LANGUAGE USE AS AN INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE GENRE OF WORKPLACE EMAILS IN AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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Abstrak

Penyelidikan yang lepas menumpukan kepada penganalisisan genre e-mel sebagai satu model yang berfokus kepada kandungan dan bentuk sahaja. Kajian ini pula menyelidiki genre e-mel sebagai sumber dengan menganalisis pengetahuan yang dijana dan pengetahuan yang disebarkan bagi membentuk genre e-mel dalam situasi sosio-retorik. Kajian ini menggunakan analisis genre kritikal dengan meneliti elemen dalaman dan luaran teks atau pengaruh amalan institusi dan aturan disiplin penggunaan bahasa dalam komunikasi e-mel di sebuah institusi pengajian tinggi swasta di Kuala Lumpur. Analisis menggunakan 378 e-mel dalam komunikasi, pemerhatian turut serta dan temu bual, kajian ini meneliti genre komunikasi e-mel dari sudut etnografi, teks, perspektif sosio-kognitif dan sosio-kritis. Satu kaedah integratif baharu, yang melibatkan pendekatan terhadap teks, konteks dan analisis genre telah digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Kajian ini mengenal pasti empat jenis e-mel. Penjenisan e-mel dibuat berdasarkan tujuan komunikasi, hasrat, matlamat komunikasi, laras dan struktur generik. Hasil kajian menunjukkan e-mel perbincangan digunakan untuk membincangkan sesuatu isu. E-mel bentuk ini lazimnya melibatkan penghasilan dan ujaran ketara dalam penghujahan secara terang-terangan. E-mel pertanyaan pula digunakan sebagai strategi permintaan dan respons melibatkan wacana naratif dan bukan naratif. E-mel penyampaian digunakan untuk menyediakan fail yang melibatkan penghasilan maklumat secara wacana naratif. Manakala, e-mel pemberitahuan pula untuk memaklumkan isu-isu umum kepada penerima khususnya gaya abstrak dan penghasilan maklumat. Kajian ini juga memaparkan bahawa amalan institusi dan kelaziman disiplin dalam komuniti wacana mempengaruhi penggunaan bahasa dalam e-mel. Hal ini tergambar dalam penggunaan strategi, mekanisma dan pilihan linguistik dalam keempat-empat jenis e-mel. Kajian ini memberikan sumbangan dari segi sosio-retorik dan analisis genre kritikal berdasarkan amalan, tatacara dan kelaziman dalam komuniti pengurusan akademik. Pendekatan integratif turut ditonjolkan sebagai satu kaedah penelitian penggunaan bahasa dalam komunikasi e-mel.

Kata kunci: Komunikasi e-mel, Sosio-retorik, Analisis genre kritis, Komuniti wacana, Pendekatan integratif

Abstract

Past studies that examined the genre of email regarded genre as a model by focusing on the content and form alone. However, this study examined the genre as a resource by analyzing the knowledge producing and knowledge disseminating that makes the genre possible in its socio-rhetorical context. The study, in line with critical genre analysis, examined the text-internal and the influences of the text-external elements on language use in email communication at a private higher educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. Using 378 emails, participant observation and interviews, this study analyzed the genre from the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. To conduct the analysis, a novel integrative methodology that included approaches to text, context and genre analysis was applied. The study revealed that the emails could be categorized into four types of genres that varied in their communicative purposes, intentions, goals of communication, register and generic structures. The discussion email genre, which was used to negotiate issues, mainly included involved production and overt expression of argumentation. Enquiry email genre, which was used as a request-respond strategy, included narrative and non-narrative discourse while the delivery email genre, which was used to provide files, mainly included informational production and non-narrative discourse. Informing email genre, which was used to notify the recipients about general interest issues, mainly included abstract style and informational production. This study also revealed that the institutional practices and disciplinary conventions of the discourse community influenced language use in the emails. This was reflected in the strategies, mechanisms and linguistic choices made in the four types of genres. The study contributed to the socio-rhetoric perspective and critical genre analysis based on conventionalized practices and procedures in the community of practice in academic management. The integrative approach is also highlighted as an analytical method to examine language use in email communication.

Keywords: Email communication, Socio-rhetoric, Critical genre analysis, Discourse community, Integrative approach

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List of Abbreviations

ABE : Association of Business Executives

BABA : Bachelor of Arts: Business Administration

BCC : Blind carbon copy

BCU : Biber Conner Upton discourse organization approach

CC : Carbon copy

CDA : Critical discourse analysis

CEO : Chief Executive officer

CGA : Critical genre analysis

CL : Critical linguistics

CMC : Computer mediated communication

ESP : English for specific purposes approach to genre

FGM : Focus group member

FTA : Face threatening act

ICCS : International certificate in computer science

IDCS : International diploma in computer science

KL : Kuala Lumpur

MAPCU : Malaysian Association of Private Colleges and Universities

MBA : Master in business administration

MOE : Ministry of Education, Malaysia

MOHE : Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia

MQA : Malaysian Qualifications Agency

NCC : National Computing Centre

NED : Pseudonym (the educational institute subject of the study)

SFG : Systemic functional grammar

SFL : Systemic functional linguistic approach to genre

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The development of computers during the last decade of the twentieth century has changed the industrial landscape of the world, and the "e" factor has become a distinguishing mark of this era, the information era. Initially, computers were used as typewriters and calculators. After the introduction of the Internet and email, however, they have become influential and widespread communicational methods, especially in business communication (Crystal, 2003a). Email today has become the preferred channel of communication in the workplace (Ean, 2010; Hadina Habil, 2010). To a certain extent, email has replaced traditional written (Louhiala-Salminen, 2002) and oral (Flynn, 2010) communicational methods. Business people these days spend more time preparing documents that are communicated through electronic forms (Nikali, 1998). This present study is concerned with the use of email communication in the workplace, particularly examining the genre of email communication as an institutional practice.

Previous research on the genre of email has been scant, and loosely using the term genre to refer to the texts produced in emails (Don, 2007). This research mainly focused on the textual features of emails to describe how the emails were written (Baron, 1998; Davis and Brewer, 1997; Grzega, 1999). Genre analysis, however, should not only investigate how the emails are written, but also examine why the emails are written the way they are. This argument presents the case for a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) and a "comprehensive and insightful understanding" of

the email genre as a communicative vehicle to achieve the "specific disciplinary objectives" of the discourse community (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 392). Therefore, this study investigates not only how the genre of email is constructed, but also how it is interpreted, how it is exploited in its institutional context, why the employees write the emails the way they do, and what influences the institutional practices and the disciplinary conventions of the discourse community have on language use in email messages.

Even though work on genre analysis started in the early eighties, it has developed drastically recently (Hajibah Osman, 2009). Researchers have developed several approaches to examine the genre. They have viewed the genre differently to identify the regularities, consistencies or reoccurring patterns in language use in relationship to register (Halliday, 1994), rhetorical actions (Miller, 1994) and communicative purposes (Swales, 1990). The examination of the conventions traditionally explored "how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them" (Martin, 1985, p. 250). This method treated genre as form and content alone (Campbell and Jamieson, 1978). This practice gave students and novice practitioners an overview about the textual features of professional genres; yet, left them "unaware of the discursive realities of the professional world" (Bhatia, 2008, p. 161).

Therefore, genre analysis needed to bridge the gap between language use and institutional practice. This was the case as the discursive and institutional practices of discourse communities complement each other (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2012). However, this perspective of genre analysis is recent and has not attracted much attention. Previous research on language use as an institutional practice mainly

examined language use in legal practice (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a), promotional activities (Hajibah Osman, 2009), reality television (Penzhorn and Pitout, 2007) and traditional business documents (Chin, 2011; Louhiala-Salminen, 2009; Piller, 2009). Examining language use as an institutional practice in workplace email communication, however, has not attracted much attention. Therefore, aligned with recent developments in genre analysis, this study examines the genre of email as an institutional practice.

The investigation of language use as an institutional practice extends the scope of genre analysis more into the context. The investigation brings into attention the influences of "text-internal" (i.e., moves, lexico-grammatical features, patterns of intertextuality) and "text-external" (i.e., patterns of interdiscursivity, influences of institutional practice and disciplinary conventions on language use) elements that make the genre possible in its institutional context. Even though genres are identified in relationship to conventional patterns, their occurrence, however, is dynamic, creative and novel at times (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995). Similarity, discourse communities use genres to "realize communicatively the goals of their communities" (Swales, 1990, p. 52). They do not employ communication to create specific genres; they employ communication to achieve their goals of communication (Hanford, 2010). Genre, as such, is a product of conventionalized and institutionalized "disciplinary practices, procedures and cultures" (Bhatia, 2002) in a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

The community of practice, in this study, is a Malaysian private higher educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. Private higher educational institutions in Malaysia

nowadays are well established (Wan, 2007). A number of these institutions have even opened campuses in some Asian and African countries. They form "institutions" (Jenkins, 2004), and, over the years, they have developed "patterns of behaviour in any particular setting that has become established overtime as the ways things are done" (p. 133), [place] discourse communities (Swales, 1990, 1998) that have "settled sense of their aggregation's roles and purposes" (p. 204), and goals for communication (Bhatia, 1993, 2004). Their institutional practices and ideologies (Biber, 2006) are governed by a code of ethics that emphasizes professionalism, integrity and quality education (MAPCU, 2012). They also use oral, written and computer-mediated methods of communication to interact within the community and with 'the other' to achieve their institutional goals, communicative purposes and communicative intentions (Biber et al., 2007; Swales, 1990, 1998).

This present study is concerned with the use of the English language in the Malaysian workplace. English language has been used actively in Malaysia from the time of being a British colony (Asmah Omar, 1982, 1992; Vatikiotis, 1991; Venugopal, 2000). English in Malaysia is used as a first, second and foreign language (Zarina Mustafa, 2009) and is used increasingly as the corporate language of Malaysian business (Venugopal, 2000). Even though the government has supported mastery of English language (MOE, 2012), the use of English, today, has far exceeded government expectations as "employees in the private sector used English 99 percent of the time", according to Mr. Mohd Puad Zarkashi, the previous deputy minister of education ("English at Workplace is 'Weird'", 2009). Even though researchers investigated the use of English in written and oral communications (Airil Adnan, 2010; Nur Ehsan Mohd Said and Saadiyah Darus,

2011; Techlan, Khuan, and Singh, 2011; Zarina Othman and Taufik Rashid, 2011), analysis of Malaysian electronic discourse remains minimal (Norizah Hassan and Azirah Hashim, 2009), especially studies pertaining to language use as an institutional practice.

1.2 Problem Statement

As far as genre studies are concerned, examining the influence of the text-external elements on language use "has attracted relatively little attention" (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 391). Researchers have mainly examined the text-internal elements focusing on the textual artefacts of the text genre (Albi, 2013; Cortes, 2011; Fang, 2012; Kristina, 2011; Wenhsien, 2013). Genre analysis, according to Bhatia (2002, 2004), is "multi-faceted". As a model, generic description is used to provide language learners the description of the generic construct so that novice practitioners and students learn the conventional textual aspects of the genre. As a resource, however, the focus is extended to include the "knowledge of procedures, practices, and conventions that make the text possible and relevant to a particular socio-rhetorical context" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 5).

Previous research on genre analysis has mainly investigated genre as a model; investigating genre as a resource, however, has not attracted much attention. Similarly, the minute number of email genre studies have examined the genre as a model by "loosely" referring to the texts generated in emails (Don, 2007). They mainly examined the syntactical features used in emails (Crystal, 2001; Gimenez, 2005; Hale and Scanlon, 1999; Murray, 1991) and compared these features to spoken and written language (e.g., Collot and Bellmore, 1996; Gains, 1999; Gruber, 2001;

Yates, 1996). Even though these studies contribute to our understanding of the language used in emails, especially in relationship to textual artefacts, they, however, do not provide a comprehensive understanding of the influences of the institutional practices and disciplinary conventions in the workplace on language use (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a). Therefore, a need exists to examine the genre of emails from this critical perspective, as genres, in practice, are not static; they are complex, dynamic and developing (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995). This is the case as expert members of discourse communities appropriate the generic resources of a genre to create another (Bhatia, 2010a, 2010b).

As such, the examination of email genre in this study is carried out in relationship to four overlapping perspectives that are the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical. The ethnographic perspective examines language use in the emails as a part of professional practice. It examines the influences of the professional practice in the workplace subject to the study on language use. The investigation of the textual perspective examines language use in the emails as a text to find out how the employees write their email messages. The socio-cognitive perspective examines language use in the emails as a genre to examine how the employees of the educational institution construct and exploit their email messages. As such, the socio-cognitive perspective also includes the examination of the socio-pragmatic space (Bhatia, 2010a, 2012) by investigating the relationship between the texts in the workplace and the more innovative strategy of exploiting the conventional strategies to create novel constructs and genres, interdiscursivity. The socio-critical perspective examines the influence of the disciplinary conventions of the workplace on language

use. As such, this study accounts for the text-internal and text-external elements of email genre in the workplace subject of the study.

Bhatia (2004) provided the above-mentioned approach to [critical] genre analysis, but he did not fully explain the methods to conduct the analysis. Therefore, to have a fuller view of email genre in the workplace, the researcher has adopted an integrative methodology that made use of several approaches to text, context and genre analysis. To investigate language use as a professional practice (ethnographic perspective), the researcher made use of situatedness (Devitt, 1991; Miller, 1992) and textography (Swales, 1998). To investigate language use as text (textual perspective), the researcher made use of Biber's et al. (2007) BCU approach to discourse organization and Biber's (1988, 1995) and Conrad and Biber's (2001) multi-dimensional framework to investigate register variation. To investigate language use as genre (socio-cognitive perspective), the researcher made use of Biber's et al. (2007) BCU approach to discourse organization and Devitt's (1991) kinds of intertextuality. To investigate language use as a product of a culture (Socio-critical perspective), the researcher investigated the strategies, inferences and contextualization cues (Van Dijk, 2001) that shows conformity to the organizational culture and ideologies in the workplace. The integration of these approaches provided a thick description (Greetz, 1973) and comprehensive analysis (Bhatia, 2008) of the email genre as an institutional practice.

Another motivation for conducting this study is the already high and increasing use of email for work-related communications. Email is the preferred channel of communication in the workplace in Malaysia (Baninanjarian, Abdullah, and Bolong,

2011; Ean, 2010; Hadina Habil, 2010; Husain et al., 2009) and abroad (Lichtenstein and Swatman, 2001; O'Kane, Hargie, and Tourish, 2004; Pee et al., 2008; Surjan, 2008). In a survey, OfficeTeam an international job-seeking organization specializing in finding jobs for white-collar professionals, carried out in 2006, 71 percent of the respondents preferred email communication with colleagues, which reflected an increase of 27 percent from a previous survey the same organization carried out five years earlier. The use of face-to-face communication declined from 24 percent in 2001 to 14 percent in 2006, and the use of telephone conversations also declined from 48 percent to 13 percent during the same period (Flynn, 2010). Comparing the use of email with the use of traditional written channels of communication in the workplace also reveals that the use of email has overtaken the use of letters and memorandums, and the use of fax is almost extinct in institutions (Louhiala-Salminen 1995, 1999, 2002; Nikali, 1998). Therefore, a need exists to conduct empirical research based on natural authentic email communications in the workplace to inform students and novice practitioners about the discursive realities of email communication in the professional world (Bhatia, 2008).

Practitioners usually attend training to become familiar with the norms of business writing, but they are not taught how to be effective electronic communicators (Nantz and Drexel, 1995; Nor Azni Abdullah, 2003). Therefore, email communication was reported as a source of information overload (Dawley and William, 2003; Eppler and Mengis, 2003; Thomas et al., 2006; and Russel et al., 2007), flaming (McLaughlin et al., 1995; Sussman and Sproull, 1999; Palme, 2003; O'Sullivan and Flanagin, 2003), bullying (Romm and Pliskin, 1999; and Baruch, 2005) and interruption (Cutrell et al., 2000; Czerwinski et al., 2000; Speier, 2003) in the

workplace. Surveying previous research does not provide much help as it was based mainly on surveys, simulations and measurement procedures (Husain et al., 2009; Kankaanranta, 2005; Swangboonsatic, 2006). Therefore, "we need to stop conducting surveys…and 'get into' organizations so we know first-hand what communication tasks managers and staff professionals at various levels … perform" (Suchan, 1993, p. 203).

Due to the above-mentioned reasons, a need exists to examine the genre of email communication as a resource using authentic and natural data. This examination would not only reveal how the emails are written, but also why they are written the way they are (Bhatia, 2004).

1.3 Research Questions

This study examines language use in one of the most rapidly growing, but least researched channels of workplace communication, email. The overall objective of the study is to investigate the genre of email communication in one private higher educational institution in Kuala Lumpur as an institutional practice. Therefore, the following are the research questions of the study:

1. What are the influences of the institutional practices in the private higher educational institution that is subject of this study on the nature and the construction of the genre?
2. What are the textual features of the email messages exchanged in the private higher educational institution that is subject of this study?
3. How is the genre of email communication constructed and exploited by the employees of the institution that is subject of this study?

4. What are the influences of the disciplinary conventions in the private higher educational institution that is subject of this study on language use in the email messages?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main research objectives of this study are:

1. To analyse the influences of the institutional practices in the private higher educational institution that is subject of the study on the nature and the construction of the genre.
2. To analyse the textual features used in the email messages exchanged in the private higher educational institution that is subject of the study.
3. To analyse how the genre of email communication is constructed and exploited by the employees of the institution that is subject of the study.
4. To analyse the influences of the disciplinary conventions in the private higher educational institution that is subject of the study on language use in the email messages.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study goes beyond the overwhelming majority of research conducted on the genre of workplace communication, in general, and email communication in particular. It does not only investigate the genre of email as model. It investigates the genre as a resource of conventionalized and institutionalized practices and procedures. It investigates language use in the emails as text, genre, professional practice and a product of institutional culture (Bhatia, 2010a). Language use as text examines the lexico-grammatical features (Biber, 1988, 1995) and the discourse units

(Biber, et al., 2007). Language use as genre examines how the texts are constructed (Biber et al., 2007; Upton and Cohen, 2009) and how they are exploited (Bhatia, 2004). Language use as a professional practice examines the influences of institutional practices in the educational institution on the construction of genre (Swales, 1998). Language as a product of a professional culture, however, examines the influences of the disciplinary conventions of the discourse community on language use (Bhatia, 2004).

Following Swales's (1990) concept of 'discourse community', researchers have examined different entities to bridge language use and institutional and professional practices (Ching, 2011). Some have suggested grouping communities according to their rhetorical practice (Miller, 1994), others grouped communities according to their focus (Porter, 1992). Meanwhile, Killingsworth and Gilbertson (1992) suggested 'local' and 'global' communities depending on their location and the actions they want to accomplish. Later on, Swales (1998) refined his concept of discourse community to 'place discourse community', which he defined as a "group of people who regularly work together…. (T)his group typically has a name. Members of the group (or most of them) have a settled (if evolving) sense of their aggregation's roles and purposes" (p. 204). Following this, researchers strived to bridge language use and institutional practice in book reviews (Tse and Hyland, 2009), social work (new immigrants interactions) (Rubino, 2009), health work (medical discourse) (Gunnarsson, 2006), law (legal documents) (Lung, 2008), and traditional business communication in institutions (Ching, 2011; Kristina, 2011; Louhiala-Salminen, 2009; Piller, 2009). Examining language use as an institutional practice in the educational sector, specifically the genre of email exchanges in private

educational institutions, has not yet been examined. As mentioned earlier, private higher educational institutions in several countries, including Malaysia, are well-established organizations that have a long history of producing graduates to meet the needs of the marketplace. They use language to accomplish their daily academic and organizational tasks. Therefore, an investigation into language use as an institutional practice relating to educational institutions is of vital significance, as it sheds more light on how these communities use language, email in particular, to achieve their targets, goals and carry out their institutional tasks.

Additionally, the researcher shares Hawisher and Moran's (1993, p. 643) belief that "we need to build email into our discipline because in the future there will be more, not less, electronic communication". Teaching formal language style of writing in schools and business colleges without referring to the current flexible conventions of email may not help students to be fit members of a modern workplace. On the other hand, asserting that email is an informal communication channel in the workplace (Adler and Elmhorst, 2004; Blundel, 2004; Taylor, 1999) may not help either because email, these days, is the preferred channel of communication for intra-organizational and inter-organizational communication (Flynn, 2010; Gimenez, 2005; Kankaanranta, 2005; Scheyder, 2003). Therefore, we need to present more empirical research pertaining to workplace emails to inform students and novice practitioners about the current practices in using email in the workplace. This is particularly important as email communication in the workplace has been reported to be a source of flaming (Palme, 2003) and bullying (Baruch, 2005). Students and novice practitioners need to know how the emails are written, why they are written and what influences the institutional practices, disciplinary conventions and relating

factors have on language use in email messages. Similarly, English-for-business communication instructors need to be aware of these current practices in using email and relate this awareness to their students in order to prepare them for the cyber world of business.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study investigates language use in email communication as an institutional practice at one private higher educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. The main informants were seven full-time employees in the educational institution who work in different organizational positions and represent the different ethnic backgrounds work at the institution. They are Malays, Chinese Malaysians, Indian Malaysians and a Jordanian. The investigation about the genre of email included the intra-organizational and inter-organizational email communications of the seven main informants. As a large number of the emails were exchanged in chains or threads, the received emails were also included as they provided the immediate context of the interactions. The investigation of the genre of email, however, examined the emails that were produced by the main informants alone.

The investigation of genre in this study adopted Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework. It investigates the genre of email from four perspectives that are the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. On the ethnographic perspective, the front-stage and back-stage interactions of the discourse community were investigated to identify the critical moments of interactions in the discourse community (Bhatia, 2004; Goffman, 1959). In addition, the mode of genre construction and communication (Swales, 1998) was

also investigated to identify the influence of the institutional practices in the discourse community on the nature and construction of genre. On the textual perspective, the rhetorical moves (Biber et al., 2007; Swales, 1990) and the lexico-grammatical features of the email messages were investigated. On the socio-cognitive perspective, the patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity were investigated to identify how the genre of email is constructed and exploited by the discourse community (Biber et al., 2007; Bhatia, 2004; Devitt, 1991). On the socio-critical perspective, the influences of the disciplinary conventions in the discourse community on language use were investigated to identify why the employees write their emails the way they do (Bhatia, 2004).

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following is the definition of some terms in this study:

Communicative purpose in this study refers to the functional and cognitive intention of the communication in the email message (Bhatia, 1993). It "operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused" (Swales, 1990, p. 58).

Disciplinary conventions in this study refer to the implicitly understood and unconsciously followed and the explicitly enforced conventions that govern the use of language in the institution (Bhatia, 2004).

Discourse community in this study refers to a number of people, who have common public goal[s] of communication, have common techniques in their

intercommunication, and use these techniques in their communications whether to deliver information or give feedback (Swales, 1990).

Ethnographic analysis in this study refers to the investigation of the front-stage and back-stage interactions in the discourse community to examine the critical site of engagement and moments of interactions. It also refers to the textographic analysis (see textography below) that investigates the mode of genre construction and communication (Bhatia, 2004; Swales, 1998).

Genre in this study refers to "a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs" (Bhatia. 1993, p. 13).

Genre as a resource in this study refers to the "knowledge of procedures, practices, and conventions that make the text possible and relevant to a particular socio-rhetorical context" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 5).

Genre system in this study refers to the "complete set of discursive forms that are invoked by all the participants involved in a professional activity" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 55).

Move in this study refers to a discourse unit in a text bearing a unique communicative purpose that is characterized by a unique functional-semantic contribution and linguistic features and/or typographical features or symbols and

identified in its context. Every move is unique and builds with the other moves identified in the text[s] the communicative purpose of the whole text.

Socio-cognitive analysis in this study refers to the discourse-based investigation (Bhatia, 2010a) of the patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

Socio-critical analysis in this study refers to the discourse-based investigation (Bhatia, 2010a) of the influence of the organizational culture[s] and organizational ideologies in the private higher educational institution on language use (Bhatia, 2004).

Textography is "an approach to genre analysis that combines elements of text analysis with ethnographic techniques such as interviews, observations, and document analysis" (Paltridge, 2008, p. 10).

Textual analysis in this study refers to the semantic-functional investigation of the discourse units or the moves (Biber, et al., 2007) and the functional investigation of the lexico-grammatical features used in the emails (Biber, 1988, 1995).

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study is organized into eight chapters. The first three chapters present the preparatory work of the study and include the introduction, literature review and methodology. Chapter two reveals the emergence of this study from previous research. It also highlights the gap that this study targets to fill. In addition, chapter

two discusses several approaches to [critical] genre analysis, and provides insights into previous research on computer-mediated communication, in general, and email communication in the workplace in particular.

Chapter three presents the overall methodology of the study. It details the research questions and presents an overview about the educational institution subject of the study. It also details the data, methods of analysis and the analytical framework of the study.

Chapters four to seven present the analytical realizations of the study on the four perspectives of critical genre analysis. Chapter four examines the ethnographic perspective. It investigates the critical site of engagement and moments of interaction in the discourse community that is the subject of the study. It also examines the mode of genre construction and communication.

Chapter five examines the textual perspective. In this chapter, the rhetorical moves used in the email messages are identified, and the lexico-grammatical features used in the emails are analysed.

Chapter six targets the socio-cognitive perspective. This chapter examines how the emails are constructed and how they are exploited. The patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity are analysed. To authenticate the findings, this chapter presents validation derived from the opinion of a focus group that included seven members who worked in two different private higher educational institutions in Kuala Lumpur.

Chapter seven examines the socio-critical perspective. This chapter examines the influence of the disciplinary conventions, mainly the organizational culture and organizational ideologies, on language use.

Chapter eight discusses the findings of the study and draws conclusions. This chapter confirms the different types of email genres in relationship to the different levels of analysis. It also presents the implications of the study and future research directions. The conclusion sums up the chapter and the study.

1.9 Summary

This chapter presented the main purpose that led the researcher to the investigation of the genre of email communication in the workplace as a product of conventionalized and institutionalized practices and procedures, not only texts. It highlighted the importance of investigating the text-internal and text-external elements that make the genre possible in a specific socio-rhetorical context (Bhatia, 2002). This chapter also outlined the scope of the study and the contributions on the theoretical and institutional practice levels.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is a critical genre analysis enquiry that intends to investigate language use in email communication as a genre. The genre of email communication is viewed as a resource and a product of institutionalized practices and procedures in a community of practice. It is, as such, a goal-oriented communication that takes place in a certain place by certain people to achieve their discursive practices in their institutional context. The literature review is divided into five sections. Firstly, the researcher presented insights into language use. The second section is concerned with language use as genre. In this section, the researcher discussed four approaches to genre analysis, namely, systemic functional linguistic (SFL), new rhetoric, English for specific purposes (ESP) and Bhatia's (2004) critical genre analysis (CGA). As this study is mainly a critical genre analysis, the third section presented insights into the critical perspective to genre analysis including intertextuality, interdiscursivity and the institutional context including the organizational culture and the organizational ideologies. As this study is concerned with language use in email exchanges, the fourth section discussed the nature of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and email in the workplace. The fifth section presented insights into the analytical framework for the moves and the textual artefacts of the email messages.

2.1 Language and Language Use

The dictionary definition of the term language as a mass noun is "the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in structured and conventional way" (Soanes and Stevenson, 2008, p. 801). This

definition suggests that language is a method of communication, which is a point emphasized by Sapir (1921), who defined language as a "method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires" (p. 8). It also suggests that language has rules and structures. According to Biber, et al. (1998), language is distinguished by structure and use. In language as a structure, the focus, according to Biber et al. (1998), is on the units and classes of a language such as the morphemes, words, phrases and clausal. Matthiessen and Halliday (1997) referred to this view of language as "language as a set of rules" (p. 2).

