study of British, American and Finnish Business Writing*. Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum 71. Helsinki: Suomalainen tiedeakatemia.
- Yli-Jokipii, H. 1998. Power and distance as cultural and contextual elements in Finnish and English business writing. In S. Niemeier, C. Campbell & R. Dirven (eds.), *The Cultural Context in Business Communication*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 121–144.
- Yongyan, L. 2000. Surfing e-mails, *English Today* 64, 16, 30–34 & 55.
- Yunick, S. 1997. Genres, registers and sociolinguistics, *World Englishes* 16, 321–36.
- Zhu, Y. 2000. Structural moves reflected in English and Chinese sales letters, *Discourse Studies* 2, 525–548.
- Ziv, O. 1996. Writing to work: How using email can reflect technological and organizational change. In S. Herring (ed.), *Computer-mediated communication: Linguistic, social and cross-cultural perspectives*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 243–264.

Interviews:

Stora Enso employee (Erja), Helsinki, 11 August 2000.

Other materials:

- Association for Business Communication. 2005.
<http://www.businesscommunication.org/>. Downloaded 21 August 2005.
- Research program page: Finnish, Swedish, or English? Internal communication in recently merged Finnish-Swedish companies. Åbo Akademi University.
<http://www.abo.fi/instut/fisve-svefi/english/kangasharju-charles.html>. Downloaded 26 July 2005.
- Stora Enso. 2005. <http://storaenso.com/>
- Stora Enso. Mission, vision and values. 2003.
http://www.storaenso.com/CDAvgn/main/0,,1_-1925-1007-,00.html.
 Downloaded 6 June 2003.
- University of Jyväskylä. Department of English. 2004.
<http://www.jyu.fi/tdk/hum/englanti/EnglishVoices/>. Downloaded 25 May 2004.
- University of Michigan. Ross School of Business. 2005.
<http://www.bus.umich.edu/Admissions/Mba/>. Downloaded 26 July 2005.

Newspapers and magazines:

The Economist 2001. The triumph of English: A world empire by other means, 22 December 2001, 33–35.

Helsingin sanomat 2005. Motorolan uutuuus haastaa Blackberryn, 27 July 2005, B3.

Talouselämä 2005. Suomen suurimmat yritykset, 20/2005, 40.

Personal communication:

Jung, Y. 2005. Ph.D. Korea University, 14 January 2005.

Majapuro, M. 2003. Lecturer in Finnish Business Communication. Helsinki School of Economics, 22 May 2003.

Rogers, P. S. 2003. Assistant Professor in Business Communication. University of Michigan Business School, 30 June 2003.

Swales, J.M. 2001, 2003. Professor. English Language Institute, University of Michigan, 2 August 2001 and 2 July 2003.

APPENDIX 1. Length and description of the collection period, distribution of outgoing and incoming mail, distribution of internal vs. external messages, and distribution of messages written in different languages in the informants' mailboxes.

Pseudonym	Collection period	% for research, collection, period description	OUT BOX		IN BOX		External English		External Swedish	
			Internal English	Internal Swedish	Internal English	Internal Swedish	F	S	F	S
Henrik ¹²⁸	June 00 1 week	100%, -busy	5	-	1	-	22	-	4	-
Henrik	Jan 01 3 weeks	100% usual	15	24	1	-	81	-	4	2
Kauko	March 01 1 week	90-100% usual	2	15	1	9	10	44	4	10
Erja	Aug 00 1 week	100% usual	12	8	5	2	13	1	4	3
Hannu	May 00 2 weeks	100%, -busy	3	1	-	-	8	16	1	3
Berit	May 01 1 week	75-100% usual	15	-	-	-	11	-	-	1
Seppo ¹²⁹	Jan 01 2 weeks	50-75% -busy	8	17	2	2	18	16	8	2
Leena	Jan 01 1 week	50% -busy	10	7	-	7	4	1	-	9
Monica	May 01 1 week	100% usual	7	60	1	-	14	-	-	-
Total	13 weeks		77	31 (F) 105 (S) 136	11	33	181	80 (F) 151 (S) 4 (G) 217	25	49
			213		44		398		74	

F = Finnish
S = Swedish
00 = 2000
01 = 2001
usual = as busy as usual
-busy = not as busy as usual

All outgoing and incoming mail
(213+44+398+74=729)
Internal messages (213+398=611) 83%
External messages (44+74=118) 17%

Internal messages (611):
English (77+181=258) 42%
Finnish (31+62=93) 15%
Swedish (105+151=256) 42%
German (4) < 1%

¹²⁸ Henrik was entered twice into the table because of the two collection periods.
¹²⁹ Seppo is a Finn based in Germany.

APPENDIX 2. Questionnaire (a) to the informants concerning background information about them and the collection period.

The beginning of the questionnaires sent to the informants was worded slightly differently depending on how much was known about them beforehand. For example, the questionnaire below was sent to Berit, whom I had met at her office briefly (so that I knew her mother tongue, her job description, and was also able to estimate her age).

Thank you very much for the email messages you have forwarded to me. I've got a few questions about them and hope that you can spare a couple of minutes. This won't take long.

First of all, what is your English job title?

Then about the messages: here is a list of some people you exchanged messages with and a suggestion for their mother tongue. If the mother tongue suggested is wrong, I'd appreciate it if you could change it.

Then please use the following symbols after the person's name to indicate if she/he

S - is on the same hierarchical level as you

A - is your boss/on a higher hierarchical level than you

B - is your subordinate/on a lower hierarchical level than you

Yes - if you have met the person face-to-face.

(a list of max 26 people)

Then a couple of questions about the typicality of the period in question.

- (a) What percentage of incoming mail did you forward to me? Use X to show the correct alternative.
- 25%
 - 50%
 - 75%
 - almost 100%

- (b) What percentage of outgoing mail did you forward to me?
 - 25%
 - 50%
 - 75%
 - almost 100%

- (c) Would you say the number of messages over the period was
 - As usual
 - Less than usual
 - More than usual?

Once again, thank you very much for your help.

APPENDIX 3. Questionnaire (b) to the informants concerning messages written and/or received by them.

Below you find x number of messages and there are four questions related to each of them. The reason for these questions is that I'd like to test a theory about email communication and it cannot be done without your reactions to the messages. I'd very much appreciate it if you could answer them.

1. What did you do/would you do when you got a message like this?
2. What is the purpose of this message?
3. Does it have a name? How would you call it?
4. Before email technology, how was this message delivered?
(use X)
 - (a) phonecall
 - (b) internal mail
 - (c) fax
 - (d) noticeboard
 - (e) nothing
 - (f) other,what?
5. Have you got any other comments about the message?

APPENDIX 4. Questionnaire to the focus group consisting of international business people.

FOCUS GROUP

This questionnaire asks questions about 3 email messages exchanged within one company, i.e. they are company-internal messages. Some of the questions may sound strange but I'd appreciate it if you'd reply to all of them.

Background

Age ____ Female/Male ____ First language _____

Business work experience _____ years _____ months

Business studies _____ years

What company did you work before coming to Ann Arbor?

In what country did you work before coming to Ann Arbor?

In your work, how often did you write email messages (in your mother tongue)?

Several messages daily / a few messages daily / a few messages a week / more seldom

How often did you write English email messages?

How often did you receive English email messages?

Did you exchange messages with your colleagues (within the company) in English?

Yes/ No How often?

EMAIL MESSAGE A

1. Have you received an email message like this while working in business? Would you describe this message as typical?
2. Imagine you are the receiver of this message. What would you do if you got a message like this?
3. What is the purpose of the message? Why was it sent?
4. How would you ask for a message like this? That is, if you wanted your colleague to send you a similar message, what would you call it in English?
5. Do you have any comments about the language in the message?

Message A

From Markuksela, Pirkko
Date Tue, 26 Jan 2001 13:57:28
To Laine Eija; Rahkola Seppo; Suomi Hannu; Sunila Anne;
Jaakkola Matti; Karlsson, Eva; Bjorn, Ulf; KA5 (+ 30 other recipients)
Subject: X Y's visit report 18.01.2001

Dear Colleagues,
Please find enclosed a summary of our visit at X (Customer*s name) Y's (Location) factory 19.02.2000.
Wishing you all a nice weekend!