The second view of language, according to Biber et al. (1998), is language use or "language as a resource" (Matthiessen and Halliday, 1997). Language as a resource reviews how communicators "exploit resources of their language" (Biber et al., 1998, p.1). Language, in this sense, is a "resource for making meaning" (Matthiessen and Halliday, 1997). As such, given that the "text is the basic unit; the sentence is studied in its discourse context" (p. 2). To investigate language as a resource, Biber (1988) presented a multi-dimensional framework. Biber's main intention was investigating register variations from a functional perspective. According to Conrad and Biber (2001), register is recognized through "core lexical and grammatical features" that are used in almost all texts. However, what makes a text distinct from another is the type of register features used. According to Conrad and Biber (2001), some registers can only be distinguished by the frequent or infrequent use of certain features.

Biber's (1988, 1995) framework includes seven basic dimensions, in which every dimension has positive and negative features. The categorization of register depends upon the occurrence of the linguistic features. The first dimension is "involved vs.

informational production". "Involved production" is reflected in the use of first and second person pronouns, hedges, private verbs, simple present tense, 'wh' questions, possibility modals and a number of other features, whereas "information production" is reflected in the use of agentless passive voice, place adverbials, nouns, word length and a number of other linguistic features (Biber, 1988, 1995). The second dimension is the "narrative vs. non-narrative discourse". "Narrative discourse" is reflected in the use of past tense, present perfect tense, public verbs, present participle clauses and a number of other linguistic features, whereas the "non-narrative discourse" is reflected in the use of attributed adjectives and present tense (Biber, 1988, 1995). The third dimension is the "situational-dependent reference vs. elaborated reference". "Situational-dependent reference" is reflected in the use of place adverbials, time adverbials and adverbs whereas the "elaborated reference" is reflected in the use of nominalization, 'wh' relative clauses on object and subject positions, and phrasal co-ordination (Biber, 1988, 1995). The fourth dimension is the "overtly expression of argumentation". "Overtly argumentative" is reflected in the use of predicative, necessity and possibility modals, infinitives, suasive verbs, and conditional subordination (Biber, 1988, 1995). The fifth dimension is the "abstract vs. non-abstract style". The "abstract style" is reflected in the use of agentless passive, 'by' passive, conjuncts and past participle adverbial and post nominal clauses, but there are no positive features for the "non-abstract style" (Biber, 1988, 1995). The sixth dimension is "on-line vs. non-online informational". "On-line informational" is reflected in the use of demonstrative pronouns, demonstratives, that clauses, and 'wh' relative clauses, whereas the "edited not on-line informational" is reflected in the use of phrasal coordination (Biber, 1988, 1995). The seventh dimension is the "tentative interpretation academic hedges", which is reflected in the

use of adverbs, seem and appear hedges, attributive adjectives, downtoners, and concessive adverbial subordination (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The dimensions of register variation have both "linguistic and functional content" (Conrad and Biber, 2001, p. 6). The linguistic content refers to identifying the frequently used linguistic features in the register. This may include the use of tenses, modal verbs, private verbs, pronouns, and voice. The functional content, however, refers to interpreting the use of these features "in terms of [the] situational, social, and cognitive functions" (Conrad and Biber, 2001, p. 6) they serve in the text. That is, Conrad and Biber (2001) suggested conducting microscopic and macroscopic analysis on the functions of the linguistic features.

The microscopic analysis, according to Biber (1988), is concerned with the communicative functions of the frequently occurred lexico-grammatical features, whereas the macroscopic analysis examines the dimensions in which these features belong. On the microscopic level, Biber signified that the use of the first and second person pronouns indicates personal involvement and expressing personal feelings, the use of third person pronouns, however, indicates reference to other participants in the context. The use of the present tense indicates immediate occurrence of the event, whereas the use of the past and perfect tenses indicate referring to past events. The use of passive voice "promotes an inanimate referent or demotes the animate referent" (Biber, 1995, p.164). The use of 'wh' questions indicates that a specific addressee is involved. The use of private verbs and present tenses reflects active and verbal style of language. The use of modal verbs could be distinguished from deontic and epistemic. Deontic modals refer to obligation, whereas epistemic modality refers

to logical status or knowledge (Biber, 1988, 1995; Crystal, 2003b). The use of hedges reflects probability or uncertainty (p. 241). After identifying the functional use of the features, Biber (1988, 1995) grouped these features into the seven basic dimensions to identify the register of the corpus. This current study is concerned with this view of language that does not merely count what linguistic features are used in the emails, but also why these features are used in their institutional context.

Investigating language use, as mentioned earlier, does not intend to analyse the texts or the structural patterns of the texts as a goal. It investigates them as a method to explore another target or goal. In systemic functional linguistics, for example, Halliday (1985) examined the structural patterns of the texts to identify the register. The register, according to Halliday (1985, 2002) can be identified by examining three components that are the field or the social action, the tenor or the role of the participants and their status and mode or how the participants use the channel of communication, which refers to the textual metafunction. The main purpose of Halliday's (1985) systemic functional grammar (SFG) approach is examining "meaning as a choice".

From a discourse analysis perspective, the focus is on the "analysis of language in use" (Brown and Yule, 1983, p. 1). That is, discourse analysis is the investigation of language use "beyond sentence boundaries" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 3). This view of language use widens the boundaries of the analysis to include the text and context (Schiffrin, 1994). The analysis of the context may even include the analysis of body language and eye contact. It also includes the assumptions that people have about each other (Cook, 2003). In this sense, discourse is "language in use, as a process,

which is socially situated" (Candlin, 1997, p. ix). Discourse analysis, according to Juez (2009), is not merely concerned with the linguistic facts, it exceeds those to examine language use in social, political and cultural disciplines, which does not only attract the interest of linguists, but also philosophers, anthropologists, communication specialists, sociologists and political scientists.

From a critical discourse analysis standpoint, however, language use is "a form of social practice" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 63). The main intention of Fairclough's approach is to make a "contribution to the general rising of consciousness of exploitative social relations, through focusing upon language" (1989, p. 5). In analysing any communicative event, Fairclough (1992) drew attention to three main analytical nuclei, which are: the text, discourse and social practices. Text practices, according to Fairclough (1992), refer to the production of the texts. That is, text practices refer to the linguistic choice of words in the texts, which include the vocabulary and grammar. Discourse practices refer to the interpretation of the texts. That is, how the text is produced and how it is received. Social practices, however, refer to the practices that are usually used in a certain context. As such, conducting critical discourse analysis requires examining the text and the social context.

Language use can also be examined as a genre. According to Bhatia (2004, p. 23), genre is "language use in a conventionalized communicative setting". As such, to examine genre, researchers need to examine the conventionalized use of language in a given setting, or what Swales (1990, 1998) called a [place] discourse community. Language use, in this sense, is examined from a cognitive or functional perspective (Bhatia, 1993). According to Martin (1992), by investigating the register in a

'context of situation'; we may identify the 'context of culture' or the genre. Bazerman (1994) also suggested investigating the context to determine the genre. However, unlike Martin and Halliday, he suggested using ethnographic methods such as interviews and observations. These ethnographic methods investigate the characteristics of the 'rhetorical community' (Miller, 1994) in which the genre text regularly occurs.

As such, language use is discussed in different disciplines and approaches to investigate "how humans make sense of their world" (McKee, 2003, p. 1). In this study, language use is examined as a genre. As mentioned earlier, genre analysis does not only count on the textual artefacts of the genre text, but also examines the context in which the genre regularly occurs, including the characteristics of the discourse or rhetorical community. This focus was extended further recently to include the socio-cognitive and the socio-critical perspectives (Bhatia, 2004).

2.2 Genre Studies

Genre study is an approach in communicational interactions that involves textual analysis of the content, form, and functions of a text or a group of texts in relation to the context. Campbell and Jamieson (1978) defined genre as a group of acts that are unified in a form. These forms, according to Campbell and Jamieson (1978), occur in other discourses, but what makes them a genre is their "recurrence in constellation" (p. 20). This traditional view of language use that mainly identifies the genre of a group of texts in relation to their form or content is the foundation for any genre study.

These days, however, genre is defined in relation to its social, rhetorical or institutional context. From a social perspective, genre is "a socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 14). From a rhetorical perspective, genre is "tying linguistic and substantive similarities to regularities in human spheres of activities" (Freedman and Medway, 1995, p. 1). Genre is also defined as "consistencies in the communicative purposes" (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990). Some scholars have viewed genre as 'context of culture' (Martin, 1992) that is recognized by the recurrence of the register in a 'context of situation' (Halliday, 1985).

This section discussed four main approaches to genre that are the systemic functional approach (SFL), new rhetoric, English for specific purposes (ESP) and Bhatia's (2004) critical genre analysis (CGA). The interesting issue about these four approaches is the differencing methods used to identify the genre. SFL placed a great emphasis on the text to recognize the context, while new rhetoric approach placed more emphasis on the context to understand the text. ESP and CGA, however, placed an equal amount of emphasis on the text and the context.

2.2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) Approach to Genre

SFL or the 'Sydney School' (Hyland, 2002) is based on Halliday's systemic functional grammar (SFG) approach. Halliday's (1985) approach is functional grammar as opposed to 'formal grammar' and functional as it intends to interpret the texts, the system and the linguistic structures. His approach is systemic as the structures that people tend to use in certain recurrent situations are systematic.

As Halliday (1985) viewed grammar form a functional point of view, he also viewed the components of meaning as functional. He supposed that languages are systematized around two types of meanings that are the ideational, which represent experience (Martin and Rose, 2003), and the interpersonal, which is the component enacting relationships (Martin and Rose, 2003). As such, the ideational component is concerned with our use of grammar and grammatical resources to interpret our experience of the world around us and inside us (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). The interpersonal component, however, is concerned with the relationship between the communicators. It is the "grammatical resources for *enacting* social roles" (Matthiessen and Halliday, 1997, p. 12).

In addition to these two components, Halliday (1985) added another component that is the textual, which "breathes relevance into the other two". The textual component, then, is concerned with the presentation of the other two components as a text (Matthiessen and Halliday, 1997). Halliday (1985) called these three components of meanings metafunctions. According to Martín and Rose (2003), these three functions or metafunctions of language are "interwoven with each other" (p. 6). Therefore, researchers may examine any discourse from any of these three components to identify the functions carried out by the different patterns of meaning (p.7).

According to Halliday (1985), the main intention of this approach is to examine the meaning as a choice. For him, the meanings that are carried out in any semiotic system can be interpreted as a network of interlocking options. He argued that language, as a socializing system, is used to achieve meaning in what he called the context of situation. The context of situation, according to Halliday, reoccurs as

situation types. Therefore, the users of any semiotic system create typified options that they use when they face the same context of situation. As such, these typified options become conventional in any similar context of situation and create what Halliday called the semantic configurations or the register.

The register was (and still is) a central focus in SFG and SFL. According to Halliday and Hasan (1989, p. 39), the register is a "configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, tenor, and mode". In this sense, the field refers to the social action that is taking place between participants, the tenor refers to the participants who are taking part in the social action, their role and status and the mode refers to the function[s] of language in that given context (Halliday and Hasan, 1985). Taking workplace emails as an example, if an employee sent a goal-oriented email to a colleague, the field is the knowledge that the writer has about writing such an email in the workplace. The tenor is the status and role played by the sender and the recipient[s] in the institution. The mode, however, is how the participant used the channel of communication, which is a computer-mediated written channel in this context, to achieve his goals.

A close observation of register components or the configurations of meanings shows that they are interconnected to Halliday's metafunctions of language. The ideational metafunction, as explained earlier, is related to or represents the experience that the participants have when facing typified or reoccurring situations. As such, it is related to the field. As the interpersonal metafunction represents the participants and their relationships, it communicates to the tenor. Finally, as the textual metafunction relates to how the participants organize their texts to achieve their goal, it relates to

the mode. In this sense, the context of situation and the register, according to Bawarshi and Reiff (2010), realize one another. That is, this perception of Halliday implies that the texts that share the same context of situation make use of the same ideational, interpersonal and textual choices and belong to the same register (Butt et. al., 2000).

To examine the use of the three metafunctions and the components of register, researchers have looked at and examined the functional use of the lexico-grammatical features used in text[s]. To examine the field or the ideational metafunction, researchers have examined the use of verbs and nominal and prepositional phrases. Examining the functional use of nominal phrases may provide insights about the participant; by examining the use of verbs, we may create perceptions about the nature of the involvement, and investigating the use of prepositional phrases provide us insights into the circumstances (Schleppegrell, 2004, Thompson, 1996). To identify the interpersonal metafunction or the tenor, researchers have looked at the mood of the clauses or the use of the declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences. They also looked at the use of model verbs and their functions. To identify the textual metafunction and the mode, researchers have looked at the use of cohesive devices such as repetition, ellipsis, and substitutions (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Schleppegrell, 2004, Thompson, 1996). The examination of these linguistic resources included the use and the meaning or the function of the use in the given context of situation. Once the functional investigation is complete, the researcher may identify the register of the given text[s].

According to Hyon (1996), register was the focus of Halliday's approach to language analysis. However, some of his students, such as Hasan (1977, 1985), Martin (1992, 1997) and Eggins (2004), extended the focus of the approach to include genre. According to Martin and Rose (2003), genre is a "staged, goal-oriented social process" (p. 7). It is staged as it usually takes us a number of steps to achieve our goals, goal-oriented as we use it to achieve goals, and social as we use genre with other people (Martin and Rose, 2007). According to Martin (1992), genre and register realize each another, but they occur in two different levels of context. That is, we may regard genre and register as semiotic planes that fly on two different levels. Register flies in a lower semiotic level, whereas the genre flies on a higher semiotic level. As such, in order to determine the genre of a correspondence, we need to identify the register on the context of situation level. Once the three dimensions of situation -field, tenor and mode - appear to regularly co-occur and become stabilized as part of a culture, according Eggins (2004), they are, then, identified as genres.

For Hasan (1977, 1985), the genre of a social event may be identified by examining the text-ness or the characteristics that make the text what it is. The text-ness, here, refers to the structure and texture of the social event[s] or the text[s]. In this sense, Hasan (1977) defined texture as "the fact that the lexicogrammatical units represent a text hang together" (p. 229). The structure, however, is "what allows us to distinguish between complete and incomplete texts, on the one hand, and between different generic forms on the other" (Hasan, 1977, p. 229). That is, to identify the genre of a social event we need to examine the linguistic resources of the text[s] such as the lexico-grammatical features and cohesion (i.e., ellipsis, substitution, lexical

organization), on the one hand, and the completeness of the text structure or the "actual structure".

To evaluate the completeness and incompleteness of texts, Hasan (1977) stated that every social event includes obligatory, optional and reiterational elements. The obligatory elements refer to the indispensable elements that must occur in any similar social event. The optional elements refer to the elements that can occur but their occurrence is not obligatory, whereas the reiteration elements refer to the elements that may occur. In this sense, the optional and reiteration elements are not integral parts of the process of determining genre; the obligatory elements, however, are fundamental and considered categorizing elements in defining the genre. In this sense, if a text does not include the obligatory elements, it is, then, incomplete or its generic membership cannot be determined (Ventola, 1987). Consequently, a slight change in the obligatory elements will result into creating a new genre. To explain this point, Taboada (2004) pointed out a scenario in a travel agency as an example. She explained that booking is considered an obligatory genre-defining element in the conversation between the client and the travel agent. However, if the conversation took a longer time and included an enquiry, this, in Hasan's (1977) opinion, will result into having two different genres that are the booking genre and the booking and enquiry genre.

As mentioned earlier, the focus of SFL was identifying the register of communications to help students "learn to exercise the appropriate linguistic choices relevant to the needs, functions or meanings at any time" (Christie, 1987, p. 24). This focus was extended to include teaching English to new immigrants in Australia

(Feez, 2002; Halliday, 1994). Recently, the use of the SFL approach has been extended further to include written and oral workplace communication. Kristina (2011), for example, referred to SFL, or to Hasan's (1977, 1985) module in particular, to examine the genre of promotion letters in the Indonesian batik industry. She asserted that the use of SFL helped her identify the lexico-grammatical features used in the letters. It also helped in determining the obligatory, optional and reiterational elements in the text genre. In another study, Thomas (1997) examined the linguistic features used in executive letters. He concluded that letter writers use passive voice to distance themselves from the action, especially when delivering bad or negative news. Eggins and Slade (1997), however, applied SFL to examine oral genres. They asserted that the main function of the conversations is to represent communicators' social identity and negotiate relationships. As such, applying SFL to examine the functional use of the lexico-grammatical features and cohesion devices in workplace communication is not a new trend. It appeared to be useful in examining linguistic resources in relation to the context of situation.

2.2.2 New Rhetoric Approach to Genre

Unlike the SFL approach to genre that placed more emphasis on the text[s] to apprehend the context, new rhetoric, or the North American, approach to genre placed more emphases on the context to recognize the text[s]. This viewpoint can be seen in the methodological aspect adopted by the new rhetoricians who mainly used ethnographic methods to examine the genre in its institutional context. Bazerman (1988, 1994), for example, has favoured conducting interviews and observations to identify the genre. Smart (1993) spent around seven months observing and conducting formal and informal interviews in a bank with the intention of

investigating how tax account documents are prepared and produced in its organizational context. This ethnographic perspective in examining genre was also used by other new rhetoricians (Freedman and Medway, 1994; Miller, 1994).

Even though the new rhetoricians focused on ethnographic methods to determine the genre, they did not abandon fully the traditional view of genre as content or form. According to Miller (1984, 1994), who has had the greatest influence in adopting this approach to genre (Flowerdew, 2005), genre is a typified rhetorical actions or recurrent patterns of language use that are based in recurring contexts. These reoccurring patterns bring about our culture or understanding when we come across the same situations (Bazerman, 1994). Therefore, genre knowledge, which appears in the appropriate use of content, is also foregrounded as to investigate how participants choose an appropriate content for an appropriate context (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995). In other words, the new rhetoric approach to genre views genre as typified patterns of language in typified contexts. These typified patterns of language enable us achieve our communicative targets (Bazerman, 1988). As such, new rhetoricians linked the content or the form of the genre to the broader "regularities in human spheres of activities" (Freedman and Medway, 1994, p. 1).

Miller (1984, 1994) placed a remarkable emphasis on the 'action'. She regarded genre as a social action that mediates an external force that she called the situation or the social context, and an internal force that she called the motive or the aim of the communication. Therefore, these actions or genres, according to Miller, should only be interpreted as motives or communicative aims in a situation or a context. Stemming from this view, genre studies that merely examine the content, form or

register are not comprehensive approaches. Genre, as a "motivated, functional relationship between text type and rhetorical situation'' (Coe, 2002, p. 195), should only be interpreted against its context, which requires a fuller understanding of the social and cultural constituents of the community in which the genre regularly occurs. In this sense, Miller (1994) suggested examining the "cultural artefacts" in relation to a "rhetorical community".

The rhetorical community suggested by Miller (1994) is different from the discourse community proposed by Swales (1990). The rhetorical community, according to Miller (1994), is a "rhetorical construct" that makes use of discourse in a conventional or a typified manner to achieve conventional or typified goals. It has common beliefs, values and social practices, which make it different from other rhetorical communities. In this sense, the rhetorical community does not require location unity or membership. It is "a virtual entity, a discursive projection, a rhetorical construct." (p. 73). To further explain, Miller (1992) looked at police as a rhetorical community. Police, in general terms, do not share the same location, but, nevertheless, share the same beliefs and values. They also drill in the same social practices, which makes them a rhetorical community. This suggests that the genre, from Miller's (1984, 1994) point of view, could be defined in different levels of abstractions in different times and different cultures depending on our sense of rhetorical reoccurrence.

According to Hyon (1996), teaching writing in the territory level was the main intention of the new rhetoric approach to genres. This focus, however, was extended to examine the genre of academic and organizational communication (Bazerman,

1988; Devitt, 1991; Dias et al., 1999; Freedman, 1989; Myers, 1990; Smart, 1992, 1993; Yates and Orlikowski, 1992). Building on Miller's view of genre, Yates and Orlikowski (1992), who examined the genre of organizational communication, defined genre as "typified communicative actions characterized by similar substance and form and taken in response to recurrent situations" (p. 299). As the definition suggests, Yates and Orlikowski (1992) also viewed genre as an action, but they emphasized the communicative aspect of it. Yates and Orlikowski (1992) examined the similarities as substance, which they defined as "the social motives, themes, and topics being expressed in the communication" (p. 301), and form, which they defined as "the observable physical and linguistic features of the communication" (p. 309). In terms of identifying genre, Yates and Orlikowski (1992) adopted a more flexible approach to genre than did Miller. Miller (1984) examined genre on different levels of constructs, Yates and Orlikowski, however, examined the genre of business communication. For Yates and Orlikowski, organizational communication might be identified as a single genre or a number of sub-genres depending on the similarities in the topic and formal features. Miller (1984), however, argued "genre can only be identified at one of these levels in a specific time and place" (Kankaanranta, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, new rhetoricians mainly adopted ethnographic methodologies to examine genre. Miller (1984, 1994) suggested an ethno-methodological perspective that observes the participants or genre writers, on the one hand, and the partakers in the broader scene that include the rhetorical community, on the other. The main purpose of this ethnographic analysis is investigating the daily practices, activities and the "cultural artefacts" of the rhetorical community that help them construct the genre the way they did. Similarly, Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995)

suggested conducting "situatedness" or the participation in the daily practices, activities and professional life of the community using the genre. This "situatedness", according to Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), enables researchers to gain an in-depth understanding about genre knowledge. In addition, Bazerman (1988), who investigated the production of experimental articles also made use of ethnographic methods such as formal and informal interviews and observations to investigate how these articles were produced in their context. This ethnographic methodology, however, was always supported by content and form analysis to examine the regularities or the typified use of language in the given context of situation.

In this sense, the new rhetoric approach to genre, or specifically, the methodological orientation of the approach seems suitable for the purposes of this study. The ethnographic analysis suggested by Miller (1984, 1994) and Bazerman (1994) would provide in-depth information about the factors that allow the community to produce the texts the way they do. Additionally, Yates and Orlikowski's (1992) focus on organizational communication seems suitable for this study, especially, their focus on identifying genres according to their common subjects and common formal features.

2.2.3 English for Specific Purposes Approach to Genre (ESP)

The English for specific purposes approach to genre is based on the work of Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993). Swales (1990) argued that the traditional method of genre analysis that focused on register does not explain the genre of correspondence. Identifying genre, according to Swales (1990), should focus on the communicative purpose[s]. For Swales (1990), genre is a "class of communicative events in which

language and paralanguage play both significant and indispensable role" (p. 47). This means that aimless communications that incidentally happen is not considered a communicative event, because the use of language is vital in communicative events. According to Swales (1990), genres should be grouped according to their communicative purposes, not the form or the content of the language even though they are integrated. These purposes, Swales argued, are known by the communicators in certain discourse communities. They are accepted and understood by the whole community. Therefore, they became conventions. In order to identify the communicative purpose[s] of correspondence, Swales (1990) proposed his "move-step" approach to genre, in which he explained that the move carries the communicative intention; the step, however, is the smaller unit that carries the communicative purposes.

In addition to the communicative purposes, Swales (1990) emphasized the importance of the discourse community using the genre. Discourse community as presented by Swales, is different from speech community that is widely referred to in sociolinguistics. According to Borg (2003), a discourse community sits between the speech community as presented by Hymes (1972) and interpretive community as presented by Fish (1980). Discourse community, according to Swales (1990), includes a number of people, who have common public goal[s] of communication, have a common technique in their intercommunication, and use this technique in their communications whether to deliver information or to give feedback. Speech communities, however, have an oral medium of communication, their purpose of communication is social and membership is granted by birth. A discourse community, according to Swales, has it is own conventions on the meaning and the

use of specific vocabulary and abbreviations. This, however, does not mean that the discourse community uses one single genre. Swales argued that members of a discourse community may use more than one genre within the same community, and those members of a particular discourse community might be members of other discourse communities. Therefore, the communicational conventions used by a given discourse community might not reflect the practices used by other discourse communities.

Using 'textography', Swales (1998) narrowed his view of discourse community to place discourse community. He applied his new term to two separate university buildings at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. He examined what kind of writing the place discourse community was engaged in, what kind of texts they wrote and what guided the writing (Swales, 1998). He linguistically analysed the documents and the correspondences the employees wrote to examine why the texts were written the way they are. He used a mix of discourse analysis and ethnography such as observation, interviews and participating in the daily life of the informants to examine the context in which the texts are constructed. His findings supported his view of place discourse community in which people who work regularly together form a community and use their own conventions to communication that are different from other communities. Swales (1998) defined place discourse community as "a group of people who regularly work together. This group typically has a name" (p. 204).

After identifying the communicative purposes used by certain discourse community, Swales (1990) emphasized the importance of naming the newly identified genre[s].

For Paltridge (1997, p. 107), "[t]he 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". Swales (1990) agreed with Paltridge that the names of genres given by the discourse community "constitute valuable ethnographic communication", however he emphasized that these names "typically need further validation" (p. 58).

Bhatia (1993) supported Swales's (1990) approach to genre, but he asserted that the focus should be directed not only to the communicative purposes, but also to the context, linguistic and sociolinguistic factors. That is, identifying the genre should not only include explaining the practice, but also the rationale after the given practice. In highlighting the importance of the communicative purpose to determine the genre, Bhatia (2002) argued that the communicative purpose is important in identifying genre through the generic principles of such things as description, and evaluation that are independent of any specific situation. These generic principles of "values" give the shape of "discourse colony" (Bhatia, 1997, p. 634). Even though discourse colony shapes the discourse, it does not have real distinctions, and the discursive margins overlap. The boundaries of the discourse colony become clearer when the analysis moves from the general purpose to the more specific purpose. As long as the purpose of the communication remains the same, the genres remain related and overlap, but if the purpose of communication changes, the genres become distinctively different. In order to clarify this issue, Bhatia (1993) gave an example of advertisements. He argued that advertisements in general could include TV advertisements, Internet advertisements and print advertisements. They are different in their medium and target. In general analysis, they may look similar and belong to

the same genre. However, a deeper analysis indicates that they may belong to different genres, if the purpose of communication appears different.

The use of ESP approach to genre has attracted a number of researchers in the last two decades (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005; Catenaccio, 2008; Lassen, 2006; Llopis, 2009; Louhiala-Salminen, 1995; Pinto dos Santos, 2002; Yates and Orlikowski, 1992, 2002; Yunxia, 2000). Generally, this approach to genre is used as an educational method in teaching English as a second (foreign) language. Luzon (2005) referred to the discourse community concept, suggested by Swales (1990), in order to understand the practice used in technical communication. She asserted that "by studying genres in relation to the activity system of a community", researchers may improve their understanding of the technical communication. In a more recent study, Huiling (2008) studied "the initiation of novice grant writers to the activity system of National Institutions of Health grant applications" (p. 3). She suggested that writing instructors should "teach genre systems rather than specific genres to better facilitate students' enculturation to activity systems of disciplinary discourse communities" (p. 3). The use of the discourse community concept was also applied in examining the genre of press release (Tench, 2003) and teaching writing to high school students (Gordon and Myskow, 2010). According to Hyon (1996, p. 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".

ESP was also used in a number of studies that investigated the genre of business communication. After analysing their communicative purposes, Yates and

Orlikowski (1992) identified business letters, business memos, and business email messages as genres. Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), however, stated that the traditional classification of genres is very general. For them, knowing the genre does not only mean knowing the topic and the content, but should also include knowing the specified topic and the details of the communication. Genres should also be restricted in terms of time and place, therefore, business letters cannot be considered as a genre because they refer to a general topic that includes many ancillaries.

In a more recent study, Wang Ji-yu (2007), using Swales's and Bhatia's ESP approach to genre, analysed a number of business letters in order to find out their types of genres. She concluded that business letters belong to three different types of genres that are getting or sending information, persuading or negotiating and collaborating. In another study, Louhiala-Salminen (1995), who studied business fax communication, referred to business fax as a single genre. Louhiala-Salminen stated that writing a business fax carries a number of expectations regarding the form and the content between business partners. This means that the name of the sender may summon the purpose of the fax. Later on, Louhiala-Salminen (1999) found that business fax could stand as an umbrella for a number of business fax subgenres like inquiry and order. Mulholland (1999) shared Louhiala-Salminen's (1995) view of recognizing genres. She referred to workplace emails as a single genre. Mulholland (1999) tried to find the regularities of workplace emails as a genre, and she did not refer to any subgenres. Mulholland's motive of doing the study was driven by her desire "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" (Mulholland, 1999, p. 81:

original emphasis). Friesen (2009), however, referred to electronic business communication in general including emails, blogs, FAQs as a single genre that includes similarities.

Building on ESP approach to genre, Bhatia (2004) presented his Critical genre analysis (CGA). As in ESP approach to genre, Bhatia (2004) retained the focus on the text and context; however, he extended this focus to include the socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. In order to investigate the genre as a professional or institutional practice, Bhatia (2004) presented his multi-dimensional framework to investigate genre.

2.2.4 Critical Genre Analysis (CGA)

Critical genre analysis (CGA), according to Bhatia (2010b), is different from the "genre analysis of textual genres" (p. 465) presented by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) as it offers "a complementary methodological alternative in the form of a discourse based investigation of a range of professional, organizational and institutional practices" (p. 466). It is also different in its adoption of a multi-dimensional and multi-perspective view of genre analysis, which has, according to Bhatia (2010b), "tremendous potential for the future of genre studies" (p. 466).

According to Bhatia (2004), the main purpose for presenting this multi-dimensional framework is to investigate discourse from four different facets that are "discourse as text", "discourse as genre", "discourse as professional practice" and "discourse as a product of a professional culture". "Discourse as text" is related to the "textual space" and examines "what features of lexicogrammar are statistically

and/functionally distinctive?" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 17). "Discourse as genre" is related to the "socio-cognitive space" and examines "why do people construct genre the way they do, and what makes this possible?" (p. 17). Discourse as a product of a professional culture examines the influence of the disciplinary conventions on language use. "Discourse as professional practice", however, is related to the social practices that overlap with the socio-cognitive and tactical space.

To conduct a critical genre analysis, Bhatia (2004) suggested investigating four dimensions or overlapping perspectives that are the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive, and socio-critical perspectives. On the ethnographic perspective, Bhatia (2004) suggested investigating the "critical site of engagements or moments of interaction", "physical circumstances influencing genre construction", and "the mode of genre construction and communication" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 163). On the textual perspective, Bhatia (2004) suggested investigating the statistical significance of the lexico-grammatical features, the discourse/rhetorical or cognitive structure, and textualization of the lexico-grammatical features. On the socio-cognitive perspective, Bhatia (2004) suggested examining the patterns of generic integrity, patterns of audience reception, patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity and/or the appropriation of generic resources. On the socio-critical perspective, Bhatia (2004) suggested examining the interaction of language and social structures and interaction between discourse and social changes.

Bhatia (2004) further illustrated that these four dimensions are used to examine the genre in its institutional context. According to Bhatia (2004), genres are "conventionalized discursive actions" (p. 87), however, members of the discourse

community usually ‘mix’ a number of genres to achieve their targets. This leads to what Bhatia called “genre mixing” or “genre embedding”. That is, genre users, especially the expert members of the discourse community, may appropriate the generic resources of a genre to create another. Thus, to provide a fuller description about the genre, researchers need to investigate not only the text-internal but also the text-external aspects of generic integrity.

The “text-internal” aspects of generic integrity, according to Bhatia (2004), refer to textual, intertextual and contextual indicators in the immediate context (p.117). The textual indicators include the lexico-grammatical, rhetorical and discoursal features of the text genre. This may include examining the occurrence and the function of certain lexico-grammatical features, such as the significance of using first and second person pronouns in promotional genres (Bhatia, 2004, p. 116), the rhetorical moves (Swales, 1990), and the organizational structure of these moves in a given genre. Investigating the intertextual indicators may include how the text[s] interacts with surrounding texts, intertextuality (Bhatia, 2004; Devitt, 1991). The investigation on the contextual indictors includes the communicative purposes and their placement in a particular communicative environment (Bhatia, 2004). That is, investigating the text[s] in relation to a network of texts and linguistic traditions in the immediate context (Bhatia, 2004, p. 125).

The “text-external” aspects of generic integrity, however, refer to the discursive practices and the disciplinary or professional culture. The discursive practices, according to Bhatia (2004), refer to the appropriate choice of an appropriate genre to achieve the communicative objectives. This may include the investigation of what

communicative modes or genres (i.e., face-to-face conversation, a telephone call, a letter, a fax, or an email) the discourse community uses for what purposes. The discursive procedure, however, refers to how the members of the discourse community use "relevant generic knowledge and information to make the genre in question possible" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 128). This, according to Bhatia (2004), includes examining the construction and the interpretation of the genre in question. This process also gives rise to appropriating the generic resources of genres to create others, which, nevertheless, requires exploring "interdiscursivity in genre construction" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 128). Finally, the disciplinary or the professional culture refers to the "goals and objectives" of the institution, the "professional and organizational identify" and the "norms and conventions" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 130). The generic intentions, goals and conventions refer to the behavioural principles that most professionals in the discourse community observe and participate in as part of their professional life (Bhatia, 2004). Thus, investigating the professional culture may include examining the influence of the critical moments of engagement, the institutional culture and the organizational ideologies on the construction of the genre in question.

Bhatia's (2004) CGA approach was a used in a number of recent studies to examine the genre of communication in its professional and institutional context (Bonini, 2010; Ching, 2011). Cheng (2011) examined the genre of quantity surveyors letters. After examining the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives of the letters in their professional context, he found that the letters belong to four types of genres that are directive, checking, monitoring, and procedural. Directive and procedural letters are used to deliver guidelines and

privileges, which are routine practices in the professional context. The use of the checking and monitoring purposes, however, are used to express evaluation and present comments, which is a spontaneous practice in the profession.

The use of CGA seems suitable for the purposes of conducting this study. The four perspectives presented by Bhatia (2004) assist in providing a fuller view about the genre of email exchanges, from the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives, as an institutional practice. The following section sheds more lights on the critical enquiry in language studies to further explain the nucleuses of critical genre analysis.

2.3 Critical Perspective to Genre Analysis

The critical enquiry in language studies, according to Wodak (2006), could be traced back to the work of Pecheux (1982), who adopted the work of Bakhtin (1981), who is a Russian theorist. The term 'critical', here, intends to not only "describe and explain" the linguistic features of texts, but additionally, to "root out any particular kind of delusion" (Wodak, 2006, p. 3). Researchers applied the term 'Critical Linguistics' (CL) (Fowler et al., 1979; Kress and Hodge, 1979) to investigate the relationships between the linguistic structures of texts and link them to the broader social structures. Simpson (1993) noted that "critical linguistics like stylistics, seeks to interpret texts on the basis of linguistic analysis", and that critical linguistics "expands the horizons of stylistics by focusing on texts other than those regarded as literary" (p. 5). Simpson also noticed that while the inspiration of stylistics is observing the rhetorical and the metaphorical aspects of the text, critical linguistics is

more into the political and the historical dimension and directed to change not only observe reality.

Building on CL, Fairclough (1989, p. 5) presented his "Critical Language Study", which is widely known as critical discourse analysis (CDA). For Fairclough (1993), critical discourse analysis aims at investigating the relationship between discourse practices and the wider social and cultural context. It also investigates how textual practices reflect power relations. Critical discourse analysis then is not a simple discipline or narrowly defined theory; it is "not a homogeneous method, nor school or a paradigm, but at most a shared perspective on doing linguistic, semiotic or discourse analysis" (Van Dijk, 1993, p.131). In analysing any communicative event, Fairclough drew attention to three main analytical nuclei, which are: the text, discourse and social practices. Text practices, according to Fairclough (1992), refer to the production of the texts. That is, text practices refer to the linguistic choice of words in the texts, which include the vocabulary and grammar. In examining the vocabulary, the focus is on the word level, whereas in examining the grammar, the focus is drawn to the sentence, clause or phrase levels (Fairclough, 1992). Discourse practices refer to the interpretation of the texts. That is how the text is produced and how it is received. In other words, as the communication cycle includes a writer or a speaker, a channel of communication and a recipient, the production of the linguistic choices depends on writers' knowledge about the world, and the interpretation of these choices depends on recipients' knowledge. As such, examining discourse practices include examining the used features and their interpretation according to the context. Social practices, however, refer to the practices that are usually used in a

certain context. These practices are socially and culturally constructed and used conventionally by the members of the discourse community.

Recently, the critical perspective on language studies was extended to investigate genres (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a, 2010b, 2012). Genres initially were viewed as reoccurring patterns; these days, however, the investigation was extended to include the critical perspective that does not only include the texts, but also the institutional practices, the disciplinary conventions of the institution including the culture and the ideologies and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. As Fairclough (1989) was eager to distinguish CDA from CL, Bhatia (2012) also distinguished CGA from CDA. According to Bhatia (2012), CDA intends to analyse the social structures and social relations including power, ideology and class relations in a way that are viewed as invulnerable. CGA, however, intends to examine the generic artifacts to find out what is explicitly and implicitly said in the genre and reflects the private intentions of the expert members of the discourse community. Therefore, the "organizational practices are not assumed but negotiated" (Bhatia, 2012, p. 23) as they reflect competing interests. To investigate these interests, the researcher needs to investigate "two kinds of relationships involving texts and contexts" (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 391) that are intertextuality and interdiscursivity. They also need to examine the influences of the institutional context on language use.

This study adopts this critical perspective to genre analysis. It does not only investigate the textual artifacts of the text genre, but also examines the contextual and the intertextual aspects of generic integrity. This includes the influences of the institutional practices and the disciplinary conventions in the institute on the nature

and the construction of the genre. This study, as such, is a descriptive and interpretive study. It does only examine how the employees of the institute construct email genre, but also why they construct it the way they do, how the organizational cultures and ideologies of the workplace influence the construction of email genre and how and why the expert members of the discourse community exploit email genre. To conduct the analysis, this study examines the relationships between texts (intertextuality), the interactions between genres (interdiscursivity) and the organizational context of the institution.

2.3.1 Intertextuality

The term intertextuality can be traced back to the work of Kristeva (1980). According to Kristeva (1980), writers do not invent texts, they, nevertheless, compile them together. In this regard, intertextuality in a given text is "several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and naturalize one another" (p. 36). As such, intertextuality is the "transforming of the past [texts] into the present" (Bhatia, 2010, p. 392). For Fairclough (1992), intertextuality is the "property text have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth" (p. 84).

Intertextuality, or the "interrelationships within and across texts" (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 391), was viewed in several ways by several researchers. For Fairclough (1992), intertextuality could be distinguished into manifest intertextuality and constitutive intertextuality. Manifest intertextuality refers to the presence of other specific texts in a new text; quotation marks could mark these. Constitutive intertextuality, however, refers to the conventions and the structure that go into new to new text production.

The latter type is referred to as interdiscursivity (Correa, 2008). In addition, intertextuality could be divided into horizontal intertextuality and vertical intertextuality (Kristeva, 1986). Horizontal intertextuality refers to the interrelationship between a given text and other texts that proceeded or followed it, whereas vertical intertextuality refers to the relationship between a given text and other texts that constitute its more-or-less immediate or distant context.

Devitt (1991) also divided intertextuality into three different kinds that are referential, functional and generic intertextuality. Referential intertextuality, according to Devitt (1991), refers to the "reference in one text to other texts" (p. 342). Generic intertextuality refers to the repeated rhetorical forms in reoccurring rhetorical situations (Devitt, 1991). Functional intertextuality, however, refers to the "community consequences of intertextuality" (Devitt, 1991, p. 350). That is, as members of a given community in practice share professional knowledge and use a set of genres to achieve their goals, they create a form of functional intertextuality. This occur as they may "cut" from a text and "paste" in another, and that past text may impact future texts by creating the need for these future texts (Devitt, 1991). Devitt (1991), who is a new rhetorical scholar, applied these kinds of intertextuality to examine the genre in a tax accounting community. She found the community included previous texts in a new text (referential intertextuality), repeatedly used certain forms to respond to reoccurring situations (generic intertextuality) and used the "cut-paste" technique to create a letter from a memorandum (functional intertextuality).

Intertextuality was used in several studies to reflect upon the interrelationships within and across texts. As mentioned earlier, Devitt (1991) examined the genre in a tax accounting community. She identified thirteen genres including proposal, review, nontechnical correspondence and a number of memorandum and letter genres that were used for different rhetorical situations. Akar and Louhiala-Salminen (1999) referred to Fairclough's concept of intertextuality in scrutinizing business fax genres. They found that the fax correspondence referred to other communicational events like phone conversations or previous faxes. Intertextuality was also apparent in the conventional method of responding to other faxes. Akar and Louhiala-Salminen found that communicators usually fax back the same fax adding their comments on it. Regarding constitutive intertextuality, Akar and Louhiala-Salminen (1999) found that fax communicators share spoken features in their faxes like having the chance of instant feedback, and involving background or presupposed knowledge.

Intertextuality, specifically Devitt's (1991) kinds of intertextuality, seems suitable for the purposes of this study as it provides insights into the interrelationship within and across texts as an internal reference, functional practice that is based on professional knowledge and generic category that is based on repeated forms in repeated situations.

2.3.2 Interdiscursivity

The term interdiscursivity can be traced back to Bakhtin (1986), Foucault (1981), and Kristeva (1980). According to Fairclough (1993), interdiscursivity refers to the "constitution of a text from diverse discourses and genres" (p. 138), it extends intertextuality "in the direction of the principle of the primacy of the order of

discourse" (p. 85). The orders of discourse, according to Fairclough (2003) are not merely the elements of the linguistic structures such as the nouns and the sentences, they are the "social organization, control of linguistic variations and their elements" (p. 24). In this regard, the investigation of interdiscursivity includes linguistic, semiotic and context analysis.

In conducting linguistic analysis, Fairclough made use of Halliday's (1985) systemic functional linguistic that examines language and "other elements and aspects of social life" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 5). This included the vocabulary and grammar. In examining the vocabulary, the focus is on the word level, whereas in examining the grammar, the focus is drawn to the sentence, clause or phrase levels (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough's interdiscursive analysis also incorporated semiotic and context analysis into the analysis of texts to reflect on the innovation and change in texts and to allow connecting the linguistic and the semiotic analysis to the broader social change (Fairclough, 2005).

Interdiscursivity for Fairclough (1992) is more than a stylistic phenomenon. It is a representation of social practices that occur as a result of social change. This social change, according to Fairclough (1992), occurs as a result of the democratization of discourse, commodification or marketization of discourse and technologization of discourse. In examining the discourse of higher education, Fairclough (1993) noticed interdiscursivity or mix not only on the discourse level, but also on the genre and style levels. This interdiscursivity occurred as a result of mixing the discourse of education with the discourse of the market. This mix, according to Fairclough (1993), occurred as a result of the marketization of higher education.

According to Bhatia (2010a), interdiscursivity refers to the interactions within or across genres. The investigation of interdiscursivity as a text-external aspect of generic integrity has taken a prominence role in Bhatia's (2004, 2008, 2010a) critical genre analysis. The investigation of interdiscursivity, according to Bhatia (2010a), is central to understanding professional practice. This is particularly important as the 'expert members' of discourse communities communicate private intentions in socially recognized communicative purposes, which leads to creating hybrid or embedded genres. Stemming from this view, Bhatia (2010a) defined interdiscursivity as an innovative attempt to create hybrid or embedded genres by appropriating the generic resources of a genre or a practice to create another. This appropriation may occur in professional practices, by mixing the "generic norms in professional contexts" or semiotic resources such as "textual, semantic, socio-pragmatic, generic, and professional" resources (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 393).

According to Bhatia (2008), interdiscursivity, or the appropriation of generic resources, may occur between two different genres, professional practices or cultures. To examine hybrid genres, Bhatia (2010a) examined a number of annual reports that were taken from companies in Hong Kong. He found that annual reports included two different discourses that are the accounting discourse and public relations discourse. Bhatia concluded that even though these two discourses have different purposes, different corporate practices, and different textual resources and rhetorical strategies, they were placed in a single genre to reflect a good impression about the performance of the company (Bhatia, 2010a). In relation to professional practices, Bhatia (2008) exposed instances of interdiscursivity through the use of

language and discourse between arbitration and litigation practices in legal discourse. In relation to professional cultures, Bhatia (2010a) found instances of interdiscursivity by appropriating semiotic resources between fundraising practices and commercial advertising. These instances of interdiscursivity, according to Bhatia (2010a, p. 399), reflect the tension between "generic integrity", on the one hand, and "appropriating the generic resources" on the other.

According to Bhatia (2010a), the term interdiscursivity is not "fully explored" (p. 392), especially in regard to the complexities in discursive and professional practices. Thus, to investigate interdiscursivity, researchers need to investigate a number of "discourses, actions and voices" that play a prominent role in the development of "specific discursive practices" within "institutional frameworks" (p. 393). In this context, interdiscursivity plays a more significant role than intertextuality, especially in professional discourse, as it examines the construction and interpretation of the text-external resources at different genres, professional practices and professional cultures (Bhatia, 2010a).

Several researchers examined interdiscursivity to reflect on mixing styles, genres, and discourses. Musson and Cohen (1996), for example, examined medical discourse in the UK. They observed aspects of interdiscursivity between the medical discourse and enterprise discourse. This interdiscursivity, according to Musson and Cohen (1996), is a product of transition in policies from state-controlled medicine to privately controlled medical practices. In another study, Sarangi (2000) examined interdiscursivity between different discourse types. He stated that genetic counselling is a discourse that includes three different moments that are giving information,

seeking advice and decision-making. These three moments are different discourse types. However, he perceived that counsellors appropriate the resources of a discourse upon which to create another. In addition, Bhatia (2008, 2010a), as presented earlier in this section, provided insights into the occurrence of interdiscursivity between different genres, professional practices and disciplinary cultures. Even though the genres serve socially recognized communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1993, 1995), the expert members of the discourse community still may exploit private intentions (Bhatia, 2002) to create hybrid or mixed genres (Bhatia, 2008). The investigation of interdiscursivity, in this study, targets the appropriation of generic resources of an email genre to create another, on the one hand, and using hybrid forms and styles, on the other.

2.3.3 Institutional Context

The critical perspective to language studies examines language use in relation to the context. CDA, for example, views language as a social practice in which the context of language use has a primary role to play (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 2000). It is perceived that the discursive practices have major ideological effects (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). The ideologies, in this context, refer to "the basic frameworks for organizing the social cognitions shared by members of social groups, organizations or institutions" (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 17-18). These ideologies are cognitive and social. The cognitive aspect refers to the "system of mental representations and processes of group members", whereas the social aspect refers to the "societal position or the interest of groups" (Van Dijk, 1995, P. 18).

The CGA, however, examines language use as a product of institutionalized and conventionalized practices and procedures (Bhatia, 2010a). These institutional practices and procedures are reflected in the professional or organizational practices of the discourse community and the influences of the disciplinary conventions of the discourse community using the genre on language use. Examining the influences of the institutional practices are examined using ethnographical methodologies (see Bazerman, 1994; Devitt, 1991; Miller, 1994; Swales, 1998). The influence of the disciplinary conventions on language use, however, is examined in relation to the implicitly understood and unconsciously followed and the explicitly enforced conventions that govern the use of language in the institution (Bhatia, 2004). As this study examines the genre of email exchanges as an institutional practice, this section presents insights into institutions and institutional behaviour to provide a fuller view about the practices and values in institutions.

Institutions, according to North (1991), are "the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction" (p. 97). These institutions are formed "so that people who share a common set of values or interests can work together towards achieving that common objective" (Gabriel, 2003, p. 106). This is important, as the collective work of the group is better than the individual work. In this regard, organizations are characterized, according to Gabriel (2003), by the people or the employees of the origination, their common objectives and the structure they develop (p. 106).

The daily practices in institutions are governed by formal and informal rules (North, 1991). The formal rules are usually written and enforced by an external authority.

These include “constitutions, laws, and property rights” (North, 1991, p. 97). Informal rules, however, evolve over time as a result of human interactions and these include the code of conduct, unwritten conventions, and behavioural norms (Kasper and Streit, 1998). Unlike the formal rules that are enforced by an external authority, informal rules, which set the obligations between society members, are written and enforced by the institution. They are adopted as institutions find them and the objectives they try to achieve valuable (Skoog, 2005). The employees who do not abide by the formal rules are formally sanctioned, whereas those who do not abide by the informal rules are sanctioned through social feedback (Kasper and Streit, 1998).

As formal rules are set and enforced by external authorities, the focus in this section is directed to the internally set and enforced informal rules as they govern the social obligations and interactions within the community. Specifically, this section reviews previous research on the organizational culture and the organizational ideologies, which represent “resources institutionalized in practices” (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002, p. 623).

2.3.3.1 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture, according to O’Donnell and Boyle (2008), “gives organizations a sense of identity and determines, through the organization’s legends, rituals, beliefs, meanings, values, norms and language, the way in which ‘things are done around [there]’” (p. 4). As such, it is a “pattern of basic assumptions” that are used to “perceive, think and feel” in organizations (Schein, 1985, p. 9). The culture of the workplace is not created instantly; it is developed overtime. In this regard, the responsibility of the leader is to establish and manage the organizational culture

(Schein, 2004). It is perceived that creating and managing the organizational culture is "the only thing of real importance that leaders do" (Schein, 2004, p.11) in organizations.

Organizational culture is prominent in the success or failure of organizations (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). According to Kilmann et al. (1985), organizational culture may have a positive or negative impact on the employees and the performance of organizations. It has a positive impact if it directs the employees in the right direction; however, it has a negative impact if it directs employees in the wrong direction. In this regard, cultures that have a positive impact on organizations are "good cultures" that value teamwork, honesty, customer service orientation and commitment to the organization (Baker, 1985). These good cultures also value adaptability to new regulations, technological development, and strains of growth (Baker, 1985, p. 10), which have a positive impact on the performance and the success of the organization. Organizational cultures that do not value these norms, however, have a negative impact on the performance and lead to the failure of the organization.

Throughout the years, organizational and management scholars have identified and studied different types of organizational cultures (Cameron and Quinn, 1999; Cooke and Lafferty, 1987; Cooke and Szumal, 1993; Handy, 1976). Cooke and Szumal (1993), for example, identified three general types of organizational cultures that are the constructive cultures, passive-defensive cultures and aggressive-defensive cultures. The constructive cultures are the cultures that encourage staff members to work together so that they achieve their organizational goals. Constructive cultures

include the humanistic-encouraging culture, which requires the employees to be supportive and constructive; affiliative culture, which emphasizes interpersonal relationships; achievement culture, which values accomplishing tasks; and self-actualizing culture, which values creativity and innovation (Cooke and Szumal, 1993).

Passive-defensive cultures, however, are those cultures that value interacting with staff members in a way that does not affect their positions or security in the institution. This general type of culture includes dependent culture, in which members do only the tasks that they were asked to do; avoidance culture, in which organizations do not reward success but punish the mistakes of the employees; conventional culture, in which the staff members are expected to follow the rules and regulations; and approval culture, in which members are expected to avoid conflict and maintain a good interpersonal relationships, at least superficially (Cooke and Szumal, 1993).

Aggressive-defensive cultures, according to Cooke and Szumal (1993), are cultures in which the staff members carry out tasks in an aggressive manner to protect their positions and status. This type of culture includes power culture (Handy, 1976), in which staff members act upon the power inherited in their organizational positions; competitive culture, in which the employees must work against one another to "outperform" the other employees; perfectionist culture, in which staff members are expected to avoid mistakes and carry out all tasks in a perfect manner; and oppositional culture, in which the employees who confront and criticize the work and actions of other employees are rewarded (Cooke, and Szumal, 1993).

Because organizational culture influences the daily practices of the employees, it also influences the language used (Fancher, 2007). This is the case as language is the main method of passing the culture (Spradley, 1979). The organizational culture of institutions, according to Bate (1990) is encoded in the language used. This latter point is significant for the purposes of this study. As this study investigates language use in an institutional practice, the investigation of the organizational culture, which comprises the norms, values, meanings and language in organizations (O'Donnell and Boyle, 2008), provides insights into why the employees of the educational institution that is the subject of this study use language the way they do (Bhatia, 2004).

2.3.3.2 Organizational Ideologies

The organizational ideologies, as the organizational culture, are informal rules in organizations because they are set and enforced internally within the institution. The ideology of an organization, according to Mumby (1987), refers to "the ways in which members, as social subjects, become qualified to participate in and create the organizational reality (mode of rationality) that is represented to them" (p. 125). In this sense, organizational ideology directs the general conduct of the organization's processes, codes of behaviour, the management of people and its businesses with other institutions (Mullins, 2010).

The purpose of the organizational ideologies has evolved over the years. Originally, organizational ideologies were used to reflect upon ethical and operational foundations, both of which reflected internal and external relations (Brech, 1975).

The external ethical foundations relate to the relationship with customers and the public. The internal ethical foundations, however, relate to the standards of employment in an institution. The operational foundations, on the other hand, relate to the "structure, operation, and conduct of the activities of the organization" (Mullins, 2010). Internally, these operational foundations are related to production and managerial practices; externally, they are related to trading and distribution.

In recent years, organizations have given growing attention to the organizational values and placed them in places for all to see (Mullins, 2010). These values are the glue that binds the organization together (Dainty and Anderson, 2000). They form the framework that influences decisions, choices and practices in organizations. They inform the employees about how to interact, what practices to adopt and which to abandon (Dainty and Anderson, 2000). The forming of these values, according to Dainty and Anderson (2000) became an important practice in organizations today because they want to decide and agree upon the values by which they want their organization managed. These values usually appear in a code of conduct or code of ethics that institutions adopt.

The code of conduct and the code of ethics, according to Gilman (2005), carry the framework with which employees need to carry out their public responsibilities. The codes usually state the standards of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for employees in an institution. In this manner, they are not direct to "bad" people, however, they have "a demonstrable impact on the behaviour of bad people" (Gilman, 2005' p. 8). Organizations adopt these codes because they have a number of positive impacts. Firstly, they increase the possibility that employees behave in the

manner that the institution requires. Secondly, they make the employees more focused on doing the right thing for the right reason for the sake of the institution. Thirdly, they give the reasons for an expected behaviour. Fourthly, they function as a professional statement for the institutions because these codes express employees' commitment to certain moral or ethical standards (Gilman, 2005).

Effective codes, according to Gilman (2005), are not merely texts. They are behavioural standards that influence, and are reflected in, the daily practices of the employees in an institution. This includes the way in which they interact and communicate among themselves and with the customers. This latter point is of a substantial prominence for the purposes of conducting this study. As this study investigates language use as an institutional practice, we must examine the influence of the organizational ideologies on language use to have a fuller view of why employees communicate the way in which they do. In this sense, the organizational ideologies that are reflected in the code of conduct and the code of ethics provide insights into the values and norms that govern the practices in the discourse community (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a, 2010b).

2.3.3.3 Influence of Institutional Context on Language Use

As mentioned earlier, the influence of the institutional culture and ideology is encoded in language use (Bate, 1990). That is, "ideologies may influence the ways social attitudes are expressed in discourse structures" (Van Dijk, 2001, p.11). This influence could be traced back to how the communicators "define the interaction" and "what knowledge, beliefs or aims are activated" during the communication (Van Dijk, 2001). These influences could be identified through the use of "intonation,

sentence syntax, lexical selection, topicalization" and "mechanisms of politeness" (Van Dijk, 2001). As such, the ideologies or the culture of organizations controls the "social representations of groups" or the "group knowledge" (Van Dijk, 2001). Therefore, to identify the influences of the ideologies, institutional context or the disciplinary conventions of institutions on language use, the "strategies", "inferences" or the "contextualization cues" used by the employees are of significant importance because they provide an "explanation of discourse" used in a certain context (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 38).

The contextualization cues refer to "any feature of linguistic form that contributes to the signalling of contextual presuppositions" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 131). This could be examined, as explained by Van Dijk (2001), by investigating the use of certain linguistic structures in certain situations, the use of certain politeness strategies when communicating to a certain group of people or the use of certain intonation, words or style of writing in certain conditions. These contextualization cues when taken in a certain institutional context, as in the case of this study, may reflect the conformity of the employees to the implicitly understood and followed or the explicitly enforced cultures and ideologies in the workplace. This is the case as communicators usually "foreground or make relevant certain aspects of background knowledge" in their communications (Gumperz, 1982, p. 131). This is specifically relevant in the institutional context as the behaviour of the group is governed by values, norms and procedures that regulate the way in which things are done (O'Donnell and Boyle, 2008).