Best regards,
Pirkko

Attachment Converted: "c:/eudora/attach/KP HU 180101.doc"
(F101)

EMAIL MESSAGE B

1. Have you received an email message like this when working in business? Would you describe this message as typical?
2. Imagine you are the receiver of this message. What would you do if you got a message like this?
3. What is the purpose of the message? Why was it sent?
4. How would you ask for a message like this? That is, if you wanted your colleague to send you a similar message, what would you call it in English?
5. Do you have any comments about the language in the message?

Message B

From Andersson, Sven
Date Mon, 15 Feb 2001 08:07:01
To Suominen, Pekka
Cc Nordström, Lars; Haglund, Monica
Subject Winterliner for Spain

Dear Pekka,
What was the outcome of your discussion with Henrik Lindfors?
Could we get approx 2000mt 265gsm trimming machine for feb
production?

Kind Regards,
Sven Andersson
tel int+46 54 123450
fax int+46 54 543210
email_sven.andersson@storaenso.com

EMAIL MESSAGE C

1. Have you received an email message like this while working in business? Would you describe this message as typical?
2. Imagine you are the receiver of this message. What would you do if you got a message like this?
3. What is the purpose of the message? Why was it sent?
4. How would you ask for a message like this? That is, if you wanted your colleague to send you a similar message, what would you call it in English?
5. Do you have any comments about the language in the message?

Message C

From Svensson, Lars
Date Mon, 23 Sept 2001 11:04:20
To Majapuro, Marketta; Suni, Marke; Hippi, Jari; Lundstrom, Monica; Laine, Eija; Rahkola, Seppo; Suomi, Hannu; Sunila, Anne; Jaakkola, Henrik; Karlsson, Berit; Bjorn, Thomas; (+ aliases, and individual recipients)
Subject Labor contract situation - Sweden

Dear Sirs,

A bid for a 3 year contract giving a total increase in wages of 6,3% as well as a reduction of working days by 1 day/year during the contract period was rejected by the blue collar unions on 17/9. According to reports in media today, a new bid by the mediator is expected early this week.

We will keep you posted of any further developments.

Kind regards
Lars Svensson

6. Before email technology, how do you reckon these messages would have been delivered? Or would they have been delivered at all?
7. In your opinion, what is the main difference between these messages?
8. Is there anything unfamiliar, surprising, or not “typical” in these messages when you compare them to your experience of email communications in business?

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!!

APPENDIX 5. Distribution of English messages of all internal messages in the informants' mailboxes.

Pseudonym	Position	Collection period description	OUT		BOX		IN		BOX		Total No	English messages %
			Internal English	Internal English	Finnish Swedish	Finnish Swedish	Internal English	Finnish Swedish	Finnish Swedish	G(erman)		
Henrik 00 ¹³⁰	Vice President	-busy	5	-	4	-	22	-	-	12	43	63%
Henrik 01 ¹	Vice President	usual	15	-	24	-	81	-	43	-	164	60%
Kauko	Manager, Technical	usual	2	15	-	10	44	-	1(G)	-	71	17%
Erja	Project Manager	usual	12	8	-	13	1	-	-	-	34	74%
Hannu	Development Manager	- busy	3	1	-	8	16	-	-	-	28	40%
Berit	Communication specialist	usual	15	-	17	-	11	-	16	-	59	37%
Seppo ¹³¹	Communication specialist	-busy	8	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	29	90%
Leena	Secretary/ Assistant to Vice President	-busy	10	7	-	4	1	-	3(G)	-	22	64%
Monica	Secretary/ Assistant to local manager	usual	7	-	60	14	-	80	-	-	161	13%
Total			77	31 (F) 105 (S) 136	181	62 (F) 151 (S) 4(G) 217	611					

usual = as busy as usual
 -busy = not as busy as usual

¹³⁰ Distribution has been calculated separately for Henrik's two sets of messages collected at different times: 00 refers to June 2000 and 01 to January 2001.

¹³¹ Seppo is a Finn based in Germany.