A number of researchers examined the influence of the institutional context on language use. Figueiredo (2010), for example, examined the appropriateness of some linguistic forms to achieve certain communicative purposes in schools. She argued that genres as resources allow users to be competent and achieve the goals. She found that the use of language and the social context were interrelated. Therefore, she suggested using the functional perspective to teach language to help students "build systematic links between contextual and linguistic parameters when using language" (p. 136). The students need to be aware of the sociocultural features of the texts to make linguistic sources that are more likely to occur in that context.

In another study, Chin (2011) examined the influence of the organizational ideologies on language use in the quantity surveying profession. He found that quantity surveyors used certain linguistic forms that reflected conformity to the organizational ideologies. For example, the quantity surveyors showed conformity to the organizational ideology of "open" by informing the addressee about the award of the contract using the construct "in accordance with.. I hereby notify you". In conformity to the organizational ideology of "fair", the quantity surveyors used constructs such as "I hereby instruct you to give a notification". In conformity to the ideology of "just", the quantity surveyors used constructs such as "in accordance with, you are required to" to describe the obligations of the successful tenderers (Chin, 2011).

As the main intention of conducting this study is examining the use of language as an institutional practice, the examination of the influence of the disciplinary conventions of the educational institution is vital. The explicitly enforced disciplinary

conventions are openly stated. However, to identify the implicitly understood conventions, Bhatia (2008) suggested "narratives of experience" from the main informants (p. 170).

2.4 CMC and Email in the Workplace

Baron argued that the history of email or the "family tree" of email goes back more than a hundred years (Baron, 1998, p. 140). She pointed out that email was invented after a number of teletechnologies such as the telegraph in 1838, the telephone in 1876, telex in 1900, and fax machines in 1950s that helped transfer data from one place to another. Email as we know it today has developed over the years. The American Defence Department used it in the 1960s to transfer data from remote areas. The major concern of the Americans at that time was nuclear attack by the Soviets. "The aim was to decentralize the distribution of defence data so that no targeted nuclear strike would affect America's command and control system" (Baron, 1998, p. 141).

In the early 1970s, Tomlinson invented email, and made the sending of information and messages, not only data, from one place to another through computers possible. He chose the symbol "@" to assign sending messages. Afterward, anyone using the Internet standard could send messages (email) by simply typing the 'name-of-the-user@name-of-the-computer' (Peter, 2004).

It took almost two decades to publicize the Internet and email. However, according to Hafner and Lyon (1996), some major institutions and businesses had the privilege of using the Internet and email in the seventies and the eighties. In fact, it did not

take long to recognize email as a communicational medium. Licklider and Vezza (1978) wrote that it soon became obvious that the ARPANET (the Internet today) was becoming a human-communication medium with very important advantages over normal U.S. mail and over telephone calls.

Nowadays, emails and CMC have become accepted phenomena, and more than a billion people use them worldwide for different purposes. Managers realized the advantages that could be achieved by adopting CMC and email in the workplace, and they applied them in their organizations from the early eighties. However, the usage of emails was not always advantageous. Scholars, both organizational and linguistic, discovered that the usage of CMC and emails in organizations is a double- edged sword, as it has merits and demerits.

2.4.1 The Nature of CMC and Emails in Workplace

CMC is an electronic exchange of information through computers that are connected by communicational links (Sproull and Kiesler, 1986). Some popular forms of CMC today include emails, video and audio conferencing, chatting, and bulletin boards. Even though the adoption of CMC in Eastern economies is still in early stages (Huang, 2003), it has become a routine in Western economies (Ross, 2001), which opened the door for a new type of literature. Researchers looked at the social influence of emails and CMC in organizations (Sproull and Kiesler, 1986), medium richness (Markus, 1994), how organizations could benefit from emails (Romm and Pliskin, 1997), quick information access (Garton and Wellman, 1995) and how emails enable managers to control their staff from a distance (Brigham and Corbett, 1997). Some studies pointed out that email is a “double-edged sword” (Brigham and

Corbett, 1997, p. 28) as it has positive (Spence, 2002; Sproull and Kiesler, 1992; Walther, 1995) and negative effects (Baruch, 2005; Jensen, 2003; Kayany, 1998; O'Sullivan and Flanagin, 2003; Steele, 1983).

For Danet (2001), CMC could be divided into synchronous and asynchronous communication. Synchronous communication, according to Ashley (2003), is a "same time different place" communicational mode. It allows people to communicate at the same time from different locations. Examples of synchronous modes of CMC include web conferencing and two-party and multiple-party chat. Asynchronous communication, however, is a "different time-different place" communicational mode. It allows people to communicate according to their own schedule and convenience. This includes web logs (blogs) and emails. Table 2.1 presents the similarities and differences of these modes of communication.

Table 2.1: Similarities and Differences: Synchronous and Asynchronous CMC

	Synchronous CMC	**Asynchronous CMC**
Similarities	• Increased amount of output results in richer and more diverse lexicon Written code • Register between those of written and oral styles of communication	
Differences	• Relatively immediate response • Use of outside resources cumbersome • Social immediacy of interlocutors	• Extended planning, encoding, decoding and time • Use of outside resources not limited • Interactants not "immediately" present

(Adapted from Abrams, 2003, p. 159.)

One of the most popular CMC methods is email. According to Kettinger and Grover (1997), email is a computer system that is used for exchanging information and other data that may include textual and numerical figures, sounds, videos, graphics, and computer programs. Kerr and Hiltz (1982) and Rice and Borgman (1983) found that email is mainly used for task-oriented purposes such as asking and answering questions, exchanging information, and giving opinions. Even though task-oriented

purposes are not the only practices of email in the workplace, they are one of the major purposes. Some research has indicated that email is used for social purposes as well, such as keeping in touch.

Some researchers have questioned the effectiveness of CMC and email in the workplace, and doubted their interactive nature (Brown and Lightfoot, 2002; Davenport and Prusak, 1997; Nantz and Drexel, 1995; Ngwenyama and Lee, 1996). Researchers highlighted deficits in communication skills, information incompetence, disturbance of workflow, negative effect on productive time, and email overload (Davenport and Prusak, 1997; Frazee, 1996). On the other hand, Nantz and Drexel (1995) found that most employees were not taught how to be effective electronic communicators. However, the most controversial criticism of the use, effectiveness, and appropriateness of CMC and email in the workplace is that raised by information richness theory (Daft and Lengel, 1984, 1986).

According to Daft and Lengel's (1984, 1986) theory, the richness of a medium depends on its ability to produce information in ways that reduce equivocality. Their theory stated that having effective communication in a certain situation depends on the richness of the chosen medium. As such, Daft, Lengel and Trevino (1987) established media hierarchy in organizational context based on four factors that are feedback capability, communicational channel type (such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice), personal quality of the source and process of information. They stated that those communicational methods that include nonverbal cues like face-to-face or telephone conversations are rich mediums, but those, which do not include the social cues, are low in richness. Emails fall under the third

category of communicational methods in the given figure. They are written addressed documents (like notes, letters and memos). Therefore, emails, according to Daft, Lengel, and Trevino (1987), are low in richness (see Figure 2.1 below).

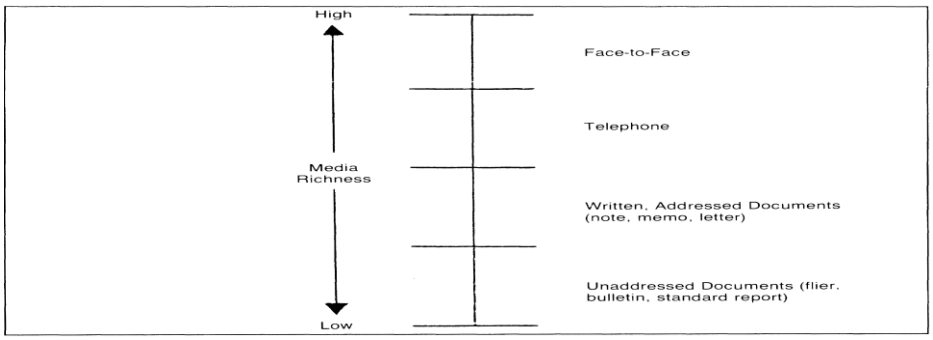

Figure 2.1: Hierarchy of Media Richness
(Adapted from Daft, Lengel, and Trevino, 1987, p. 358)

Several researchers questioned categorizing CMC and emails as a lean method of communication (Chun, 1998; Huang, 2003; Markus, 1994; Carlson and Zmud, 1999; Williams, 1999). They showed that, even though CMC and emails lack richness, they are still able to transmit rich information and carry even the most challenging tasks in the workplace. El-Shinnawy and Markus (1998) stated that the organizational choice of media depends on social factors that are not explained in information richness theory. Information richness theory categorized email as a lean medium of communication; however, using information richness theory's own criteria, Markus (1991) showed the evidence of how emails were used as the rich mediums of communication. Markus (1994, p. 508) asserted that "the adoption, use and consequences of media use in organizations can be powerfully shaped by social processes such as sponsorship, socialization, and social control, which require social perspectives to understand them", and she provided social definition theories as an alternative of information richness theory to study electronic mail in organizations.

Research proved that CMC and email are rich medium of communication; however, according to Olaniran (2002), the lack of social cues in emails may result in misunderstanding and misinterpretation. He hypothesized that "the majority of the misunderstandings in CMC are associated with misinterpretation of messages rather than with cultural or language difficulty" (p. 208). This actually adds to the argument that communicators need to understand the hybrid nature of CMC and emails and realize the consequences when establishing or responding to email messages. This shows that importance of analysing the genre[s] of email to not only highlight the textual aspects of emails, but also to give a clearer picture of the actual practices used, the purpose[s] after the use, and the effect of the institutional context on the use of these practices.

2.4.2 Language Use in Workplace Emails

Previous research on language use in workplace email communication viewed the text of emails as partly written, partly spoken (Baron, 2000, 2002; Davis and Brewer, 1997; Du Bartell, 1995; Holmes, 1995; Howard, 1997; Murray, 1996; Lee, 1996). They regarded the style of emails as hybrid (Baron, 1998; Hale and Scanlon, 1999; Yates and Orlikowski, 1993), as the social dynamics of email is predominantly writing, the lexicon and the style is predominantly speech, whereas the format and the syntax are a mixture of writing and speech (Baron, 1998). This view was driven by the use of sound imitation, capitalization, repetition, having several grammatical and spelling mistakes, abbreviations, short sentences, straightforward syntax, and elliptical forms (Clement et al., 2003), which made the discourse of emails seems more like unplanned spoken discourse rather than planned written discourse (Gimenez, 2000). Gimenez (2000, p. 250) asserted "the language and style of e-mail

messages seem to indicate that this emerging electronic discourse reflects the features of spoken discourse from which it has derived". So the question is, does email emerge from spoken or written discourse?

In order to answer this question, Baron (1998) looked at the social dynamics, email format, grammar and style of email (see Table 2.2 below).

Table 2.2: Overall Linguistic Profile of Email

Linguistic Components	**Email Most like**
Social dynamics	Predominantly writing
Format	(mixed) writing and speech
Grammar	
Lexicon	Predominantly speech
Syntax	(Mixed) writing and speech
Style	Predominantly speech

(Adapted from Baron, 1998, p. 155)

Baron noticed that, while the language of speech is not edited, the language of email could be edited (p. 152). Regarding feedback, she asserted that even though face-to-face communication allows quick feedback, emails also allow quick feedback, but as written communication, it could also take a longer time to provide the feedback (p. 151). Regarding the language used, Baron (1998) stated that it is not possible to categorize the language used in emails as spoken or written forms of communication as "email is a communicative modality in flux" (p. 162). Baron stated that the main purpose of this fluctuation in the language of emails is the use of "technology, usership, and maturation" (p. 144). In a more recent study, Baron (2008) stated, "Trying to characterize email style with a 'one size fits all' definition is … meaningless …. By now, email has become sufficiently domesticated, at least in the United States, that its style and content is as diverse as the people using it" (p. 16).

Louhiala-Salminen (1995) agreed with Baron that the use of technology is the main purpose of the hybrid nature of emails. According to her interviewees, the conventional use of language in business communication has changed by applying email to conduct goal-oriented communication. By using email, the language used by her respondents became more straightforward and simple, unlike the language used in their fax correspondence. Her interviewees stated that the language used in their emails does not reflect the native English standard. They try to cope with the conventions used by the recipients in the workplace according to the organizational culture, which as a result affects the standard of email communication. In a more recent study, Louhiala-Salminen (1999), after analysing email correspondence in multinational organization, referred to her previous findings as still applicable.

The hybrid nature of emails was also reported in the framing moves of the emails (Crystal, 2001; Grzega, 1999; Kankaanranta, 2005). Crystal (2001), for example, after examining 500 emails, declared that the framing moves of the emails, especially the pre-closing and the identifying topic move were strongly affected by the traditions of using these moves in formal letters, but this is not a general implication. Crystal found that the use of these moves depends on the age of the email writers. Even though Crystal's emails were written by native and non-native speakers of English, but he did not differentiate between the practices of using these moves according to the background of the email sender. This point, in fact, is worth investigating as it may show insights into the actual use of emails between native and non-native speakers. In contrast to Crystal's findings, Grzega (1999), who compared letters and emails, found no constant relation between the use of openings and closing in the emails and letters. She declared that the informants used a wide variety

of options to open and close the letter, which makes the task of identifying the similarities and differences in these options a difficult task as she could not judge whether these options are similar or different.

In a more recent study, Scheyder (2003) found that there was no use of a closing move in around half of the 532 emails that she examined. However, she realized that the use of the closing move in emails depends on two main factors that are the purpose of writing the emails and the social distance between the communicators. She declared that the findings of her study provided new insights into the actual use of email in workplace environments, and she called for further exploration on the use of closings in relation to the regional background of email senders, job function and their socio-economic status (Scheyder, 2003). This point in fact, is vital for the purpose of this study, which focuses on analysing the language used in email in relation to the institutional context and discourse community.

On the influence of the context, some researchers asserted that the context of situation determines the structure and the discourse in emails (Murray, 1988). In particular, the emails that were sent from one organization to another are more complex in terms of lexicon and syntactic structure than those sent within the organization (Gimenez, 2005). It was also noticed that the relationship between interlocutors influences the formality of emails, even though other means of communication like face-to-face conversations and telephone calls have been shown to be better for building and maintaining a relationship (Bertacco and Deponte, 2005). That is, after a period of time, email communicators form communities regardless of their national cultures (Cassell and Tversky, 2004; O'Dowd 2006;

Postmes, Spears, and Lea, 2000). This point was emphasized by Swales (1990), who stated that in order to determine the genre of communicative events, researchers needed to explore the norms of the discourse community. These aspects of the community might be viewed in their style, topic selection, and strategies in writing emails. But this does not only exist in workplace communities, it might also exist in any personal exchange of emails as the emphatic language in email arguments helps communicators build a personal relationship, which, as a result, affect the style of emails and make them more informal (Yates and Orlikowski, 1993).

In contrast to above studies, Gains (1999) reported that the emails he examined were highly structured. After examining the opening, closing, and the register of the email messages, he stated that the emails, which were collected from internal email communications, had no conversational features. However, Gains explained that this could be related to the nature of the communication, as the participant knew that the emails could be used as a record. This is essential in the context of institutional communication as employees' awareness of the nature of communication may influence the formality and informality in the email messages.

Email, however, is not an isolated model; a number of studies reported several factors that may influence the text of the emails. Postmes et al. (2000) highlighted the social influence on the text of email. They examined a number of students who used email to communicate as part of their course. They noticed that, over time, students form group norms in their communication that are different from other social norms they use in outside communications. O'Dowd (2006) observed that students who are working online with foreign partners need "to have themselves and

their identity represented to the world as they perceive it" (p. 83). This is important as communicators from different countries and cultures have different aspects for communication and they structure their messages differently (Akar, 1998; Al-Ali and Sahawneh, 2008; Alatalo, 2002; Chang and Hsu, 1998; Grindsted, 1997; Maier, 1992; Murphy and Levy, 2006; Paarlahati, 1998; Rogers and Wong, 2003; Sheer, 2000; Ulijin et al., 2001; Yli-Jokipii, 1994).

In addition to the ethnicity of communicators, the status and the role of email were also attributed to shaping the text of email (Waldvogel, 2005). Researchers noticed that email gives a chance to shy employees to express their thoughts and helps to reduce status imbalance in workplaces (Bishop and Levine, 1999), however, noted that as in face-to-face communication, the effect of unequal power can still be noticed in the emails (Weisband, Schneider and Connolly, 1995). In addition, it was also noticed that gender difference might play a big role in the structure and language used in emails. Studies showed that women's questions were generally requests for information or clarification, and they (women) apologize, appreciate, thank, and engage in intimacy and maintaining rapport more than men (Colley and Todd, 2002; Fishman, 1980; Jessmer and Anderson, 2001; Smith et al., 1997).

In a more recent study, Waldvogel (2005) found that the "the type of organization affects the way in which the email messages are written" (p. 2), as the organizational culture of the workplace effects the construction of the emails. After analysing 515 email messages that were collected from two different organizations using qualitative and quantitative methods, Waldvogel found little difference in the communicative functions of using email as the main purpose of using them in the two organizations

was requesting information. However, she stated that the use of email could be categorized as a "white-collar" method of communication. She emphasized that "email plays an important role in organizational knowledge creation, and that in addition to being a useful communication tool assisting in the functional work of an organization, it does considerable relational work" (p. 2). Waldvogel (2005) also highlighted gender differences in using email as she found that women respondents in both organizations wrote longer messages and used more effective features than their male counterparts. On the style of email, Waldvogel (2005, p. 2) noticed that "email directives were seen, in general, to lie midway between the mainly direct forms of spoken communication and the mainly indirect forms of other types of written communication".

2.4.3 Genre of Email: Empirical Studies

As reviewed in previous section, the overwhelming majority of pervious research viewed the language of email as hybrid. This view was also carried over to studies that intended to examine the genre of email communication. Overall, researchers highlighted that the flexibility, formality, and the register (Crystal, 2000; Gimenez, 2005; Gruber; 2001; Rice, 1997; Uhlírová, 1994) of emails made them hybrid. Hawisher and Moran (1993), who studied the rhetoric of email, argued that their study would "consider the different rhetorical contexts for email, including in its view genres, audiences, voices, uses, and the extent to which any and all of these are influenced by the properties of the medium" (p. 630). They reported that the use of smiles and signature files makes electronic discourse look more like speech. The speed of email and the physical distance between the communicators leads to wilding behaviour (pp. 629-631). Researchers believe that the use of these features occurred

as a result of the nature of email, which is credited to agreement and disagreement (Baym, 1996), the American education revolution and a fall of the public face's concern the last few decades (Baron, 2001).

For Gimenez (2005), the genre of email communication in the workplace became more complex as email communicators in the internally exchanged emails write long chains to elaborate on an issue. This chain creates what Gimenez called "embedded email". Embedded emails, according to Gimenez (2005), are chains that start by a single email. This email creates a response and the response creates another response until communicators reach an agreement. Understanding these emails, according to Gimenez (2005), depends on "the first message to make sense" (p. 236). In addition to the embedded email, Gimenez also presented his "embedded topicality" term, which relates to the topic discussed in the embedded emails. According to him, the name of the messages in the subject box in the email formatting governs the "micro topics" discussed in the embedded emails. Regarding the linguistic structure of emails, he said that the first email "chain initiator" and the last email "chain terminator" are the longest and the most complex in terms of syntax and structure. That is, the first email presents the issue and the last email seals the communicative event. The emails in the middle, however, are less complex in terms of lexical items.

In another study, Swangboonsatic (2006) found that emails belong to a single genre. To collect the data, he depended on simulations and scenarios that were created and given to participants who were contacted through contacts, websites and chat rooms. After establishing communicative conventions based on the linguistic form, communication style, textual structures (Bazerman, 1994; Campbell and Jamieson, 1978) and analysing the communicative purpose of emails, he asserted that the

emails belong to a single genre, which consists of hybrid features such as the inconsistent use of the framing moves and the syntax. He also asserted the generic knowledge in international trade email leads to creating common moves, structures and communicative purposes.

In other studies, it was found that email may belong to a single or a number of genres (Kankaanranta, 2005; Orlikowski and Yates, 1994; Yates and Orlikowski, 1992). Kankaanranta (2005), for example, "recognized the possibility of defining genres at different levels of abstractions" (p. 58). Kankaanranta, who examined 282 emails in multinational company, asserted that, when considering the genre of email as a single genre, the investigation is on the general level that is comparable to the genre of letters and faxes. However, when the corpus-based analysis is combined with the views of the expert members of the discourse community 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" (Kankaanranta, p. 412).

2.5 The Present Study

Bearing the above-mentioned studies in mind, this current study investigated email communication as a goal-oriented communication that takes place in a certain place, certain time, by certain type of people, to achieve certain goals in an institution. This study adopted Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework for critical genre analysis. As such, genre in this study is a resource of contextualized, conventionalized and institutionalized practices and procedures in a certain discourse community (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a). It does not only count for

the text-internal elements or textual artefacts, but exceeds it to include the text-external elements of generic integrity (Bhatia, 2008, 2010a). That is, unlike the new rhetoric perspective to genre, which views genre analysis as "tying linguistic and substantive similarities to regularities in human spheres of activities" (Freedman and Medway, 1995, p.1); the new constructionism-genre perspective, which views genre analysis as "how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them" (Martin, 1985. p.250); or the new systemic approach to genre, which views it as "an analysis-synthesis grammar based on the paradigmatic notion of choice" (Halliday, 1985, p. 30), genre analysis in this study is concerned with examining language use as an intuitional practice.

The examination of the textual perspective remains a main focus in this view of genre analysis; identifying genre, however, requires investigating the institutional and professional practices of the discourse community, the disciplinary conventions in the institutional context and the socially constructed form-function colorations (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a). This is the case to count for the "complex and dynamic realities of the world of discourse" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 6). Even though genres are identified on the bases of conventional features, they are, however, developing (Bhatia, 2002). It is also perceived that members of the discourse community appropriate the generic resources of a genre to create another. This creates 'hybrid' or 'embedded' genres (Bhatia, 2008, 2010a). Therefore, to count for the possibilities in the "real world" (Bhatia, 2002) and the "world of private intentions" (Bhatia, 2004), it is important to examine genre as a professional practice.

Previous email genre studies "loosely" referred to the texts that are produced in emails (Collot and Belmore, 1996; Gruber, 2001) without referring to the contextual factors that may influence language use (Don, 2007). Therefore, the genre of email was generally theorized to be a written discourse genre (Bates, Ianetta and Karper, 2002), a "pre-genre" (Spooner and Yancey, 1996, p. 268), or a "macro-genre" (Don, 2007). They mainly examined the 'how' of emails without referring to the 'why' or the rationale behind the linguistic choice. Some recent studies looked at the genre of email using "simulations" to generate data (Swangboonsatic, 2006) or examined the organizational context using measurements without being part of it (Kankaanranta, 2005), which is considered a major limitation to these studies (Kankaanranta, 2005; Swangboonsatic, 2006). According to Kankaanranta (2005), a need exists for conducting more situated research on the genre of emails using authentic data in which the researcher has the background knowledge of the informants, as it would produce "a truly thick description of the email genres in the company" (p. 421). Therefore, there is a need to examine the genre of email communication as a resource, not a model. As a model, the investigation is on the textual artefacts of the email genre; as a resource, however, the investigation is on why email writers write the emails the way do, how the emails are constructed and how they are interpreted in their institutional context, what influences the institutional and professional practices have on the construction and the nature of the email genre, how the disciplinary conventions of the discourse community influence language use in the email messages, how and why email writers appropriate the generic conventions of a genre to create another, and how the emails are linked to the "genre system" (Bhatia, 2004) the discourse community use. The answers to these quires need an empirical

investigation of language use in the email messages as an institutional practice (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a, 2010b), which was not done so far.

In line with Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework of genre analysis, this study examines the genre of emails as a product of conventionalized and institutionalized practices in a community of practice (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a). The investigation of genre in this study goes beyond all previous research on the genre of email by examining the four overlapping perspectives of conducting a critical genre analysis namely: the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive, and socio-critical perspectives (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a, 2010b).

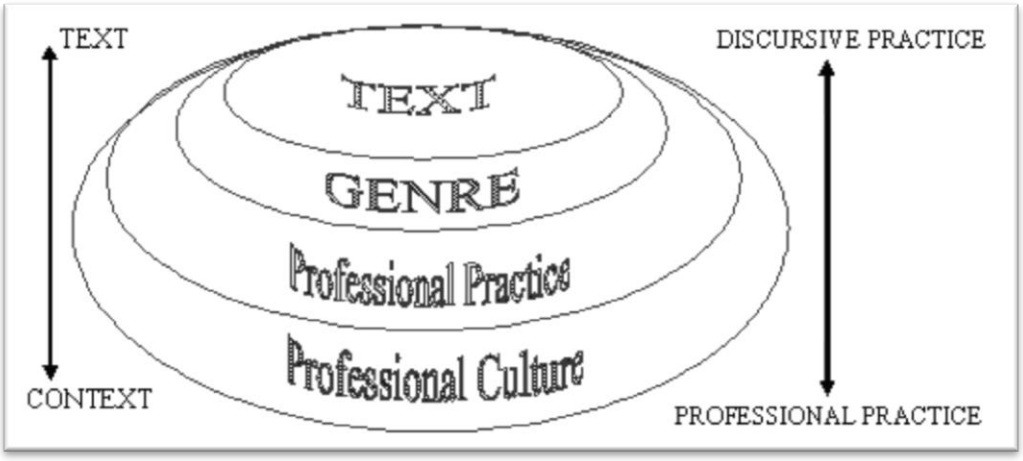

Figure 2.2: Patterns of discourse realization in professional contexts
(Adapted from Bhatia, 2010a, p. 392)

These investigations, according to Bhatia (2010a), would provide a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of language use as a text (textual perspective), language use as a genre (socio-cognitive perspective), language use as a professional practice (ethnographic perceptive) and language use as a product of a professional culture (socio-critical perspective) (see Figure 2.2 above).

Even though Bhatia's (2004) critical genre analysis is the dominant approach of genre analysis in this study, the other three approaches to genre analysis discussed earlier also contributed to the investigation of genre in this study in several ways. The ESP approach contributed Swales's (1990) concept of discourse community. The SFL approach contributed Hasan's (1977) generic structure potential, which examines the completeness or incompleteness of texts in relation to obligatory, optional and reiterational elements. The new rhetoric approach contributed the ethnographic-based methodology to investigate the ethnographic perspective. In addition, to conduct the textual analysis, Biber's (1988, 1995) register variation approach and Biber's et al. (2007) BCU corpus based analysis of discourse organization were employed (see section 2.5.1 below).

2.5.1 Framework for Move Analysis in this Study

As reviewed earlier, Swales (1990) proposed his move approach to examine the communicative purpose[s] of texts. He proposed two discourse units that are the 'move' and the 'step'. To identify the move and the step, he stated that the step, which is a micro unit, is smaller than the move, may appear in various grammatical forms and that every step has a communicative purpose. The move, which is the macro unit, carries the communicative intention. To further explain his approach, Swales analysed the rhetorical moves and steps in an introduction to research article.

MOVE 1: Establishing a territory
Step 1 Claiming centrality, and/or
Step 2 Making topic generalization(s), and/or
Step 3 Reviewing items of previous research
MOVE 2: Establishing a niche
Step 1A Counter claiming, or
Step 1B Indicating a gap, or
Step 1C Question-raising, or
Step 1D Continuing a tradition
MOVE 3: Occupying the niche
Step 1A Outlining purposes, or
Step 1B Announcing present research, and
Step 2 Announcing principal findings
Step 3 Indicating RA structure

Figure 2.3: The CARS Model
(Adapted from Swales, 1990, p. 141)

As Figure 2.3 shows, Swales (1990) identified three main moves that include a number of steps. He stated that to establish a territory, the writers have collectively or selectively used three steps that are: claiming centrality, making topic generalization, and reviewing items of previous research. As such, the use of any of these three steps in the context of the introduction to a research article meant to establish territory. Similarly, this practice continued in the second and third moves as the writer used one or a number of micro level units to achieve a greater or a macro level goal that is the communicative intention or the move. To identify the moves and the steps, Swales (1981, 1990) investigated the paragraph organization of the text and the use of syntax and lexical signals. He examined the presence of some lexical signals such as "this study attempts…", "this study indicates…", and "the purpose of this study…". He also looked at the presences of some conjunctions such as "however", "therefore", and "yet".

Swales's (1990) rhetorical move approach has been the centre of attention in the last two decades. Researchers used this approach to investigate the discourse units of texts in several fields including academic, scientific and professional (Bhatia, 1993; Connor and Upton, 2004; Hiranburana, 1996; Kwan, 1996; Kanoksilapatham, 2005;

Posteguillo, 1999; Nwogu, 1991; Samraj, 2002; Upton, 2002; Williams, 1999). Nevertheless, even though Swales's approach helps categorizing discourse units, it lacks standardization as the boundaries of the move and the step are unclear (Lewin et al., 2001; Zhu, 2000). Researchers agreed on the overall structure of texts, but, at times, they referred to the move and the step differently (see Bhatia, 1993; Hiranburana, 1996). In reaction to these voices, Swales responded that the definition of the move remains "a real question" (Askehave and Swales, 2001).

In response to Swales's (1990) structural-based categorization of the moves and the steps, Bhatia (1993) suggested a cognitive or a functional based categorization. He stated that there is an obvious interrelationship between psycholinguistic and genre. This relationship is obvious, according to Bhatia (1993), in the choices the writers make to structure their text genre. Thus, he differentiated between two units that are the intention of the writer and the tactics used to achieve the intention. The intention appears in the cognitive structure of similar genres, whereas the tactics appears in the choices that writers use to achieve their intention. Bhatia (1993) called the intentions, or the macro units, 'moves' and the tactics used to achieve these intentions, or the micro units, 'strategies'.

Building on this cognitive based approach, Biber et al. (2007) presented their 'top-down' or (BCU) Biber Conner Upton approach (Upton and Cohen, 2009) to analysing discourse organization. The main purpose of this approach is "refining the move approach" and applying it on corpus-based texts. According to Upton and Cohen (2009), this approach is called 'top-down' approach as it focuses on the meanings and ideas, not as 'down-top' approaches that examine the use of lexicon

and syntax first, and then examines the organizational structure of the texts. Overall, this approach examines the organization of the texts in relation to the functional, semantic or cognitive meanings of the segments. That is, as in Bhatia's (1993) suggestion, BCU approach examines the meanings and ideas of the text genre to determine the communicative intention of the writer and the tactics or strategies used to achieve this communicative intention. To facilitate the analysis, Biber et al. (2007) presented a seven-step framework.

The first step in the BCU approach is investigating the communicative/functional categories of the text genre (see Figure 2.4 below). According to Upton and Cohen (2009), this is a two-step process. Firstly, it requires building an overall picture about the rhetorical purposes of the text genre, by examining the functional and semantic purposes of the texts. This requires reading the text genre several times to establish a clear idea about the functions of the texts. After that, it requires a detailed analysis of the functions of each segment to identify its 'local purpose' or the intention it carries. Through this process, Upton and Cohen (2009) also suggested looking at proximity and the location of the identified functional-semantic segments so as to group them into 'steps' that have the same function. This should be followed by grouping the steps into moves where every single move "has its own functional-semantic contribution to the overall rhetorical purpose of the text" (p. 9). This means that every move is classified as a move type that has a different function or semantic meaning from other moves. In this sense, Upton and Cohen (2009) warned that the functional-semantic purpose of every single move should be clear and distinct.

Required step in the analysis	*Realization in this approach*
1. Communicative/ functional categories	Develop the analytical framework: determine set of possible functional types of discourse units, that is, the major communicative functions that discourse units can serve in corpus
2. Segmentation	Segment each text into discourse units (applying the analytical framework from Step 1)
3. Classification	Identify the functional type of each discourse unit in each text of the corpus (applying the analytical framework from Step 1)
4. Linguistic analysis of each unit	Analyze the lexical/grammatical characteristics of each discourse unit in each text of the corpus
5. Linguistic description of discourse categories	Describe the typical linguistic characteristics of each functional category, based on analysis of all discourse units of a particular functional type in the corpus
6. Text structure	Analyze complete texts as sequences of discourse units shifting among the different functional types
7. Discourse organizational tendencies	Describe the general patterns of discourse organization across all texts in the corpus

Figure 2.4: Top-down corpus-based analysis of discourse organization
(Adapted from Biber et al., 2007, p. 13)

As the presentation above suggests, the analytical realization of the first step in BCU approach includes the second, segmentation, and the third, classification, steps identified in the framework. In segmentation, Upton and Cohen (2009) suggested segmenting the whole texts in the corpus into moves that reflect their functional-semantic purpose. During the segmentation process, researchers are advised to look at any additional moves or steps that appear when running the analysis on the corpus level. Once the segmentation is complete, the researcher should classify the identified moves into move types. The move type, according to Upton and Cohen (2009) should reflect the local purpose of every single move in relation to its functional and/or semantic theme.

The fourth and the fifth steps in BCU approach are conducting linguistic analysis and linguistic description on the identified moves. According to Upton and Cohen (2009), even though the main purpose of this approach is identifying the moves according to their functions, they also intend to present 'well-defined' discourse units in relation to their 'linguistic characteristics'. In this sense, the linguistic analysis investigates the use of tense, voice and word choice in the identified moves to determine the linguistic features used in every single move with the intention of describing the moves according to their linguistic choices. According to Biber et al. (2007), the linguistic analysis is crucial as it helps describing the moves in relation to the use of one or a number of linguistic devices. This step seems comparable to Swales's (1990) and Bhatia's (1993) call to conduct syntax and lexicon or lexico-grammatical analysis on the text genre.

The sixth and seventh steps, however, are examining the text structure and discourse organization of the texts. This, according to Upton and Cohen (2009), is conducted after the completion of move analysis and aims at building an overall picture about the "rhetorical movements" (Swales, 1990, p. 140) of the genre text. In this section, according to Upton and Cohen (2009), we may conduct two levels of analysis that are: firstly, scrutinizing the organizational structure of the texts genre in relation to move types and their location; secondly, identifying the patterns used in the whole corpus by examining the "preferred move structure" (p. 17). That is, examining the distinctive patterns of the discourse in relation to similarities and differences in functions and grammatical resources.

To explain the use of this approach, practically, Upton and Cohen (2009) applied the framework to a corpus of birthmother letters. By applying the first three interlinked steps of the framework, they were able to identify the communicative and functional category of the corpus, segment the functional-semantic moves used, and classify them into move types. Applying the fourth and fifth steps allowed them identify the linguistic components in the corpus and their functions in the different moves. Finally, applying the sixth and the seventh steps allowed them identify the preferred structural patterns used in the corpus (see Upton and Cohen, 2009). This functional-semantic approach was also used in number of studies that examined academic and professional discourse (Cohen, 2007; Jones, 2007; Kanoksilapatham, 2007; Kwan, 2006; Marcus, 2008).

As it is reviewed above, researchers examined the moves or the discourse units from a structural (Swales, 1990) cognitive (Bhatia, 1993) and functional or functional-semantic perspectives (Biber et al, 2007; Upton and Cohen, 2009). According to Biber et al. (2007), the functional approach of analysing discourse units depends on cognitive judgments to decide on the moves and their boundaries (also see Bhatia, 1993; Kwan, 2006; Paltridge, 1994). Applying Swales (1990) move approach on the emails appeared to be problematic for several reasons. Firstly, the length of the emails varied a great deal. The shortest email was a single word, whereas the longest was 686 words. Secondly, some emails were written as a sentence or a number of separated sentences; others were written in the form of well-organized paragraphs. Thirdly, a number of emails follow the standard of written English, others were written in reduced patterns. As such, categorizing the emails according to their

organizational structure, as suggested by Swales (1990), does not suit the nature of the emails.

Applying the BCU approach, however, seemed more suitable as it focuses on the functions of the segments in the texts. It calls for investigating the segments of the texts to identify the local purpose of every segment; and then, classifying the segments into moves and move types. This approach seems in support of Bhatia's (1993) observation that the "psycholinguistic aspect of genre analysis reveals the cognitive structuring" (p. 19). In terms of the suitability for the nature of the data (the email messages), the BCU approach seems suitable for two main reasons. Firstly, exploring the emails showed that every segment in the email messages carries a function or communicative purpose. Even though some emails were not highly structured (some emails were highly structured) as formal written business correspondence (i.e., business letters, faxes, written memos), but their function or communicative purpose was clear. Secondly, the BCU approach provides a detailed framework for corpus-based analysis. As this study investigates a corpus of workplace emails, the provided framework provides useful insights and guidelines into how to carry the investigation of discourse units in a large set of data. In addition, the use of BCU framework is central in investigating the socio-cognitive strategies used in the rhetorical moves of the email messages. That is, the use of the BCU framework in this study is used to identify the rhetorical moves of the email messages and the generic structures used in constructing the email messages (step 6 and 7 in the BCU framework).

Swales (1990) and Biber et al. (2007) categorized the discourse units to moves and steps, whereas Bhatia (1993) categorized them to moves and strategies. They defined the move as the unit that carries the communicative intention. The move may include one or a number steps or strategies. The step or the strategy, however, is a smaller unit than the move and includes the strategies used to achieve the communicative intention. As such, the step is the micro unit and the move is the macro unit of the discourse unit. The identification of the communicative purpose depends on the communicative intentions or the moves. As such, given that the email messages varied in length from a single word to 686 words, the investigation of the organizational structure of the emails in this study is based on the move level. The move included the micro strategies or steps used by the writers to achieve their communicative intention. The working definition of the move in this study is:

> A discourse unit in a text bearing a unique communicative purpose that is characterized by a unique functional-semantic contribution and linguistic features and/or typographical features or symbols and identified in its context. Every move is unique and builds with the other moves identified in the text[s] the communicative purpose of the whole text.

As the definition of the move suggests, the two main identifying or categorizing elements of the move are the functional-semantic contribution and the linguistic features. These two characteristics are aligned with the functional approaches target discourse units. In addition to these two characteristics, the researcher acknowledged two non-identifying features or non-categorizing elements that are the typographical features and the symbols that appear in some of the moves in the emails messages. In addition to these features, the definition emphasizes the analysis of the moves in their context. This is significantly important in this study as some emails were part of

chains that included a number of "embedded emails" (Gimenez, 2005). Therefore, the context or the chain of the emails may provide improved understanding about the function of the move. This working definition is a unique definition for the purposes of this study. The following is an example of the move analysis:

The email in example (2.1) was sent by Ms. MA to the students of the IDCS program in the institution who sat for the external papers. As move analysis shows, the email included six moves.

Ex 2.1: Examination Venue for IDCS global papers 2010/5/21 MAA wrote	Identifying topic
Dear All	Salutation
Please note that **we have changed** the exam venue for IDCS global papers to the following venue for the June 2010 cycle: Venue: XXXX	Informing about issues
If you have any enquiries, **please** do not hesitate to contact me directly.	Offering help (if needed)
Best regards	Closing
MA Auto Signature	Signature

The first move was identified as 'identifying topic move'. This rhetorical move is an informative strategy that intends to advise the recipient about the purpose of sending the email. The place of this move is fixed due to the formatting structure of the email.

The second move is the 'salutation'. The function of this move is expressing politeness and giving deference. This move is always placed at the top of the email.

The third move is 'informing about issues'. This move is an informative strategy that intends to notify or update the recipients of the email about academic or organizational issues. The function of this move, in this email, is to notify the recipients about the change of the venue for the global IDCS exam. The writer used

the imperative mood to present the message directly. However, to weaken or minimize the imposition, she used the politeness marker 'please'. In addition, the writer used the first person plural pronoun 'we'. The use of 'we' in this email is exclusive. That is, it does not include the recipient and refers to the writer as part of the organization that she represents. The use of present perfect tense, according to Quirk et al. (1985, p. 190) and Biber (1988, 1995), is mainly used to signify that the action was taken in the past but with "present relevance" (Harder, 1996, p. 383).

The fourth move was identified as 'offering help if needed'. This move functions as an invitation to the recipient to contact the sender regarding the correspondence, if needed. It is an expressing availability strategy. The use of the '*if clause'* implies the conditional nature of the offer.

The fifth move, 'closing', is also a politeness and giving deference strategy that signals concluding the email message.

The sixth move, 'signature', is a creating credibility strategy. It functions as a tool to create trustworthiness and shows that the sender of the email is eligible to request, provide, or inform in the given context. The signature move reflects the professional identity of the sender.

As such, this email included six moves that are four framing and two content moves. Obviously, the third move, 'informing about issues' is the main move or the genre-defining move in the email, as it carries the main communicative intention of the email messages.

In examining the generic structure of the email messages, this study considered the interactional nature of some emails, specifically, what Gimenez's (2005) called the "embedded email" in the workplace. Embedded emails refer to the emails that belong to chains as the communicators communicate a single issue in a number of emails. To make sense of a single email in the chain, researchers need to refer to the other emails in the chain as the communicative purpose is carried out from one email to another until the communicators reach agreement (Gimenez, 2005). Thus, in this study, the emails were analysed in their context as solitary or chain-type communications. The solitary messages are the messages that do not usually require a reply. Chain-type messages, however, are the messages that usually require a reply. Analysing the communicative purposes[s] of the "embedded emails" was carried out in relation to the whole chain of messages. That is, the investigation of the communicative purpose of every single email was carried out in relation to the whole chain of email messages. (See 2.2 & 2.3).

Ex. 2.2: From: RA To: MA Dear Ms. MA Attached is the MBA Marketing assignment questions.
Ex. 2.3: MBA Assignments From: MA To: RA Hi RA, Can you send us the questions of your MBA marketing assignment? thank you MA

In isolation, example 2.2 seems to be an email that was sent to deliver the questions for the marketing assignment. Therefore, the main communicative purpose of the email is delivering documents. However, investigating the email in its context reveals that this email is a response to a previous request. The recipient of example 2.2 has written an email earlier to the sender of 2.2 to request the questions for the

marketing assignment. In response to the request, the recipient replied by forwarding the questions (see example 2.3). As such, the communicative purpose of example 2.2 is considered responding to request.

2.5.2 Framework for Linguistic Analysis in this Study

As reviewed earlier, the four main approaches to genre analysis have emphasized the importance of conducting linguistic analysis to examine the textual artefacts of the genre under investigation. Drawing on Biber's (1988, 1995) multi-dimensional framework to investigate register variation (see section 2.1); this study examined the use of mood, tenses, voice, public verbs, suasive verbs, private verbs, pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, modals, place and time adverbials, and hedges. These features were selected for their functional significance in the text genre. The examination of the tenses used in the emails shows the "temporality of the event" (Biber, 1995, p. 95). The examination of passive voice demonstrates the method of presenting the information (Biber, 1988) and the focus in the presentation whether it is the sender or the action. The examination of pronouns reflects the degree of involvement in the email messages (Biber, 1988). The examination of the modal verbs reflects the nature of the communication in the emails whether it is to present information or state obligations. The investigation of the hedges shows degree of probability and uncertainty when presenting information (Biber, 1988). The investigation of private verbs reflects the mind-set of the communicators and their psychological deposition. Suasive verbs bring intention to change, whereas public verbs are used to present indirect statements (Biber, 1991; Hinkel, 2008). Demonstrative pronouns stand for an unspecified referent and reflect an on-line

informational register (Biber, 1988, 1995). Place and time adverbials reflect a situation-dependent reference (Biber, 1988, 1995).

2.6 Concluding Remarks

Because this study investigated the genre of emails in their institutional context, it underscored the dynamic complexity of the communicative practices in the discourse community (Bhatia, 2002). This study reflected a desire to understand how the employees of the educational institution construct their email messages in English. Being an outsider to the Malaysian community should not be regarded as a handicap for the researcher, because I have lived and worked in Malaysia for the last six years. This experience gives me the same advantage as an insider (Merton, 1972).

Because textual analysis provides the linguistic description, but does not explain the rationale behind language use, genre studies grant the ability to examine the conventions and regularities used in the emails in their institutional context. While English for specific purposes highlights the prominence of the discourse community, communicative purposes, and naming genre[s], the new rhetoric approach provides insights into how to mediate the 'motive' or the goal of communication and the 'situation' or the context by conducting ethnographic analysis using interviews, observations and participating in the daily activities of the community in practice. To determine the generic structure, this study was informed by Hasan's (1977) generic structure potential, which views moves as obligatory, optional and reiteration.

Thus far, this chapter has shown that previous research on the genre of email messages has focused mainly on examining the genre as a module, but there was no

study that investigated the genre of email as a resource. Previous research has mainly investigated the textual artefacts and the characteristics of the discourse community. However, no study investigated the socio-cognitive perspective and the influence of the socio-critical perspectives of email genre. This study intends to fill this gap by investigating the genre of email in relation to Bhatia's (2004) critical genre analysis, which requires an in-depth investigation of the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives of the email genre.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This [critical] genre study explores how email communication in the private higher educational institution subject of the study is constructed, how it is interpreted and how it is exploited in its institutional context. This analysis is carried out in relation to Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework for genre analysis. This investigation, aligning with Bhatia (2004), examines the genre from four overlapping perspectives, namely, ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a). As such, this study does not only count for the text-internal aspects of generic integrity, but also exceeds it to analyse the text-external elements that influence the construction of the text genre in the institutional context.

From the ethnographic perspective, the critical site of engagements and moments of interactions and the mode of genre construction and communication are investigated (Bhatia, 2004; Miller, 1994; Swales, 1998). From the textual perspective, the rhetorical moves or the discourse units and the lexico-grammatical features of the email messages are investigated (Biber, 1988, 1995; Biber et al., 2007). From the socio-cognitive perspective, the patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity are investigated (Bhatia, 2004; Biber, et al., 2007; Devitt. 1991). From the socio-critical perspective, the influences of the organizational culture and the organizational ideologies on language use in the emails are investigated. Even though the dominant methodological approach in this study is qualitative, some simple quantitative analysis is applied to report the

frequency of occurrence when needed. The count of occurrences was carried out manually by the researcher. Here I re-emphasize the main research questions.

3.1 Research Questions

The main research questions of this study are:

1. What are the influences of the institutional practices in the private higher educational institution that is subject of this study on the nature and the construction of the genre?
2. What are the textual features of the email messages exchanged in the private higher educational institution that is subject of this study?
3. How is the genre of email communication constructed and exploited by the employees of the institution that is subject of this study?
4. What are the influences of the disciplinary conventions in the private higher educational institution that is subject of this study on language use in the email messages?

3.2 Qualitative Research

This study is mainly a descriptive and interpretive qualitative study. Clearly defining qualitative research is not an easy task (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). However, some researchers have striven to give insights about this holistic description of events (Stainback and Stainback, 1988), which intends to interpret, describe or "come to terms with the meaning (Van Maanen, 1983, p. 9). For Shank (2002) qualitative research is "a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning" (p. 5). That is, qualitative research is an enquiry into how participants make sense of their experience. This enquiry is systematic as it is rule-governed, planned and public, and

empirical as it examines how this query is grounded in the world of experience (Shank, 2002). Unlike quantitative research which follows "the meaning in general", qualitative research follows the "meaning in particular" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 27) and trails a "flexible and a context-sensitive micro perspective of every day realities of the world" (p. 29). In this sense, qualitative research is "interpretive and naturalistic" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It examines the phenomenon under investigation in its natural settings to interpret or make sense of how the participants view their world.

One main characteristic of qualitative research is its "emergence research design" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 37). Qualitative research is fluid and flexible in its design. This flexibility, according to Dornyei (2007), may even reach research questions that could be amended, refined or even changed. The researchers get into the research with an open mind to find out more about the subject issue. For this specific purpose, Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 37) advised qualitative researchers to ignore literature so that "the emergence of categories will not be contaminated by concepts more suited to different areas". This means that, unlike quantitative research that tests a hypothesis, qualitative research deals with problem statement and research questions and no part of the research design is anticipated earlier.

The "nature of data" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 37) is another characteristic of qualitative research. According to Richards (2005), in qualitative research, there are no restrictions on what can be called or labelled as data. In this sense, everything around the topic could be considered data. So the challenge is not creating enough data, the challenge in qualitative research is to create useful data (Dornyei, 2007, p. 125). Qualitative data may include observations, interviews, texts and images. As

qualitative research is concerned with words, most data is transferred into textual forms (p. 37). However, for the purposes of determining the frequency scores or evaluating the intensity, degree or weight of a narrative account (Dornyei, 2007), the researcher may use the 'quantitizing data' technique (Miles and Huberman, 1994) to report these frequencies, but not to generalize.

The perception is that qualitative research is interpretive in nature. That is, qualitative research intends to make sense of how participants or a group of people makes sense of their experiences. To achieve this, researchers investigate the phenomena in its natural settings, in which the researcher becomes an integral part of the research (Haverkamp, 2005) in terms of opinion and measurement. In addition to the researcher's opinion, qualitative research is also concerned about "insider perspective". That is, qualitative research is attributed to meaning that is brought by the participants (Punch, 2005), and the interpretation depends on researcher's sensitivity. Therefore, the outcomes of qualitative research are "ultimately the product of researcher's subjective interpretation of the data" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 39).

Sample size also could be considered a characteristic of qualitative research. Unlike Quantitative research that examines a big sample, the sample size in qualitative research is small. The main purpose of qualitative sampling is not finding a representative sample. The main purpose is finding participants or data that may provide different and rich insights into the phenomena. In this sense, qualitative research deals with two elements that are 'iteration' and 'saturation'. Iteration is the process of moving between data collection and data analysis. This may continue until the researcher reaches saturation. Saturation, however, is the point at which the

researcher believes that the data is starting to repeat itself. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 61), saturation is the point at which the researcher becomes "empirically confidant" that he/she has the required data to answer the research questions.

Applying qualitative research in applied linguistics in not a new phenomenon (Duff, 2008). According to Duff (2008), the mid-nineties of last century witnessed an increasing acceptance of qualitative research in applied linguistics. This acceptance was driven by the introduction of theories and approaches that did not only intend to examine the frequency of the phenomena, but also the influence of some social, cultural and contextual factors on the phenomena. This is the case in this study that does not only investigate the frequency of the textual features used in the emails, but also the influence of the context, practices and disciplinary culture on the construction and consumption of the emails. As such, an insider's perspective is a core interest in this study.

3.3 The Context: NED, the Educational Institution

The educational institution is a privately owned university college, which provides a number of Malaysian and British undergraduate and postgraduate programs in a relatively small city-based campus in Kuala Lumpur. The institution provides certificates, diplomas, advance diplomas, Bachelors, and Masters in business, accounting, hospitality, computer, English for Business communication, and MBA programs.

The institution began operating in Malaysia in 1992, running three British programs. The number of local and international students grew rapidly in the first twelve years, but the institution faced big financial and licensing problems. In 2005, the management changed. The new administration shifted the campus to a new location and added five new programs, including Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration (BABA) and Master of Business Administration (MBA), which are twinning programs with a major national educational institution in the UK.

These days, the institution has around eight hundred students from various Asian (including Malaysia), Middle Eastern, European, and African countries. The institution employs twenty-nine full-time employees, including two directors, three managers, three heads of program, eight administration staff, eleven full-time lecturers, a cleaner and a security guard. In addition, the institution also employs around twenty-nine part-time lecturers who also work in other institutions and attend the institution to deliver lectures. The staff are middle-class tertiary-educated Malaysians (Malay, Chinese and Indians) and a Jordanian lecturer, the researcher.

This institution was chosen for three main reasons. Firstly, as the institution employs staff from the three main Malaysian ethnic backgrounds (Malay, Chinese Malaysians, and Indian Malaysians), it is expected that email correspondence generated in the institution may reflect the different communicational styles in the Malaysian context in general. Secondly, as an insider (De Andrade, 2000) and a member of the discourse community, the researcher has an advantage of closely observing the institutional context and the physical and professional practices that influence the construction of genre (Bhatia, 2004). Thirdly, while obtaining access to

people's email mailboxes is often difficult, the researcher was able to draw on close and friendly relationships with his employer and staff members to obtain the required data.

3.4 Population and Sampling

The focus in qualitative research sampling is finding individuals who may provide rich and varied insights into the phenomena in question (Dornyei, 2007). In order to achieve this goal, a number of sampling strategies were identified and used. In this study, the snowball sampling technique was used. Snowball sampling, according to Patton (2002, p. 237), is "an approach for locating information-rich key informants". It offers "clear practical advantages in obtaining information on difficult-to-observe phenomena" (Hendricks and Blanken, 1992, p. 18). As an insider-researcher, I had the advantage of observing the physical practices in the institution, which definitely helps in examining the institutional context required by Bhatia (2004). I also had access to the emails that I sent and received from other employees and students, which were mainly concerned with academic issues. However, as I am not a member of the management team, I do not receive emails concerning the daily practices and procedures, especially those concerning institutional issues. Therefore, a need existed for a key informant who writes to and receives emails from the majority of the employees, lecturers and administrative staff, regarding academic and institutional issues.

For these purposes, the writer approached Ms. BP, the head of studies. Ms. BP is the longest serving employee in the institution as she joined fifteen years ago. She is respected by the top management, lecturers and staff members and has a wide

experience in a range of academic and administrative issues. She is frequently approached by the top management and the employees from her own and other departments to ask for advice or opinions regarding these issues. She is also active in sending emails to other employees regarding several issues. Many of the emails that I receive from her are usually sent to a group of employees across the institution, which can be noticed in the electronically generated 'sent' and 'CC' entries of the received emails. I recall her saying that "I am an email junky".

After explaining the nature of the study and the required data, I verbally asked Ms. BP if she was willing to participate in the study. She showed great enthusiasm and agreed straight away. At this stage I asked her to suggest other employees in the institution who use email for work-related purposes. She mentioned the assistant academic director and the other two heads of department; and suddenly, she called an administrative staff in her department, by name, and asked her if she wanted to participate in the study. She explained to her the required data and asked her to send me her email messages, if she agreed to participate. The administrative staff, Ms. IFF, also agreed to participate in the research.

As suggested by Ms. BP, I approached the assistant academic director and the other two heads of programs. Ms. ZA, the head of students' counselling unit also agreed to participate in the study, the other head of program, however, showed reluctance and quoted the confidential nature of the email messages. I also approached Mr. VK, the assistant academic director. He asked me whom else I intend to collect data from. I told him about Ms. BP, Ms. ZA and Ms. IFF. He also agreed to participate in the research. To "get the snowball bigger", I asked him to suggest other employees; he

replied “you! Lecturers?” He also suggested his personal assistant, Ms. MA, as “she communicates with lecturers, ABE and NCC”. I took Mr. VK’s advice and contacted his personal assistant and Mr. DS, the full-time Information Technology lecturer. Mr. DS had no objections at all. He agreed to participate in the research. Ms. MA, however, rejected. She said that she did not feel comfortable sending her ‘mailbox’ to a third party. One week later, she came to my office and told me that she wanted to participate in the research. I did not ask her what changed her mind; I welcomed her move and politely asked her to sign the consent form. I also included my own email messages.

At that stage, I had seven informants, who were around a quarter of the population. They were the assistant academic director, two heads of department, two administrative staff and two full-time lecturers, which represented all the organizational positions in the institution. They were three Malays, two Indian Malaysians, one Chinese Malaysian and one Jordanian, which also represented all ethnic backgrounds working in the institution. The informants were three males and four females, and all of them having a good level of English, as mastering English language is one of the recruiting requirements in the institution. Their age ranged from early twenties to late fifties. I felt that as the sample group included different ethnic backgrounds, age groups, organizational positions and genders, it would capture the phenomenon (Rubin and Babbie, 2007) in question and provide a thick description (Geertz, 1973) about the use of email messages in the educational institution.

Sample size in qualitative research, according to Patton (2002), depends on what the researcher wants to know or the purpose of the study. There is no rule for the sample size in qualitative research. Even a small number of people can be valuable, especially "if the cases are information rich" (p. 244). As the sampling technique in this study, snowball sampling, is based on locating information-rich key informants, the email messages collected from the seven key informants, who represented around 25 percent of the population, were expected to present a "holistic picture" (Creswell, 1998, p. 15) about language use in the email messages as an institutional practice in "a natural setting", the private higher educational institution that was the subject of the study.

All the informants agreed to voluntarily provide their workplace emails. They had the opportunity to ask questions, I gave them the answers. Before collecting the emails, the informants signed consent forms stating that they agreed to participate in the study by providing their email exchanges. In later stages, I approached them to conduct interviews. All agreed to sit for the interviews.

3.5 Data

In order to fulfil the objectives and answer the research questions, a variety of data was used. The researcher collected emails from the seven main informants from *'day-in-day-out'* email communications over a period of forty-five days, conducted interviews with six out of the seven main informants, presented a questionnaire to focus group members and, as a member of the discourse community, conducted participant observation.

According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), qualitative study is descriptive and exploratory in that it aims at finding out more about the area of interest. The area of interest in this study is analysing the genre of workplace emails in one educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. Because this study is concerned with natural authentic workplace communications through emails, the methods of collecting data reflect this feature, emphasizing the qualitative nature of the study. The following is a detailed explanation of the data and the rationale behind the choice.

3.5.1 Email Messages

The researcher collected a corpus of 378 emails messages. A corpus, according to Bowker and Pearson (2002), is defined as "a large collection of authentic texts that have been gathered according to a specific set of criteria" (p. 9). Authenticity, in this study, is dealt with by collecting emails from daily natural settings. The 378 email messages were collected on a daily basis for a period of forty-five days that started from early May 2010 to mid-June 2010.

As Maykut and Morehouse (1994) proposed that the naturalness of data collection is essential in qualitative research, the corpus was collected directly from the main informants. Although the informants agreed to provide the emails, they were either worried or confused in the first two weeks which was reflected in the limited number of emails received by the researcher. In order to motivate the informants to send the emails, the researcher had another conversation with each of them separately. I emphasized that the emails will be used for the research purposes only, and that confidentiality would be maintained and nobody would have access to them. In the research, their names would be changed in a way that no one would be able to

identify the actual writer of the email. The researcher even asked the informants to provide a nickname or initials to signify their identities in the research.

It was obvious that the informants did not want the recipients of their emails to know that the emails were being sent to a third party (i.e., the researcher). The researcher suggested that the informants could either include a blind carbon copy 'BCC' of their sent emails to the researcher, or forward the message later, separately. In order to give credibility and make the recipients feel more relaxed regarding the process, the researcher printed out one of the emails from each of the informants, after changing the email account, sans any reference to the names or numbers and presented it to them for their feedback. This, in fact, made the informants feel more relaxed about the process, and they started sending more emails. The informants either sent the emails using the 'BCC' option or immediately before they signed off the workplace from 4:45-5:00 pm, which meant that the informants either sent the emails simultaneously with sending it to the actual recipient[s] of the email, or forwarded it to the researcher at the end of the working day. The collection continued smoothly on a daily basis.

The researcher initially targeted a month-long exchange of email in the institution. However, as the response in the first two weeks was slow and the saturation was not reached, the collection period was extended for a week, and then for another extra week. At the end of the sixth week, the researcher realized that the data started to stabilize, and there were no new emerging patterns in the emails, saturation was reached. The overall collection period for collecting the emails lasted for forty-five

days. At the end of the collection period, the researcher had received 522 workplace emails.

The seven main informants, other employees in the educational institution, external contacts and students, wrote the 522 email messages. As genre analysis in this study examines language use as an institutional practice, the investigation on the genre of email examined the emails that the seven main informants (378 email messages) produced. The emails that were written by other employees, external contacts and students (144 email messages) were not examined. These 144 email messages, however, were not deleted as they provided the immediate context of the email communications.

3.5.2 Other Textual Data

This study is concerned with the genre of email communication in the educational institution. However, to build up a picture of the site (Swales, 1998), a complementary corpus of business letters, memorandums, faxes, notice board notes and documents was collected from the main informants. This corpus was used to conduct the textographic analysis on the texts and text life in the educational institution (Swales, 1998). This analysis is part of the ethnographic analysis Bhatia (2004) suggested.

Textographic analysis "combines elements of textual analysis with ethnographic techniques such as interviews, observations, and document analysis" (Paltridge, 2008, p. 10). It is more than traditional discourse analysis but less than full ethnography (Paltridge, 2008). It intends to examine why the texts are written the

way they are (Katz, 1999; Paltridge, 2008), which provides a description about the influence of the context on the production and the construction of the texts in a place discourse community (Swales, 1998).

The corpus of letters, faxes, memorandums and notice boards notes was collected from the seven main informants. It included five letters that were sent to governmental authorities and internally to the CEO of the educational institution, seven memorandums that were sent to a group of employees, three business faxes that were sent to external partners and part-time lecturers and seven notice board notes that were placed on the notice boards of the two departments. It is not a large corpus, but it provided insights about the "genre system" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 55) used by the employees.

3.5.3 Participant Observation

Bhatia (2004) emphasized the significance of some ethnographic analysis when analysing genre. This ethnographic analysis may look at some physical circumstances that influence the nature and the construction of genre (Bhatia, 2004). Specifically, as the generic integrity is dynamic, "ethnographic procedures, including detached participant observation of professional practice, be a crucial methodological procedure to serve this end" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 165). This detached observation, according to Bhatia, should target the behaviour of the expert members of the discourse community.

The main purpose of qualitative research is to gather information of human behaviour in order to comprehend the purposes that governs such behaviour (Denzin

and Lincoln, 2005); therefore, observation, or participant observation, stands as a key technique in explaining the why and how factors, especially in organizational discourse. Participant observation is a research strategy that aims at gaining more information about a group of people in their natural setting. It is an anthropologic technique but is also used in communication studies and in analysing occupational discourse (Douglas, 1976). Participant observation, as a research method, applies a number of techniques like participating in the group life (professional life in the workplace), carrying out informal interviews, direct observation, and self-analysis (DeWalt et al., 1998). Using participant observation in this study is essential as a method to observe the physical and professional practices that influence the nature and the construction of genre in the institutional context as suggested by Bhatia (1993, 2004).

Having the researcher as a member of the discourse community facilitates the observational process in natural settings and provides useful in-depth information about the actual practices that take place in the discourse community and the institution. Even though I have been in the workplace for five years, conducting the participant observation made me focus more on details, which as a result, made me realize issues about which I had never thought before. I became more alert about details. Since I started recording my field notes about what was happening in the institution, the relationship between the employees, their communication and interaction settings, I realized that I began to interact with other members more than I initially had, and become aware of details that I had not previously noticed. I realized that I started paying more visits to offices that I did not used to visit much earlier. I also realized that I started asking more questions. My main intention was to listen to

what the employees were talking about, how they viewed each other, and how this was reflected in their electronic communication. This experience, in fact, gave me new perceptions about the institution and its discourse community. The observation made me re-explore the institution.

3.5.4 Interviews

In order to have more information about the actual use of emails in the workplace, the researcher conducted six one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the main informants (see appendix 1). Qualitative interview is a method of discovering how people feel and think of themselves and their worlds (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). It is different from everyday conversation as it is "a conversation with a purpose" (Valentine, 2005, p. 111). As such, the researcher, who becomes "a student and then tries to get people to describe their experiences in their own terms" (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p. 2), needs to prepare his/her questions and report results. As such, being a good interviewer does not only require the researcher to be a good conversationalist, but also to be a good listener (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Qualitative interview, according to Rubin and Rubin (1995) "can be used to obtain more information about narratives, accounts, fronts, stories, and myths" (p. 24-27), that is why it was used in several fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, and by administrators (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Qualitative interviews, for instance, were used in examining interethnic communication (Minah Harun, 2007). Minah Harun (2007), who examined sense making in everyday interactions between Malay Malaysians and Chinese Malaysians, explained how interviews enabled her "as a researcher to explore more fully the situation I am attempting to define and interpret" (p. 144). However, as interviews may not reveal some factors that the informants

take for granted (Bryman and Bell, 2007), "researchers using this approach need to carefully construct the subject matter they are investigating" (Minah Harun, 2007, p. 144).

The main purpose of conducting the interviews was to find new insights about the actual use of email communication in the institution. They were also a follow-up technique to inquire about certain practices in the emails. The researcher, thus, was more of an active listener than passive speaker. I prepared a number of questions, but I always provided the chance for the interviewee to speak more. The interviews were conducted in three different places, according to the informants' choice. Some informants invited me to conduct the interview in their offices and one of them decided to have it in my office, while the majority of the informants preferred to conduct the interviews in a classroom. The interviews were recorded using a journalist's cassette recorder and were manually transcribed.

3.5.5 Relational Factors Questionnaire

The relational factors questionnaire was intended to acquire more information about the participants (the employees who write to or receive emails from the main informants). This included power relations and social distance. The main purpose of sending this questionnaire was deciding on some relational factors that may influence the language used in the emails, particularly, the influence of relational factors (i.e., power relations and social distance) on the formality and informality of the framing moves in the email messages. This questionnaire was sent as an attachment through email in the form of a Microsoft Word document to six out of the seven main informants.

This questionnaire (see appendix 2) was organized to gain intensive and precise information about the influence of the relational factors on the framing structure of the email messages. The names of the respondents were listed in a table; the questions regarding power relations and social distance were presented next to the names. The informants were asked to fill in how they viewed the respondents. Power relations were categorized as superior, equal, and subordinate. Social distance was categorized, in line with Waldvogel (2005), to close colleague, distant colleague, and friend. As the emails were exchanged in an educational institution, the researcher added 'student' as a separate entry in the questionnaire.

The collected data was used for coding the corpus of emails. Every single email in the corpus was coded in a way that reflected power relations and social distance between the sender and the recipient. As mentioned earlier, this coding was used in examining the use of framing moves (i.e., salutations, openings, pre-closings, closings) in the emails in relation to the relational factors between the sender and the recipient. That is, the main purpose of the questionnaire was investigating the influence of relating factors on the framing structure of the email messages.

3.5.6 Focus Group Members' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was sent to seven focus group members to verify the findings of the study (see appendix 3). The focus group included seven members who worked in two different educational institutions in Kuala Lumpur. They were heads of program, lecturers, and administrative staff.

This questionnaire was divided into two main sections: the first section included queries about the organizational position of the members, their age, and the number of years of using email for workplace purposes. The second section included four samples of emails that represent the findings of the study. Every email was followed by the following four questions:

1. What is the communicative purpose of this message? Why was it sent?

   TO:

The main purpose of this question was to verify the communicative purpose[s] of the email. It also checked whether focus group members believed that the emails have a single or a number of communicative purposes. The researcher made sure that the attached emails represented the different communicative purposes identified in the textual analysis. This question checked the communicative purpose of the messages from the recipient's point of view. To emphasize the use of verb, ***'To'*** was used to prompt the answer.

2. If you received this email, would you reply or not? If yes, what would you say?

This question was designed to check on recipients' reaction when receiving such an email. This question arose as a result of the textual analysis, which showed that some of the communicative purposes required a reply while others did not. The reaction to receiving the correspondence is one of the characteristics used to distinguish between the communicative purposes.

3. If you were the sender, why would you send a message like this?

This question checked on the communicative purpose of the email from sender's point of view. It examined whether focus group members would have the same or different reactions toward the type of email communication carried out in the email,

if it was looked at from senders' perspective. Recipients' perspective was presented in the first question.

4. If you were asked to give a name for this message (i.e., if you want your workmate to write you a message like this) what would you call it?

Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993) and Paltridge (1997) emphasized the importance of naming the newly identified types of genres. Naming the newly identified types of genres in this study was based on their communicative purposes. This question checks whether focus group members agree or disagree with the names that were given by the researcher. Focus group members were given that chance to name the communicative purposes deliberately.

These four questions were followed by two more questions regarding the whole sample of emails. The two questions focused on the overall impression about the four email messages. The format of this questionnaire was adopted from Kankaanranta (2005).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Before collecting the emails, the researcher approached the president of the institution in order to acquire his consent to collect emails, conduct interviews and distribute the questionnaires to the employees. The president agreed and signed the consent form on condition that a pseudonym rather than the actual name of the institution be used. After that, the researcher approached the main informants who raised ethical issues such as the privacy of the email accounts and the people involved in the research. These issues were overcome by means of using pseudonyms, hiding the email accounts, and deleting any identifying information of

the participants or recipients. As such, all proper names that appear in the corpus are not the real names of the people involved in this study. The same is true regarding the use of NED to represent the name of the educational institution. As the main informants were concerned about their identities, I referred to them in the study using initials that did not relate to their real names. Regarding the corpus of emails, it was collected for the research purposes only and will not be used or reproduced in any other form except with the written consent from the informants and the institution. The main informants had the opportunity to ask questions, and the answers were given. All the informants gave their written consent (see appendix 4).

3.7 Methods of Analysis

This study has mainly used Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework to critical genre analysis. It investigated the genre of email communication in the workplace from the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. The analysis of the data, however, was carried out using a novel integrative methodology that made use of new rhetoric, English for specific purposes and systemic functional linguistic approaches to genre analysis, Biber's et al. (2007) corpus-based framework of analysing discourse organization, Biber's (1988, 1995) and Conrad and Biber's (2001) multi-dimensional framework to investigate register variation, and Devitt's (1991) kinds of intertextuality (see figure 3.1 below). The integration of these approaches to genre, text and context analysis is designed for the purposes of this study to have a fuller view about the genre of email communication as institutionalized and conventionalized practices and procedures in a community of practice.

Table 3.1: Analytical framework of the study

Analytical perspectives	Intended focuses	Methods of Analysis
Ethnographic perspective	Analysis and understanding of • Critical site of engagements and moments of interactions • The mode of genre construction and communication	Observation and interviews (Bazerman, 1994, Miller, 1994) Textography (Swales, 1998)
Textual perspective	Analysis of • Rhetorical moves • Lexico-grammatical features	BCU framework (S.1-S.5) (Biber et al., 2007) Biber (1988, 1995)
Socio-cognitive perspective	Analysis and understanding of • Patterns of generic integrity • Patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity	BCU framework (P.6-P.7) (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a; Devitt, 1991)
Socio-critical perspective	Analysis and awareness of • Influences of organizational culture on language use • Influences of organizational ideologies on language use	The functional language description embedded in the texts (i.e., strategies, inferences) (Bhatia, 2004)

To have a fuller view about the educational institution and the discourse community using the genre, I firstly investigated the ethnographic perspective. In conducting the ethnographic analysis, the researcher, in line with Bhatia (2004), Bazerman (1994), Miller (1994) and Swales (1998), conducted interview with six of the seven main informants, conducted participant observation and participated in the daily activities of the discourse community. I strived to identify the influences of the institutional and professional practices on the construction of genre in the institution (Bhatia, 2004). Examining the critical site of engagements and moments of interactions and the mode of genre construction and communication carried this out. In examining the critical site of engagements, in line with Bhatia's (2008) suggestion, I examined the '*front-stage'* and '*back-stage'* interactions of the discourse community. This included the interactions within the discourse community ('colleague-colleague' interactions), on the one hand, and the interactions between the discourse community and the students and external partners, on the other. The main purpose of conducting

this analysis was identifying the institutional and professional practices of the discourse community. After that, the mode of genre construction and communication was investigated (Bhatia, 2004; Swales, 1998). The "genre system" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 55) used by the discourse community was linguistically analysed. This is the case to provide initial understanding about the use of language as an institutional practice in the educational institution. This investigation also placed the genre of email in the communicative map of the educational institution and provided insights into the interactions between the genre of email and the other genres used in the educational institution. My personal experience as an insider helped me a great deal to locate resources, on the one hand, and information-rich informants, on the other. The insider-observer status also enabled me in making sense of the daily practices.

On the textual perspective, I investigated the rhetorical moves and the lexico-grammatical features of the email messages. The investigation of the moves was carried out using a semantic-functional (Biber et al. 2007) rather than a structural (Swales, 1990) approach. This is the case because the structural patterning suggested by structural approaches (see Swales, 1990) did not fully fit into the construction of the email messages (see section 2.5.1). The semantic-functional or BCU approach (Biber et al., 2007; Upton and Cohen, 2009) facilitated identifying the rhetorical moves in relation to their communicative/functional intentions. For the purposes of this study, the researcher established a working definition for the unit move. The move in this study refers to a discourse unit in a text bearing a unique communicative purpose that is characterized by a unique functional-semantic contribution and linguistic features and/or typographical features or symbols and identified in its context. Every move is unique and builds with the other moves identified in the

text[s] the communicative purpose of the whole text (see section 2.5.1 above for details).

The linguistic analysis, however, was carried out in relation to Biber's (1988, 1995) and Conrad and Biber's (2001) multi-dimensional framework to investigate register variation. The researcher investigated the functional use of the tenses, as they reflect the temporality of events (Biber, 1995); passive voice, as they reflect the method of presenting information (Biber, 1988); the grammatical moods (declarative, interrogative and imperative clauses), as they reflect interpersonal relations; pronouns, as they reflect involvement (Biber, 1988); demonstrative pronouns, as they refer to unspecified referents (Biber, 1991); public verbs, as they are used to present indirect statements (Biber, 1988, 1995); suasive verbs, as they imply intention to bring change in the future (Biber, 1988, 1995); private verbs, as they express intellectual states (Biber, 1988, 1995); modals, because of their ability to modify a verb; hedges, as they represent the degree of probability (Biber, 1988); and place and time adverbials, as they reflect a situational-dependent reference (Biber, 1991). The investigation, in line with Conrad and Biber (2001), included the interpretation of these features in the given context. Grouping these features to identify the register used in the email messages followed (Biber, 1988, 1995).

On the socio-cognitive perspective, the researcher investigated the patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. According to Bhatia (2004), the socio-cognitive perspective overlaps with the textual perspective. In investigating the patterns of generic integrity (Bhatia, 2004), the preferred generic structures (Hasan, 1977) or the patterns of discourse organization (Biber, et al., 2007)

in the corpus of email messages were identified. This was carried out by analysing the complete texts as sequences of discourse units and describing the patterns across all texts (Biber et al., 2007). The categorization of the moves in the patterns of generic integrity were regarded as obligatory, in case they appeared in all the emails of a specific pattern; optional, in case they appeared in at least two-third of the emails in a specific pattern; or reiterational, in case they appeared in less than one-third of the emails in a specific pattern (Hasan, 1977). The description of the identified patterns (Biber, et al., 2007) was carried out in relation to their communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1993, 2004) and "form-function colorations" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 123).

The investigation of the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity, however, examined the interrelationships among or across texts and the interactions among or across genres (Bhatia, 2010a). The researcher investigated the presence of a text in another text (referential intertextuality), the influence of texts on other texts by creating the need for these new texts (functional intertextuality) and the reoccurrence of rhetorical forms in reoccurring rhetorical situations (generic intertextuality) (Devitt, 1991). The investigation of the patterns of interdiscursivity was carried out by examining the interactions between genres and styles (Bhatia, 2010a). In relation to "hybrid genres", the researcher investigated the appropriation of generic resources of a genre to create another (Bhatia, 2010a). This included the appropriation of the semiotic resources, which included textual and generic resources (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 393). The investigation of 'hybrid style', however, included examining the mixing of written and spoken styles including non-verbal cues in the email genre messages.

The investigation on the socio-critical perspective examined the "disciplinary conventions that govern the use of language" in the institution (Bhatia, 2004, p. 166). These disciplinary conventions, according to Bhatia (2004), could be "implicitly understood and unconsciously followed", as in the organizational culture, or "explicitly enforced", as in the organizational ideologies reflected in the staff code of conduct (p. 166). The investigation of these conventions, according to Bhatia (2004), is "particularly important" (p. 167) in case the data was collected from a specific institution, which is the case in this study. The influence of the institutional context on language use was carried out by examining the linguistic resources of the email genre messages in relation to the norms and values of the institution. That is, the study examined the 'strategies', 'inferences' and 'contextualization cues', such as sentence syntax, lexical selection and politeness mechanism (Van Dijk, 2001) that reflect awareness of "the social structure and interaction [and] goals of disciplinary culture" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 167). After all, the investigation on language use as an institutional practice is a "discourse based investigation of a range of professional, organizational and institutional practices" (Bhatia, 2010b, p. 466).

The integration of the above mentioned approaches was chosen as it provides a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) and a comprehensive analysis of the genre of email in its institutional context. The ethnographic and the textographic methodologies presented by the new rhetoricians (Devitt, 1991; Miller, 1994) and Swales (1998) analyses the institutional practices of the discourse community using the genres. Biber's (1988, 1995) seven basic registers and Biber's et al. (2007) discourse organization framework were chosen as they provided a complete and detailed corpus-based framework for investigating the register and the patters of

discourse organization. Swales's (1990) view of genre and Hasan's (1977) generic structure potential were chosen as they analyse how the employees construct and exploit the genre of email communication. Devitt's (1991) kinds of intertextuality were used as they provide detailed insights into how the professional knowledge of the employees influences the construction of genre. The examination of the form-function coloration (Bhatia, 2004), the contextual cues, strategies and inferences (Van Dijk, 2001) were used as they explain how the disciplinary conventions of the discourse community influence on language use. That is, they reflect the methods used by the informants to show conformity to the culture of the workplace

3.7.1 Validation of Findings

In line with Swales's (1990) approach and Bhatia's (1993) framework for identifying unfamiliar genre, the newly identified types of genres were validated. Even though Swales (1990) emphasized the importance of "validating" the names of the new types of genres (p. 58), he did not explain how to do so. In his framework for determining unfamiliar genres, Bhatia (1993) explained that, in order to validate the names of the genres, the researcher needs to check his/her findings against professionals' reactions. According to Bhatia (1993), consulting a professional in the attributed field increasingly is becoming a trend in linguistic research. As such, in order to validate the different types of genres, samples of the emails that represent the different types of genres identified in the study were presented to a focus group that consisted of seven members in the form of a questionnaire. The sample emails were representative of the different types of email genres identified in the study.

The seven members of the focus group work in two different private higher educational institutions in Kuala Lumpur, SEGI University College and RIMA College. As in NED, the two colleges run a number of joint programs with British institutions. The members of the focus group work in different organizational positions, belong to different age groups, use email for business communication, and have different educational backgrounds. These members were suggested by the head of academic studies and the head of studies in the two institutions. The researcher did not meet the members personally. After explaining the nature of the study and the importance of the required task, the questionnaires were left with the contact people and were collected the following day. Three of the focus group members work in RIMA College, and four work in SEGI University College. The questionnaire (see appendix three) included samples of the four types of email genres identified in the study. The members were asked to answer four questions regarding the communicative purposes, the possible actions to receiving such emails, and the purposes of writing the email. Focus group members voluntarily answered the four questions presented in the questionnaire.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the data and the methods of analysis that were applied in examining and analysing the genre of email. It also provided some insights about the field site of the study and the sampling strategies used to recruit the informants voluntarily. This chapter also explained ethical issues that were taken into consideration when collecting and dealing with the corpus of email. This chapter has also illustrated the focuses when conducting the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical analysis. As workplace communication is a goal-oriented

contextualized communication, using ethnographic methods is an important method of making sense of the linguistic practices. By using participant observation and interviews, the researcher was able to get closer to the topic by having access to the daily practices of the informants. This, in collaboration with the textual analysis (Biber et al., 2007) conducted on the language used in emails, provided a thick description (Geertz, 1973) about the professional practices in their institutional context. To investigate the appropriation of the generic resources of genres to create others and to identify the patterns of generic integrity, the researcher conducted the socio-cognitive analysis. To investigate how the disciplinary conventions in the institutional context influenced the construction of the email genre, a socio-critical analysis was conducted. As such, this study, in alignment with Bhatia (2004, 2008, 2010a, 2012), examined the text-internal and text-external elements of generic integrity to present a fuller and a comprehensive view about the genre of email communication in a community of practice as an institutional practice.

CHAPTER FOUR
ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

This chapter examines language use as a professional practice (Bhatia, 2010a). It targets the first research question concerning the influences of the institutional practices of the discourse community on the nature and the construction of the genre in the institution. It investigates the critical site of engagement and moments of interactions and the mode of genre construction and communication in the educational institution. In investigating the critical site of engagements and moments of interaction, the researcher made use of the New Rhetoricians' (Bazerman, 1994; Devitt, 1991; Miller, 1994) ethnographic methods including participant observation, participating in the daily practices, activities and professional life of the community and formal and informal interviews to examine the 'front-stage' and 'back-stage' interactions of the discourse community. The main intention of the analysis is identifying the institutional and professional practices of the discourse community. 'Front-stage' interactions examined the interactions between the discourse community and the outsiders regarding work-related issues; 'back-stage' interactions, however, examined the interactions between the members of the discourse community (Bhatia, 2010a). In examining the mode of genre construction and communication, the "genre system" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 55) used by the main informants and the employees of the educational institution was analysed linguistically (Swales, 1998). This intended to provide initial insights into language use as an institutional practice in the institution and examine how the construction of email genre emerges from other professional genres used in the institution (Bhatia, 2004).

4.1 The Educational Institution and Discourse Community: An Overview

NED, a pseudonym, is a privately owned higher educational institution located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur. The institution runs ten local and international programs in collaboration with a number of local and international bodies and institutions. The institution is owned by a prominent public figure in Malaysia, who has served in a number of public and private positions for the last three decades. The institution was established in 1992 and ran five local and international programs. In 2005, and because of licensing problems, a change in the management was made. The new management moved the institution to a new campus and added a number of programs, which had a positive impact as it brought in a relatively big number of local and international students. Currently, the institution has around 800 students from a number of Middle Eastern, Asian, European and African countries.

The institution has a president, who is also the CEO (chief executive officer) and the chairman. Given that the chairman holds a number of positions in a number of companies, he does not attend the institution on daily basis. His senior manager in the college, the executive director, is the actual head of the hierarchy in the institution. The executive director is responsible for the daily work in the institution and a copy of all letters, memorandums, faxes, and emails should be forwarded to him. The executive director manages the college through three main people, who are the assistant academic director and two heads of program, who manage studies and professional studies departments. The professional studies department manages undergraduate degrees and the academic studies department manages postgraduate degrees. There is a separate department called the students' counselling unit deals closely and directly with students' related issues, including obtaining visas and

registration for international students. The students' counselling unit reports directly to the executive director.

NED employs fifty-eight employees, who are twenty-nine full-time directors (two), managers (three), heads of program (three), lecturers (eleven), administrative staff (eight), a security guard and a cleaner, and twenty-nine part-time lecturers. All full-time (except the cleaner and the security guard) and part-time staff are tertiary educated middle-class Malaysians and a Jordanian. The employees belong to the three major Malaysian ethnic backgrounds that are Malays, Chinese Malaysians, and Indian Malaysians. Sixty-two percent of full-time staff and lecturers are Malays, twenty-eight percent Indian Malaysians, seven percent Chinese Malaysians, and three percent Jordanian, whereas sixty-seven percent of the part-time lecturers are Indian Malaysians, fourteen percent are Malays and ten percent Chinese Malaysians.

To draw the study sample, the researcher used the snowball sampling technique (see section 3.4 above). Seven main informants were identified through two "information-rich" informants (see Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1: Demographic analysis and years of experience of the main informants

Main Informants	**Organizational position**	**Qualification**	**Age group**	**Gender**	**Years of experience in the institution**
VK (Indian)	Academic director	Masters	Thirties	Male	Ten years
BP (Indian)	Head of studies	Bachelor	Forties	Female	Fifteen years
ZA (Malay)	Head of students' counselling unit	Bachelor	Twenties	Female	Eight years
DS (Chinese)	Lecturer	Masters	Fifties	Male	Six years
Mohd (Jordan)	Lecturer	Master	Thirties	Male	six years
MA (Malay)	Personal assistant	Diploma	Twenties	Female	Three years
IFF (Malay)	Administrative assistance	Diploma	Twenties	Female	Three years

Mr. VK, the academic director, has around ten years of experience at the college as a lecturer, head of a program and an assistant academic director. Mr. VK, who is in his thirties, is a master's degree holder in business administration. He represents the owners and the directors in the college; therefore, any correspondence must be 'CC'd' (forwarded) to him. Even though he holds a high position in the college, he maintains a friendly and 'open' relationship with the majority of the employees. Mr. VK is an Indian Malaysian. From the early stages of the research, Mr. VK showed a great enthusiasm.

Ms. BP, the head of studies, is a bachelor degree holder in hospitality management. Ms. BP, who is in her forties, has long experience in managing and administering academic programs in Malaysia. In the workplace, Ms. BP is active in writing emails to all the staff; she calls herself an "email junky". She has the widest contact list as she communicates with both full-time staff and part-time lecturers. Ms. BP is also the main contact person with the British institution that collaborates with NED. In addition to her organizational position, level of expertise, and education, Ms. BP, who is also an Indian, is active not only in writing workplace emails, but in almost all types of computer-mediated communication. She is a prominent member of a number of political, religious, and social blogs and networks, which exposes her to a number of different electronic genres and styles.

Mr. DS, a full-time information technology (IT) lecturer, is a master's degree holder in information technology. He is also partially in charge of collaborating with external partners regarding IT programs. Mr. DS, who is in his fifties, has long experience in teaching IT at several colleges in Kuala Lumpur. In the workplace, Mr.

DS is an obedient type of person, who does not like any conflict with others. He respects his work and always meets deadlines, but at the same time, he is proud of his experience, contacts “with VIP people in KL”, and his education. Mr. DS, who is Chinese, has worked at the college for six years.

Ms. ZA, head of students’ counselling unit, is a bachelor degree holder in information technology. Ms.ZA, who is in her twenties, has worked in the college for about eight years. As the head of students’ counselling unit, Ms. ZA works closely with local and international students. She is responsible for arranging medical check-ups, insurance, and creating a database for all international students. Ms. ZA, who is Malay, is also responsible for arranging the timetable of part-time lecturers, especially those who teach in a number of programs in the institution. As part of her duties, she has direct contact with all departments, the assistant academic director and the top management regarding students-related issues.

Ms. MA, who is Malay, is the personal assistant of the academic director. She is a diploma holder and has been working in the college for three years. As part of her organizational duties, she arranges meetings and is a mediator between the academic director and other staff members. As part of her duties as well, she writes emails to all staff members, lecturers and the British partners.

Ms. IFF, who is also a Malay respondent, works as an administrative staff in the department of academic studies. She is one of the institution’s graduates and knows all the administrative and management staff and lecturers well. She is the personal assistant of the head of studies, and her main duties include being a mediator

between the students, external contacts and her superior, Ms. BP. Ms. IFF has worked in the college for three years.

The seventh informant is the researcher. I am Jordanian. I have worked in the institution for six years as a full-time lecturer. I am involved in teaching language and communication modules in almost all the programs offered by the institution from certificate to master's levels. As such, I have frequent verbal, written and electronic communication with the three heads of program and administrative staff regarding academic issues. I also write to (and receive emails from) my students. I enjoy a friendly relationship with almost all full-time employees and part-time lecturers.

The main informants, as such, work in different organizational positions ranging from the assistant academic director to personal assistant. They are three males and four females, their level of education varies from diploma to Masters, their age group varies from twenties to fifties, they have been working in the institution from three to fifteen years, and they belong to the four different ethnic backgrounds in the institution. The seven main informants sent 378 email messages in 45 day-in-day-out email communications.

4.2 Critical Site of Engagement and Moments of Interactions

The working day at NED starts at 9 AM Monday-Friday and at 9:30 on Saturdays and Sundays. The security guard opens the doors and sits behind his small desk, greeting the arriving employees. The first employee to arrive usually is Mr. DS, the full-time IT lecturer. He makes his coffee, switches on his computer and starts

reading '*The Sun', a* free newspaper that he collects from the security guard. I do not pick a paper in my way to my office as I know that Mr. DS, who shares the office with me, would pick a newspaper for me as well. If I do not find a newspaper on my office, I would know that Mr. DS is on leave. He always arrives before me to work.

By thirty minutes after nine all full-time lecturers and staff members would have been arrived to the institution. They will be setting behind their desks reading the morning newspapers or having morning '*chitchat'.* Around this time of the day the students start coming to attend their classes or to discuss, enquire or deliver documents to the administrative staff. The classes in NED are arranged in two sessions that are the morning and the afternoon sessions. The morning session classes are conducted from 10-1 pm, the afternoon session classes are conducted from 2-5 pm. This is the practice throughout the five working days. The institution also runs classes on the weekends. The weekend classes are the Bachelor and Master's degree classes as the majority of the students in these degrees are working individuals.

If I have a class that morning, I would walk into Ms. ZA's office to collect the students' attendance booklet. The attendance booklets are placed in Ms. ZA's office as part of her responsibilities is keying in the attendance of the students to the electronic system used by the institution. Ms. ZA has a small office that is placed right behind the main door of the institution. It is always packed with international students who want to collect their attendance report for visa renewal purposes. According to Ms. ZA, face-to-face and telephone conversations are the main methods of communication with international students, especially diploma and certificate programs students. "We send emails to remind the students that their visa

going to expire soon, but so many of them don't reply", Ms. ZA explains. For me, I write emails to my certificate and diploma students to inform them about due dates and deliver the lecture notes and lecture hand-outs. I prefer sending the hand-outs and the lecture notes as an attachment as I feel it is a waste to print 20 or sometimes 30 copies of these hand-outs, especially because all students have computers and access to the Internet. At the beginning of every single intake, I give my email account to the students and ask them to send me emails stating their name and the name of the module they are registered in. I create email loops to send the lecture notes, hand-outs and assignments, or to inform the students in case of class cancelation and replacement classes. From my experience, they have access to the Internet and almost all of them have computers. This makes me wonder if some of them do not respond to Ms. ZA's emails to skip a reminder or gain extra time to pay their fees.

I teach modules in the two departments of the institution, the department of professional studies and the department of studies. If my class was for a diploma or a certificate program, I conduct the class in two hours and a half. After class, I give the attendance booklet back to Ms. ZA, who would still be busy discussing issues with the students. Then, I go to the department of professional studies to submit my lesson plan. The employees of the professional studies department occupy a large office that is divided into cubicle farms. In fact, office layout in the institution is arranged on the departmental level. That is, all administrative and management staff members, including the head of department, occupy a relatively big office that is divided into cubicle farms or partitioned rows of spaces, at which every employee has a computer and a telephone extension. Every employee occupies a cubicle.

Mr. MJ heads the department of professional studies. He has three administrative staff who are Ms. MA, who is also the personal assistant of the assistant academic director, Ms., DA, who is responsible for lecturers-related issues and Ms. YA, who is responsible for students-related issues. As Ms. ZA's office, the department of professional studies is always busy with students, and sometimes lecturers, especially from 12:45-1 pm and 4:45-5 pm (after classes). Ms. MA explains that "it is always busy here *lah*, sometimes we go for lunch at 3 pm". Ms. YA also seems busy with the students. I overheard her having discussions regarding academic issues. She patiently responds to the students. If they have requests, she gives them a form to fill or direct them Ms. MJ for further clarifications. Ms. DA, however, seems a little bit more relaxed. The lecturers usually drop their lesson plans on her desk, have a light '*chitchat'* and go back to their offices or leave the institution. She prefers email communication with the lecturers. I used to receive several emails from her regarding my teaching hours and assignment submission. She told me that this is the standard practice with all lecturers.

As the administrative staff deal with daily arising issues regarding students and lecturers, Mr. MJ usually handles the more complicated issues. In case the administrative staff could not give a final decision regarding an issue, they usually ask the opinion of Mr. MJ, or tell students to communicate with him directly. He is very busy person as he needs to handle issues regarding students in the institution, collaborate with external partners regarding the externally run programs and communicate with the governmental authorities, MOHE and MQA, regarding the offered programs. I also used to receive several emails from him. The emails that he

sends are usually regarding academic and administrative issues. He would send me, and other lecturers, emails calling for a meeting, discussing issues regarding the modules that we teach or informing us about the latest developments and changes regarding the programs in relationship to MQA and external partners' requirements.

As I walked out of the department of professional studies, a big red dark-printed word that reads 'URGENT' on the notice board struck my attention. It was a note that is directed to the international students whose visas will expire in two months. The note included the list of students and the required action. They were requested to pay their fees in full and submit the bank draft to Ms. YA, the administrative staff in the department, to pursue the applications. The notice board also included five more notes that were directed to the students. Three of these notes were signed by the head of the department and were regarding the timetable of the new intake, the dates and the venues of the internal exams and the date and the venue of the global exams. The other two notes were signed by '*the management'* and included a reminder for the students to pay the fees for the external exam and another note that requested the students to attend their classes on time and reminded them that if they enter the class after 15 minutes, they will be marked late. All these notes were short and direct. All of them were intended to attract the attention of the students using dark-printed capitalized words such as 'URGENT', 'ATTENTION' and 'TO ABE/ NCC STUDENTS'.

The department of studies, however, is located in another part of the building, close to the offices of the CEO, the executive director, the special officer of the chairman, and assistant academic director. This part of the building is relatively quiet during the

week as the overwhelming majority of the classes in the department of studies are conducted on the weekends; my class is on Friday. However, sometimes a number of students walk around that part of the building waiting their turn to meet the assistant academic director. As the department of professional studies, the department of studies also occupies a relatively big office that is divided into cubicle farms. Ms. BP, the head of the department, has a big office that is located opposite the door. The cubicles of Ms. IFF and Ms. VM, the administrative staff in the department of studies are located in the two sides of the office. If I need to submit a document, I usually submit it to Ms. IFF, who always helps me photocopy my exam papers. Even though this is the responsibility of Ms. VM, who is in her sixties, I feel shy to ask her. I enjoy going to this department as I have a close relationship with Ms. BP, Ms. VM and Ms. IFF, who was one of my students before joining the institution.

Unlike the students in the department of professional studies who are fresh SPM leavers and young international students, the overwhelming majority of the students in the department of studies are working individuals. They work in government office and banks. They joined the institution as they have a desire to pursue their education. Communication with the students in this department is usually carried out using email. “We use email for all communications in our department”, Ms. BP explained. I know this as I receive several emails from Ms. BP and Ms. IFF throughout the week. The email exchanges between us sometimes create chains as we discuss an issue regarding a program or a module. Even though I frequently go the department, I have observed that Ms. BP prefers email communication to carry the professional and institutional duties. Ms. IFF obviously shares the same approach

as I may have a conversation with her, and ten minutes later I receive an email regarding an issue that we may have had discussed verbally.

The notice board of the department of studies included seven notes and a newspaper article. The newspaper article was cut from a daily English newspaper that was regarding the market needs for MBA graduates in Malaysia. Given that the department offers an MBA degree, this article seems relevant for the students. The seven notes were all signed by Ms. BP, the head of the department. One of the notes read "Dr. SXXX's clinic!!!" that stated the consultation hours of the nominated part-time lecturer. Two of the notes included the examination timetable and the due dates to submit the assignments of BABA (Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration) program, another two notes included the examination timetable and the due dates to submit the assignments of MBA program, one note included a message from the management regarding assignment extension, and the last note appeared to be an old note that reminded the students to pay their fees.

The office of Mr. VK, the assistant academic director, is located right beside the department of studies. He usually meets the new students to sign their offer letters. He works closely with Ms. MAA, the registrar regarding approvals. He also conducts several visits to the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) regarding accreditation and approvals. Sometimes, Mr. VK also goes with Mr. HS to the Immigration department to explain the case of a student to grant him/her a visa. As such, Mr. VK does not communicate with the lecturers and staff members on daily basis. He asks Ms. MA, his personal

assistant, to contact the lecturers. In fact, email is the best method of communicating with Mr. VK.

Back in my office, if Mr. DS and I do not have a class, we usually conduct our official work by preparing our classes. We set our office hours (consultation hours) at the time the other lecturer has a class to minimize disturbance. However, the students sometimes walk into the office out of the consultation hours to request, discuss or deliver an assignment. We usually welcome the students and respond to their quires. If there is an issue regarding a program in which we are both involved, we discuss the issue. Otherwise, we would be working separately on our studies; Mr. DS is also a DBA student.

In addition to face-to-face and telephone conversations, the main informants and the employees of NED use several planned face-to-face encounters (i.e., meetings, seminars, workshops, training sessions), written (i.e., letters, memorandums, faxes) and computer-mediated (i.e., email) methods of communication to interact with staff members, governmental authorities (i.e., MOHE, MQA), external partners (i.e., ABE, NCC, the university in collaboration with NED) and students. The CEO, the assistant academic director and the heads of department usually write memorandums to inform the lecturers and staff members about general interest issues. These memorandums touch on issues such as a change in the rules and regulations and informing about a meeting, a visit by MOHE, MQA or external partners. The CEO, the assistant academic director or the heads of department, always signs these memorandums. The heads of department and administrative staff may send a fax to a part-time lecturer to deliver an outline or course description. However, the use of

memos and faxes is not a common practice in the institution. It is observed that the majority of the correspondences regarding notifications and delivery of documents are carried out using email communication. The assistant academic director and the heads of department also send letters to the governmental authorities, MOHE and MQA. Additionally, the assistant academic director and the heads of departments conduct regular meetings with the full-time and part-time lecturers and administrative staff.

The meetings that are organized by the heads of department usually discuss issues related to timetables, granting exemptions, preparing a marking scheme, setting due dates to submit the module outlines, examination papers, assignments and policies regarding class cancelation and replacement classes. These meetings usually take place before and after the intakes. On the institutional level, the assistant academic director usually conducts meetings with heads of department and/or the lecturers to discuss the latest preparations for the new intakes and the outcome of previous intakes. These meetings also touch on the conformity to the rules and regulations set by the institution, MOHE and MQA, and external partners. The meetings with the assistant academic director also discuss the preparations for annual visits of MOHE, MQA and external partners. These preparations include the filling out of several documents that reflect the work progress throughout the academic year.

In addition to these methods and channels of communication, the informants and the employees of NED use email to communicate to fellow staff members, governmental authorities, external partners, and students. The use of email for internal communication was enforced initially by the CEO back in 2007. Soon after my

arrival to the institution, an incident occurred in which two employees were engaged in an argument over confusion arising from some critical important information that had been relayed verbally and not acted upon. Shortly after the incident, all full-time employees were instructed, through a written memorandum signed by the chairman, to use the official email account provided by the institution for all internal work-related communications as the sender, the recipient and the institution, through the server, may keep a record. Since then the overwhelming majority of internal work-related communications are either carried out through (or confirmed by) email. My officemate and I follow this practice. We discuss several work-related issues. After reaching an agreement, we send an email to the head of department and a 'CC' to each other. We even sometimes send an email regarding an issue and verbally ask "I sent you an email; did you receive it?" I usually do this because I feel it is a better way than speaking about the issue because the chances of forgetting are high, so I do not want to risk it. I believe my officemate's intention is same. Other employees who share the physical context also share this practice.

It appears that intra-departmental communication in the institution takes place in three directions that are: the emails that were exchanged between the heads of department and administrative staff, the emails that were exchanged between heads of department and lecturers and emails that were exchanged between lecturers and administrative staff. It appears that the emails exchanged between the heads of department and administrative staff mainly intended to requests files or actions, clarify certain tasks and delivering files. The emails that were sent by the administrative staff to the heads of department, however, mainly intend to deliver assignments, exam papers, and exam marks sent by the lecturers, clarifications about

carrying out certain tasks, reminders to carry out a certain task or activity or to attend a meeting. Even though some of these tasks could have been easily accomplished using face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, or hand-delivering the files and the documents, especially that the addresser and the addressee physically share the context (the big office room), the employees chose to accomplish these tasks using email.

In this regard, Ms. BP explained "I forget. I don't want to forget important dates or tasks. That's why I always write emails to IFF. I also told her to write emails to me". However, Mr. VK was a bit more precise as he declared "in email you may keep a record of what has been said, also I don't want to forget things". This practice, then, could be explained as both the heads of department and the administrative staff used email to keep a record of the correspondence. This, in fact, is also my personal intention when writing emails to fellow colleagues in the institution.

Email exchanges between the heads of department and the lecturers, however, seems to carry the same tasks but with different intentions. It is apparent that these emails mainly intend to deliver files or documents including examination marks, examination papers, assignments, marksheets, marking schemes, discuss academic issues such as the preparation of the exam paper and assignments and request information or actions. The main intention of carrying out these tasks using email is the importance of obtaining a softcopy of all the attached files, on the one hand, and reaching out to all full-time and part-time lecturers, who may not have a fax machine to receive the sent files, on the other. Given that most lecturers are part-times (29 lecturers) who attend to the college to conduct the classes only, the use of email is a

convenient and efficient way to discuss issues and request information and actions, according to Ms. BP.

The email exchanges between the lecturers and the administrative staff, however, are mainly regarding timetables, class cancelation, replacement classes, delivering exam paper or assignment, requesting actions such as photo copying lecture hand-outs and lecture notes. These emails are mainly sent by the lecturers to the administrative staff. The small number of emails that were sent by the administrative staff to the lecturers, however, were mainly regarding timetables and requesting files. Even though a full-time lecturer could have walked into the department to provide information about the issue, and part-time lecturers could have called the administrative staff, the use of email in these cases seems to be an intention to keep a record of the communication, on the one hand, and, e-filing, on the other. As the lecturer informs the administrative staff about class cancelation or replacement classes, the department needs to sanction the task officially by sending an email to the students and/or placing note on the notice board to inform the students about this issue. Similarly, as part-time lecturers are paid per class, this email is usually saved or placed in the lecturer's file for payment purposes.

Inter-departmental email communications, however, are usually sent by the assistant academic director to all lecturers and staff members, or exchanged between a head of department and another. These emails are used mainly to request information or action, deliver a document or inform about a general interest issue. The emails that are sent by the assistant academic director, Mr. VK, are mainly to alert staff members and/or lecturers (full-timers and part-timers) about general interest issues. The emails

exchanged between the heads of department were mainly discussions, requests or delivering documents that touch on institutional or academic issues. This practice explains the uncommon use of memorandums and faxes in the institution; it also explains the relatively high exchange of intra-departmental emails. It appears that the assistant academic director and the head of studies use email to carry out one-to-one and one-to-many communicative intentions. This is the case because they want to save time and effort. Additionally, sending these correspondences through email also creates an electronic record that states the day and the time of carrying out the communicative event.

Similarly, some tasks in the institution need to be carried on the institutional level. One of these is the filling of MQA-01 and MQA-02 documents that need to be submitted to MQA for accreditation purposes. These huge documents include nine separate sections. The first section requests general information about the institution. This includes information about the programs offered, the number of full-time and part-time lecturers in all departments, their highest qualifications, and the number of students in all departments, their nationalities and level of study. The assistant academic director and the special officer usually fill this section to the chairman. The second section requires information about the specific program of interest. Filling this section entails the outlines of all the modules, their objectives, learning outcomes, mapping the objectives against the learning outcomes, credit hours and the name of lecturers. The filling of this section is usually a collaborative work of all the lecturers involved in teaching the program. The third section is regarding the assessment methods, which are usually filled in by the lecturers and the head of the program. The fourth section is regarding students selection and support services; this

part is usually filled by the register and support staff (librarians and ICT technicians). The following sections regard the facilities, administrative and governance, and quality improvement, which are filled by administrative and academic employees in all departments. To fill out this huge document, the head of the respective department calls for a meeting on the institutional level that is attended by the top management, lecturers and administrative staff. In the meeting, the head of department usually requests the employees of the different departments to fill in the different parts of the document in relation to their organizational positions and duties. After the meeting, the employees fill in their parts of the document. The filling in and submission of this document creates several inter-departmental emails that discuss several issues related to the document, requests for information or documents, information about due dates and deadlines, and, finally, the delivery of the document to the head of department. As mentioned earlier, the main purpose of using email in carrying out these tasks seems to be the desire to keep a record, the need to have a softcopy that could be edited or proofread, and e-filing as the email discussions are usually saved for future reference.

The informants also send emails to the students. According Ms. IFF, the institution sends emails to the students to officially inform them about issues such as class cancelations, replacement class, timetables, due dates, examination venues, institution closure as part of a holiday and other academic issues. “The lecturers are expected to inform the students about these issues in class”, Ms. BP stressed, “but we also need to inform them officially by email”. The students sometimes send an enquiry or want to discuss an issue through email. According to Ms. IFF, “they send so many enquires about due dates and always ask for extensions to submit

assignments". In these cases, the student should present official documents to support their requests. "The problem is they sometimes want to have extension without a reason", according to Ms. IFF. This leads to long email discussions. According to Ms. BP, "at the beginning of every semester we give the students the dates of exams and assignments. I know some of them work. That's why we give so early. But still they want extension". The use of email is a common practice with Bachelor and Master Degree students; diploma and certificate students, however, prefer telephone conversations. In this regard, Ms. ZA stated,

> We call diploma students and email graduate students, because diploma students don't respond to emails. We also update our notice board all the time. If the issue is internal, we can discuss *lah*, but if the issue is regarding ABE or NCC, we ask the students to write a letter or email. Sometimes we also ask students to write a letter if they want to go to overseas. We put this letter in their files.

This, in fact, explains the relatively high exchange of emails between the students and the department of studies; the exchange of emails between the department of professional studies and students, however, was not a common practice. According to Mr. VK, email is the official channel of communication between the institution and the students, "I know diploma students sometimes don't respond. BABA and MBA students always respond". Once they join the institution, according to Mr. VK, the students are required to provide an official email account to communicate with the institution. It is the responsibility of the students to check their email accounts regularly. The institution, according to the assistant academic director, sends emails to students to notify them about certain deadlines, class and exam timetables, exam

results, class cancelation, replacement classes and special events, visits, seminars, or workshops organized by the institution.

Email is also the official channel of communication with external partners. The interactions with the external partners usually handle management issues, registration, certification, and examination matters. These daily communications, these days, are carried out using email. According to Ms. ZA, external partners prefer email communication as it is faster and cheaper. In this regard, the institution needs to officially assign one or more contact persons to carry out communications on behalf of the institution. These external partners, according to Ms. ZA, do not tolerate any communications with other employees or students from the institution. According to Ms. BP, who has worked in the institution since 1996, email is the preferred method of communication with the external partners. Before email, according to Ms. BP, the employees needed to fax or courier documents to the external partners and wait for around two months to receive a reply. These days, communication can simply go through email and the response may come in an instant. Email, according to Ms. BP, saved a lot of effort, time and money and, in regard to communications with the external partners, it took over all other traditional methods of communication such as letters, faxes, and telephone calls. This latter point was also emphasized by Mr. VK the assistant academic director, Ms. MA, his personal assistant, and Mr. DS, who is also in charge of collaborating with NCC regarding assignments and test issues. Even though the regional office of NCC is located in Kuala Lumpur, they, according to Mr. DS, do not accept phone calls. They usually ask him to write an email, so they may keep a record of the communication and forward it the headquarters in the UK for record keeping purposes.

Email is also used to communicate with MOHE and MQA. Email communication, however, is not the first contact point between the institution and governmental authorities. Firstly, the institution sends a letter regarding an issue such as establishing a new program, changing the structure of an established program, replacing one module with another, changing the rules and regulations, changing the entry requirements or changing the level of the study of an external programs. The MQA, in response, assigns an officer, who replies to the institution. Only at this point the assistant academic director or the head of department establish an email communication with the assigned officer to further discuss, explain or clarify the issue because this process is faster than business letters that takes at least five working days to reach MQA and five days to return. I believe that governmental authorities encourage email communication. This is the case as every letter sent by MOHE and MQA officers usually includes an "offering help if needed" move that provides future contact directions. This move always includes the email account of the officer in charge. As I was involved in preparing documents for three new internally run programs in the institution, I received a number of letters that requested feedback regarding certain issues in the document. There were a few points that I did not fully comprehend so I sent an email to the officer in charge; she promptly responded to my email.

As such, the investigation of the critical site of engagement and moments of interaction reveals four major critical moments of interactions in the educational institution. Firstly, the employees communicate with governmental authorities regarding attaining and maintaining accreditation. This professional task is usually

carried out by the assistant academic director and the heads of department using letter, fax, email and document genres. Secondly, the employees communicate with external partners regarding collaboration about the externally run programs. This professional task is usually carried out by the assistant academic director, heads of department and assigned contact persons using the email genre. Thirdly, the employees communicate with students and other staff members to handle student-related issues. The management and administrative staff members and lecturers usually carry out this task using face-to-face, telephone and email genres and notice board notes. Fourthly, the employees communicate internally within the institution to manage internal issues. This process is usually carried out using face-to-face, telephone, business meeting, memo and email genres, and fax genre, at times, to deliver a document to part-time lectures. These four moments of interactions represent the main professional practices of the discourse community (Bhatia, 2008). To achieve these professional practices, the employees used a "genre system" that includes verbal, written and computer mediated genres (Bhatia, 2004, p. 55). To examine the influence of the institutional and professional practices on the nature and the construction of genre in the private higher educational institution, the mode of genre construction and communication in the "genre system" used by the discourse community and the main informants is linguistically analysed.

4.3 Mode of Genre Construction and Communication in NED

The investigation of the critical site of engagement and moments of interaction in NED revealed that the main informants and the employees use a "genre system" that included business-meeting genre (Hanford, 2011), letter genre (Wang Ji-yu, 2007), fax genre (Louhiala-Salminen, 1999), memo genre (Yates and Orlikowski, 1992),

document genre (Seki, 2005) email genre (Swangboonsatic 2006), and face-to-face and telephone conversations genres (Biber, 1988, 1995; Heylighen and Dewaele, 1999) to carry out their institutional practices. They also used the notice board to notify students about special dates and events. In this section, the mode of genre construction and communication of these genres is examined to identify the interplay in the mode of construction and communication across the genres used in the NED.

4.3.1 Letter Genre in NED

The letter genre in NED is an inter-organizational and intra-organizational communicational method. In inter-organizational communication, letters are mainly used in the communications with governmental authorities regarding attaining and maintaining accreditation. These letters are written by the assistant academic director or the heads of program to notify, clarify or enquire about changes that are related to the entry requirements, the level of the study for an external program, the credit hours of a certain module or changing the name of an external program. The letters are also used to reply to certain enquires from MQA or MOHE.

The following letter is a reply letter sent by the assistant academic director to the MQA regarding the Diploma in TESOL program. The institution, in that period, applied for a number of new internally run Diploma and Certificate Programs. Shortly after that, the institution received a confirmation letter from MQA stating that the institution would receive feedback regarding the programs in two-week time. In two-week time, the institution received another letter that included MQA's feedback and recommendations. In response to the latter letter and feedback, the institution sent this letter.

Ex 4.1: Date: June 20, 2011
Dear Ms. _____

NED/ Diploma in TESOL (MQA/PA xxx)

We would like to thank you for your feedback letter that we received on the 8th of June, 2011 regarding our Diploma in TESOL program. In this regard, we would like to update you regarding the outcome of our academic committee meeting and the amendments made to the document.
As suggested in MQA's, report we have amended the entry requirements to include three credits in SPM including English language. We have also mapped the course learning outcomes (CLO) against the program learning outcomes (PLO). In addition, we have changed the credit weight of the TESOL Practicum module from three to four credit hours. This change has also taken effect on the total student learning time. We have also changed the name of some modules in relation to MQA's suggestions. These changes were applied throughout the new document.
If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely yours,

VK
Academic director, NED

Enclosures:
(1) Detailed feedback report
(2) Four copies of MQA document

Mr. VK, the assistant academic director, wrote the letter. It followed the structural patterns of formal business letters as it included the address (was removed), date, salutation, reference, proper opening sentence, body and conclusion, closing move, signature that included the organizational position of the sender and his contact details, and the list of the enclosures. The content of the letter seems highly structured in three paragraphs. The first or the opening paragraph included the purpose of the letter, which was a reply to MQA's feedback report. The second paragraph included the details regarding the amendments in the document in line with MQA's feedback. The third paragraph provided future contact direction.

The letter reflects little involvement between the communicators. This is noticed as the use of pronouns is limited to the corporate *'we'* and *'us'* (Biber, 1988), which reflect informational oriented writing style (Biber, 1988). In regard to the temporality of action, the writer mainly used the present perfect tense to reflect the "current relevance" (Harder, 1996, p. 383) of the content. As the letter is a reply, it was linked

to the feedback letter received from MQA, *'your feedback letter'*, and MQA's feedback report, *'as suggested in MQA's report'*. This referential intertextuality (Devitt, 1991) implies that the taken actions align with the initial letter and report that were sent by the MQA. In regard to politeness, the writer used the indirect approach to express his *'wants'*. This was carried out in the form of *'would+ infinitive'*, which shows indirectness and reflects business communication standards (Bovee et al., 2003). Finally, the signature of the writer included the writer's organizational position and contact details, which creates credibility and trustworthiness on the side of recipient. It also presents the point of future contact, if needed. As such, the register of the letter seems "narrative" and "informational" (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The use of letters in intra-organizational communication, however, intends to make a special request from the CEO of the institution. The institution has forms for all reoccurring rhetorical issues (Devitt, 1991). Informing the heads of department should be carried out formally in writing, by filling the right form. However, if an employee has a special request beyond the authorities of the heads of department, he/she needs to write a letter to the CEO and send copies to the assistant academic director and the specific head of department (see example 4.2 below).

In example (4.2) below, the writer used a formal salutation and closing markers to show deference and demonstrate politeness (Waldvogel, 2007). As the letter is internally sent, the signature move included the name of the sender without stating the position, the name of the organization or the address as in the externally sent letter. As the letter is regarding a personal request, the writer used the first person

singular pronoun several times, which reflects personal involvement (Biber, 1988). In the opening sentence of the letter, the writer used '*would+ infinitive*' which is a polite form to present personal '*wants'* and it is common in business communication (Bovee et al., 2003). Examining the temporality of the discursive event shows that the letter mainly used the simple future tense to refer to an upcoming event. The writer also used the present perfect tense to refer to past event with current relevance. The use of *'looking forward to hearing from you'* is a requesting move (Kankaanranta, 2005) that is meant to stimulate response. To keep all the parties informed, the writer sent a carbon copy of the letter to the heads of department and the assistant academic director.

Ex 4.2: Date: April 20, 2010

Dear YBhg. Datuk_____,

Request for extended leave

I would like to request a thirty-two day leave of absence so that I would be able to visit my family. If possible, I would leave on the 25th of May and return on the 26th of June.

In this regard, I will mark my exam scripts and submit them duly. I will also submit the material for the coming intake to the heads of department. This holiday will not affect my duties in NED as it falls after the termination of this intake and before the commencement of the next intake. In this period, I will be contactable by email and phone.

Looking forward to hearing from you

Yours Sincerely,
Full Name of Sender

CC: Mr. VK (Assistant Academic Director)
Ms. BP (Head of Studies)
Ms. NA (head of professional Studies)

The two letters seems formal as they included proper salutation and closing markers and written discourse features. However, the direction of the letter has obviously influenced the type of register used. The two letters included narrative discourse; however, the letter that was sent to the governmental authorities included "informational" production, whereas the letter that was sent to the CEO included

"involved" production (Biber, 1988, 1995). The use of these two types of register reflects the nature of the content in these two letters. The writer of the letter in example (4.2) was involved personally in the request, whereas the writer of example (4.1) mainly intended to give information. In regard to the signature move, the writer of the externally sent letter used a full signature to create credibility, whereas the writer of the internally sent letter used his full name only as it is identifying enough in the given context.

4.3.2 Memo Genre in NED

The memo genre in NED is an intra-organizational communicational method. The memos in NED are usually written or signed by the CEO, the special officer to the chairman, the assistant academic director or the heads of department. They intend to notify the recipients about a general interest issue that relates to a group of employees. The special officer to the chairman sent the following memo to all staff members in the institution regarding a number of administrative work-related issues as it is listed below:

Ex 4.3: To: all staff
From: Special Officer to the Chairman
Subject: Standard Operating procedures
Date: 28th of August 2008
CC: Executive Chairman

With reference to the above, it has come to my attention that a number of operational procedures were not been complied to. This has led to friction in our daily operations. Please ensure that such things do not happen in the future.
Please strictly ensure the following:
1) Maintain a more cordial and harmonious relationship with students.
2) Strictly observe the college working hours and any request for flexi-hours must get prior approval from the respective HOD's .
3) Telephone calls strictly for office purpose only.
4) Maintain proper record for all correspondence with lecturers, students and staff.
5) Keep all conversations with students short and strictly on academic matters.
6) Front desk telephone must be always attended to for all incoming calls and keep the volume high at all times.
Your cooperation is very much appreciated.
Mr. AK
Special Officer to the Chairman

Unlike the genre of letters, the memo does not have a salutation move. The writer, instead replaced the salutation move with the 'TO' entry in the formatting of the memo. The memo does not also include a proper closing move; the writer, alternatively, used the passive voice construct *'your cooperation is very much appreciated'* to solicit an action from the recipients. The content of the memo targets six issues that came to the attention of the top management. The writer used a number of imperative mood sentences to reflect the direct and the firm stands of the top management regarding the given issues. The use of *'please'* softened the imposition; however, the firmness could be observed in the short and direct points. The direct and imperative approach could also be observed in the use of *'strictly observe'*, *'maintain...'*, *'telephone must be attended'*, which are goal-achieving patterns (Hoey, 2001). The use of *'must'* is a deontic modality, which reflects obligation on the part of the addressee. The use of the present perfect tense is meant to reflect on the current relevance of the issues. In addition, the writer of the memo created what Johnstone (2002, 2008) called "horizontal intertextuality", by referring to the subject of the memo in the first content move, 'with reference to the above'. This move included an elliptical form as the writer omitted a noun that could possibly be 'subject', 'issue' or 'matter'. The signature states the name and the organizational identity of the memo issuer, to create credibility. The features used in this memo reflect "abstract", "narrative" and "informational" style (Biber, 1988, 1995).

4.3.3 Fax Genre in NED

The fax genre in NED is mainly used as a method to deliver documents or information to governmental authorities, external partners or part-time lecturers. This

genre is uncommon these days, according to Ms. BP, as the delivery of documents is usually carried out using emails. However, if a contact needs files or documents to be delivered to him/her using fax, there is one fax machine in the institution that is placed in Mr. AK's office. This is the case in the following fax that was sent to a new part-time lecturer.

Ex 4.4: From: Ms. NA(Head of Professional Studies)
To: Ms. Chee
Fax No.: 03xxxx xxxx
Date: 28th May 2009
Subject: English Language Course Schedule and Content
No. of Pages: 5 pages

Ms. Chee,
Greetings from NED
I, herewith, fax the schedule and the content of the courses that you will teach in our institution. The name of the course reflects the level of English language of the students. Our students need to sit for an entry test once they register. Depending on the outcome of the test, they are placed in one of the given courses.
Regards
Ms. MJ
Head of Professional Studies

The fax, in example (4.4), was sent by Mr. MJ, the head of professional studies to a new part-time lecturer, who had an enquiry about the modules, their schedule and content. The employee obviously used the same framing structure as memos in constructing this fax. This is reflected in the use of 'From', 'To', 'Subject' and 'Date' entries on the top of the fax. This fax functions as a cover letter as it is followed by four more pages that detail the technical information about the modules. As shown in the heading, the fax included five pages that detail the name, content and schedule of the modules the new part-time lecturer is required to teach. The writer used two opening moves that are the salutation, *'Ms. Chee'* and an opening move *'greetings from NED'*. Even though the salutation included a title in front of the name, but it does not fully represent the standard of business letters. The writer also closed the fax using *'Regards'*, which is a common closing marker in business faxes and emails (Louhiala-Salminen, 1999; Kankaanranta, 2005; Warwick and

Betini, 1995). The signature move included the name and the organizational position of the sender to create credibility on the part of the recipient. The use of the simple present and future tenses reflect current and upcoming events. The writer also makes use of agentless passive voice in a single instance *'they are placed'* to present the information, which adds to the formality of the fax (Jieun Yi, 2009). Overall, the register of the fax seems "involved" and "informational" (Biber, 1988, 1995). The framing structure, however, seems flexible as it did not fully meet the standard of business letters in the institution.

4.3.4 Document Genre in NED

The document genre in NED was used mainly to notify the governmental authorities about the practices and procedures in the institution. As part of attaining and maintaining accreditation, the institution is required to submit official documents to MQA regarding every single program that the institution runs. One of these documents is MQA-01 document. This huge document touches on academic, management and administrative issues including the specifications of the program, detailed information about the institution, and the rules and regulations regarding academic and institutional issues. This document, which can be downloaded from MQA's website, comes in the form of questions that need to be answered. The following is a filled excerpt from this document:

Ex 4.5: 8.4 Academic Records

Information on Benchmarked Standards

State the policies on the secure retention and disposal of student and academic staff records at the departmental level and show its consistency with that of the HEP.

- A hard copy of the academic records is held by the central registry office as long as the student is on the program.
- The records of students who have completed or left the program will thereafter be transferred into a store in the center, for another 3- 5 years.
- Records after this period are disposed off through a security company.
- Information which is keyed into the MIS system is permanent and therefore records of students are always available.

This excerpt of the document touches on the policies and procedures related to the maintaining and the disposal of the academic records. In response to the question, Ms. BP stated the policies in the form of points for a clearer presentation. The language used in these points is formal and direct as every point explains the actions taken in a given period of time. To highlight the obligations on the institution, or its departments, passive voice was used in constructing the points (Biber, 1988). The writer used the 'by' passive strategy, '*which are held by the central registry office'*, to reflect on the role of the agent in the policy, and agentless passives, '*program will thereafter be transferred into a store in the center'*, to state the information with little involvement. That is, the focus in these points was mainly on the presented information or the actions that are taken by the institution. The last point, however, was presented in simple present active voice sentence to reflect on the factual and immediate relevance of the point (Biber, 1988). The use of the present tense here also reflects a "non-narrative" and "informational" writing (Biber, 1988). That is, the writer in this last point used an active voice simple present sentence to assure MQA that even though the records are disposed of on the departmental level, the institution keeps a permanent record that is available in the MIS (Management Information System) system. As such, the register of the document seems "abstract" and "informational" (Biber, 1988, 1995).

4.3.5 Notice board Notes in NED

The two academic departments also use the notice boards to 'notify the students regarding special events, due dates or general information'. Every department has its own notice boards, where students studying in these departments may find the latest information regarding their programs or general interest issues. The notice board of

the professional studies department, for example, included notices regarding the dates of collecting the medical insurance cards, a list of international students whose visas would expire in two-month time, and a note regarding the study break, exam week, mid-semester break and the commencement of the following semester. The note reads as follows:

Ex 4.6:

ATTENTION TO ALL ABE, TTH AND NCC STUDENTS

Study Break:
26th of May 2010- 30th of May 2010

Exam week:
2nd of June 2010- 6th of June 2010

Mid-year break
9th of June 2010-4th of July 2010

Next semester commences:
7th of July 2010

The detailed timetable of the exams will be released on Monday the 3rd of May 2010.

Ms. ZA
Students' Counselling Unit

The notice is simple, short, and direct. It has a clear heading that states the direct audience of the message. The heading was written in capital blocks, underlined and dark printed in red. The font of the heading was even bigger than the rest of the note. The main intention of these practices is to attract the attention of the students, especially the students of the professional studies department, to the message. The use of the word '*attention*', meant to show urgency and attract the attention of the students. The note included four separate entries. The sub headings of the note were also underlined. The dates mentioned included the day, month and the year to make sure that the students were informed fully about the dates. Towards the end of the note, a passive voice sentence in future tense informs the students about the date of releasing the exams timetable. The use of passive voice here meant to emphasize on the action, which is the release of the timetable, rather than the person or the

department that will release the timetable, as it is obvious. The note is signed off by the head of professional studies to reflect credibility of the presented information. The writer of the note left a lot of white space to make the reading of the messages, even from distance, easier.

Ex. 4.7

Are you stressed?
Unable to get the marks you think you deserve?
Dr. Sxxx's
ACADEMIC CLINIC
OPEN FOR CONSULTATION

Saturdays: 11:00 am-1.00 PM

(For Academic Purposes Only ☺)

EXCLUSIVELY FOR DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES STUDENTS

CALL US TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT..!!!
@ 03-xxxx xxxx

The notice board of the department of studies also included a number of notes. One of which was a note stating the time and the days of the consultation hours for one of the part-time lecturers. This consultation is different than normal consultations that usually discuss academic issues related to the modules taught by the lecturer such as the content of the module or the assignments. This consultation was set to improve student academic achievement. It is more of a counselling than an academic consultation (see example 4.7 above).

The writers of this note used two interrogative 'yes/no' questions to attract the attention of the students, on the one hand, and to set the purpose of the 'academic clinic' on the other. The use of the adjective *'stressed'* also was intended to attract the attention of the students to continue reading the message. Capitalization was intended to emphasis important information such as the intended audience of the note and future contact directions. This message was written in a friendly style to draw a

smile on the face of the readers, which is reflected in the unique construction of the name '*Dr. Sxxx's academic clinic'* and the purpose of the session *'for academic purposes Only ☺'*, which implies that this clinic intends to deal with stress related to the study, not stress related to personal or social purposes. The friendly and informal style is also reflected in the use of multiple exclamatory marks *'!!!'* to reflect excitement, symbol '@', which means 'at' and smiley '☺' to express lively facial expressions. Overall, the main intention of this note is to inform the students about the counselling session in a friendly manner.

4.3.6 Face-to-Face and Telephone Conversations Genres in NED

The face-to-face and telephone conversations genres in NED are usually used to discuss an issue or request information and action. The employees may establish a face-to-face conversation with other employees with whom they share the office or walk into the offices of other employees to have a discussion regarding an issue. They may also '*intercom'* other full-time employees or call part-time lecturers, students, or external partners or governmental authorities.

These two genres usually include "involved" production as the employees usually use first and second person pronouns to represent the '*self'* and the '*other'*, hedges such as *'I guess'* and '*I think'* to reflect on the degree of certainty and 'wh' questions to enquire about issues or actions. These conversations usually comprise "narrative" discourse as the interlocutors discuss issues with immediate relevance and "non-narrative" discourse as they refer to past remote or past events with current relevance. These two genres are used for inter-organizational and intra-organizational communication. However, as the investigation on the critical moments

of interactions revealed, the employees prefer email communication because they may keep a record of the discussion for future reference.

4.3.7 Email Genre in NED

The email genre in the institution is used for inter-organizational and intra-organizational communications. As the main informants stated, the use of email genre overlaps with the use of letter, memo, fax, face-to-face and telephone conversations genres. It also overlaps with the use of the notice board in the institution. The achievement of the professional tasks that were carried previously by the above-mentioned communicative channels is now carried out by email. As the employees need a faster response from governmental authorities and external partners, they use email in the place of business letters. As they usually prefer a softcopy of the files, they prefer sending and receiving documents through email attachments rather than sending faxes. As they need to communicate regarding general interest issues with full-time and part-time employees and students, they prefer sending emails to all the employees and students rather than sending a written memo or placing a notice on the notice board. As they need to keep a record of the discussion or the enquiry, they prefer sending emails to fellow employees, students, and external partners rather than having face-to-face or telephone conversations.

These intentions were reflected in the mode of construction and communication of the email messages. The corpus of emails included email messages that were sent to governmental authorities. Even though the communication between the institution and MOHE and MQA was traditionally carried out using letters, the employees of

the educational institution, these days, use email as it is faster and provides the chance to send a softcopy of the documents as in the following email message.

Ex 4.8: Subject: Diploma in TESOL (NED)

Dear Ms. P.A
We, hereby, attach the softcopy of our Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Program. Kindly note that the softcopy is attached in three separate files. The first file includes the pages from 1 to 22, the second file includes the pages from 23 to 36 whereas the third file includes the pages from 37 to the last page of MQA's document.
If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.
Kind Regards
MD

The email in example (4.8) seems formal and direct. It intended to deliver officially the softcopy of a document. There is little involvement between the communicators as the use of pronouns is limited to the corporate, *'we'* and *'us'*. The formal nature of the email is also noticed in the use of the active voice linguistic construct *'we hereby attach'*. The place adverbial *'hereby'* is used represent the formal and official nature of the action taken in the email, which also represents informational style (Biber, 1988, 1995). The writer also used the public verb *'attach'* to refer to the actions that were physically taken. Obviously, the majority of sentences are written in simple present tense to reflect the immediate relevance (Biber, 1988). Overall, the register of the email seems "informational" (Biber, 1988, 1995). Sending a formal letter could have carried out the communicative intention of this email message. The attached files could be added as enclosures as it is the case in example (4.1) above or sending a fax as in example (4.4). However, as the employee intended to save time and deliver a softcopy of the file, he wrote an email instead.

Similarly, the corpus of emails also included instances of clarifying issues and queries that were carried out in chains of out-going and in-coming email messages as in the following email.

Ex 4.9: Hi ZA,
Is it possible to set the class on Wednesday as agreed? I am ok with Tuesday's schedule. Sorry yea ... becasue I hv arranged for my mother in law to go for her hospital checkups on Thursday becasue we agreed the classes will be on Tuesday & Wednesday.
Sorry again :(
-NG

The email in example (4.9) is the third email in a five-email message chain discussing the timetable of the part-time lecturer. The occurrence of the first person pronouns reflects involved style in this email message (Biber, 1988). The writer used a number of informal features such as minimizations as in *'fwd-ing' for 'forwarding'* and *'hv'* for '*have'*. The informal and conversational style of the email is also reflected in the use of the dots ellipsis (…), emoticons (:( ), and conversational expressions 'sorry yea'. The writer obviously did not edit or proofread the email before sending as it included two spelling mistakes *'because'*. It is perceived that the occurrence of these informal and conversational features results from close involvement between the employees. The frequent exchange of email regarding a single issue made the email exchanges seems more of a dialogue than a written correspondence. The part-time lecturer could have used face-to-face or telephone conversations to achieve the communicative intention of this email chain. The use of email, however, reflects a desire to put the discussion on record.

Ex 4.10: Dear Colleagues
Please be informed that Dato has booked for the Facon Exhibition today which is being held at PWTC on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th from 12 noon to 6pm. The dress code is formal.
We appreciate all help possible
Thanks
full name

In addition, the corpus of email messages also included emails that were sent to several employees and students simultaneously to communicate a general interest

issue. The head of studies sent the email in example (4.10) above to the employees of the educational institution informing them about participating in an exhibition.

The salutation of this email is directed to a number of recipients *'Dear Colleagues'*. The content of the email reflects little involvement and informational production as the writer used the signposting agentless passive construct 'please be informed'. The informational production is also reflected in the use of first person plural pronoun *'we'*. The use of *'we'* intends to give institutional values to the email message. That is, the message is communicated on the corporate level. The pre-closing marker *'we appreciate all help possible'* seems comparable to the closing marker in the memo in example (4.3). The writer obviously intended to inform the recipients about the event and the dress code of the participating staff members. The communicative intention in this email message could have been communicated using an internal memo. The use of email intended to maintain a record of the correspondence.

The investigation on the mode of construction and communication of the email genre in NED reveals that the genre of email "invaded the generic integrity" of business letters, memos, fax and even face-to-face and telephone conversation genres (Bhatia, 2004). This is the case as the employees of the educational institution "exploit generic conventions to bend genres to create new forms" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 111). This invasion of generic integrity in noticed in the use of the framing moves, on the one hand, and the intention of communication on the other. The framing structure of the emails seems comparable to the framing structure of letters, faxes and memos in the educational institution. Similarly, the use of email chains to clarify or enquire about issues seems comparable to turn taking in verbal communication.

4.4 Summary

The investigation on the '*front-stage'* and '*back-stage'* (Bhatia, 2008) interactions brought into focus the professional practices of the discourse community. The main informants and the employees usually communicate to governmental authorities to attain and maintain accreditation, external partners to collaborate regarding the external programs, students to handle students-related issues and fellow staff members to manage internal issues. This was carried out using a "genre system" that included verbal, written, and computer mediated methods of communications. The letter genre was used to communicate with governmental authorities, the fax genre was used to deliver documents, the memo genre was used to notify a number of recipients regarding an issue, the face-to-face and telephone conversations genres were used to discuss and enquire and the notice boards were used to notify the students regarding academic and institutional issues.

The institutional practice of using email genre, however, invaded and overlapped with communicative intentions of all other genres and practices. The email messages invaded the generic integrity of other genres, which was reflected in the framing structure, on the one hand, and the purposes of the communication, on the other. This is the case as the employees intended to keep a record of their communications with fellow employees and students so they used email in the place of face-to-face and telephone conversations genres; to obtain a softcopy of the files and documents so they used email in the place of fax genre; to reach full-time and part-time employees and students at the same time so they used email in the place of the memo genre and notice board notes; and to save time when communicating with governmental authorities and external partners so they used email in the place of the letter genre.

As such, the use of email has a prominent role in the discourse community. The institutional practice of using email in the place of spoken and written genres suggests varied textual features. This point is further investigated in the textual perspective analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE

TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter investigates the second research question concerning the textual features of the email messages. The investigation on the ethnographic perspective revealed that the discourse community uses the genre of email for the same purposes they use the genre system in the workplace. This suggests that the emails include diverse textual features. This point is further investigated in this chapter, which examines language use in the email messages as text (Bhatia, 2010a). This chapter investigates the rhetorical moves and the lexico-grammatical features used in the corpus of emails in relation to Biber's et al. (2007) semantic-functional framework for identifying discourse units and Biber's (1988, 1991, 1995) register variation approach. The first section, however, presents an overview about the corpus of email messages.

5.1 The Corpus of Email Messages

The seven main informants produced 378 email messages. The content of the corpus, excluding the email formatting moves (i.e., From, To, Time, Subject) and signature (the auto and name signature), was 23049 words. The average length of the email message was 61 words. Interestingly, the longest email included 686 words, whereas the shortest email included a single word, 'noted'.

The corpus reflects the day-in-day-out email communications for the seven main informants in the educational institution for a period of 45 days. The emails were collected from early May till mid-June 2010, which is a relatively busy period in the educational institution as it includes the examination month and new semester

registration. This probably explains the 54/46 percent frequency of exchanging emails with internal and external contacts (see Table 5.1 below). Internally, the seven main informants sent emails to fellow colleagues in the institution regarding several institutional and academic issues. Externally, however, the informants sent email to governmental bodies, students and external partners. They used email to communicate with governmental bodies to attain and maintain accreditation; external partners to collaborate regarding the external programs, students regarding students-related issues, and internally regarding institutional and academic issues.

Table 5.1: Internal and external communications in the corpus

Emails / Informants	**Internal emails**	**External emails**	**Total**
Mr. DS	21 (43%)	28 (57%)	**49**
MS. ZA	36 (57%)	28 (43%)	**64**
Ms. BP	54 (60%)	36 (40%)	**90**
MS. MA	29 (67%)	14 (33%)	**43**
Mr. VK	21 (50%)	21 (50%)	**42**
Mr. IFF	26 (51%)	25 (49%)	**51**
Mr. Mohd	18 (46%)	21 (54%)	**39**
Total	**204 (54%)**	**174 (46%)**	**378**

The organizational position of the informants influenced the direction and the institutional and professional tasks carried out in the email messages. The assistant academic director, Mr. VK, and the heads of department, especially Ms. BP, sent emails to the governmental bodies, external partners, fellow employees and students, which reflected their involvement in the four main institutional and professional tasks of the educational institution. The administrative staff and Mr. DS, the full-time lecturer who is partially in charge of ICCS and IDCS programs, sent emails to the external partners, fellow employees and students, which reflect their involvement in three out of the four main tasks as they were not involved in communicating with the governmental bodies. Mr. MOHD, the full-time lecturer, was involved in writing

email to fellow employees and students, which reflects his involvement in two out of the four main tasks.

5.2 Rhetorical Moves Analysis

The identification of moves in this study is carried out in relation to Biber's et al. (2007) multi-dimensional approach. As such, the moves are identified in relation to their cognitive (Bhatia, 1993) and functional intention, not structural patterning (Swales, 1990). In line with Biber's et al. (2007) suggestions, the emails were read several times to identify the overall functional purposes of the texts. Then, the analysis moved to the second and third steps, segmentation and classification, to segment each text into discourse units and identify the functional type of each discourse unit in the corpus. This was carried out by examining the 'local purpose' of every single segment to identify and classify the moves according to their unique function and contribution in the email message. To establish a systematic and consistent practice for move analysis, the researcher defined move in this study as:

> A discourse unit in a text bearing a unique communicative purpose that is characterized by a unique functional-semantic contribution and linguistic features and/or typographical features or symbols and identified in its context. Every move is unique and builds with the other moves identified in the text[s] the communicative purpose of the whole text.

Applying this definition to the segments of the email messages assisted in identifying fourteen moves in the corpus of emails (see Table 5.2 below). The fourteen rhetorical moves are six framing and eight content moves. Framing moves refer to the moves that are used to identify the topic, show gratitude, and close the correspondence. This

includes the ‘identifying topic’, ‘salutation’, ‘opening’, ‘pre-closing’, ‘closing’ and ‘signature’ moves.

Table 5.2: Rhetorical moves in the corpus of emails

No	Moves	Occurrences	Percentage
1	Identifying topic	376	99.6%
2	Salutation	321	85%
3	Opening	15	4%
4	Referring to previous contact	45	12%
5	Requesting- responding to request	125	33%
6	Discussing issues	136	36%
7	Indicating enclosure	64	17%
8	Informing about issues	53	14%
9	Providing extra information/further explaining issue	83	22%
10	Requesting confirming receipt	23	6%
11	Offering help if needed	19	5%
12	Pre-closing	68	18%
13	Closing	325	86%
14	Signature	355	94%

Content moves, however, refer to the moves that are used to present and accomplish the communicative intentions in the email messages. This includes ‘discussing issues’, ‘requesting-responding to requests’, ‘indicating enclosure’, ‘informing about issues’, ‘providing extra information/further explaining issue’, ‘requesting confirming receipt’ and ‘offering help if needed’. The following are the fourteen moves identified in the corpus of email messages.

5.2.1 Identifying Topic Move

This move is an informative move that intends to communicate the subject of the email message. It is comparable to the ‘*reference’* entry in business letters. In the emails, however, it is enforced as part of the formatting structure. The informative ability of this move in the email messages could be divided into three clusters that are the clearly informative, broadly informative, and uninformative ‘identifying topic’ moves.

Ex. 5.1: 4.9. Subject: Registration Batches Confirmation

Ex. 5.2: 3.68. Subject: Annual Administrative and Quality Conference 2010

Ex. 5.3: 2.48. Subject: new syllabus and lecturer guides for new TTH management program

Clearly, informative moves are the moves that provided the recipient of the email clear information about the content (see 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3). In example (5.1), the sender is obviously confirming the receipt of the registration batches, example (5.2) is an email regarding the annual conference and example (5.3) is a message about the new syllabus and lecturer guides. Even though example (5.3) included an abbreviation, it is 100 percent clearly informative, especially for the recipient of the email. The use of specific lexis is one of the criteria that Swales (1990) set for discourse communities.

Broadly informative moves, however, are the moves that do not specifically inform about the main communicative intention of the email message. In order to identify the communicative intention of these emails, the recipients need to refer to background and contextual information about the sender.

Ex 5.4: 3.95. Subject: **Part A**

Hi VK

I hope you can forward me the soft copy for Part A which is common to the college to attach to our documents, as per our discussion this morning.

In example (5.4) above, the 'identifying topic' move as a separate unit does not tell about the communicative purpose of the message. The move may raise a number of unanswered questions regarding *'Part A'*. However, identifying the sender may enlighten the recipient of the email about *'Part A'* and what about it. Viewing the content of the email shows that *'Part A'* is a document that is '*common to the college to attach to the documents'* before sending them to MQA. In addition, the content

shows that this email was preceded by a discussion that morning, '*as per our discussion this morning',* and Mr. VK, the recipient of the email, promised to deliver *'Part A'* to Ms. BP, the writer of the email. The broadly informative identifying topic moves, as example (5.4) shows, are dependable on the 'From' box in the email, which identifies the sender of the messages so that the recipient recalls some background information.

The third category of 'identifying topic' moves is the uninformative moves. These moves are randomly written by email writers and do not reflect the purpose of the email. The only mode to identify the content of these messages is reading them, as neither the context nor the name of the writer informs about the purpose (see example 5.5).

Ex 5.5: 3.3. **Subject:** RE: New Institution Officer
Hi BP
I cannot find this student on our system, do you have a USN for him?

The 'identifying topic' move in example (5.5) reads '*RE: New Institution Officer',* the content, however, is a request about the '*USN'* or matrix number of a student. The initial *'RE'* in front of the 'identifying topic' move expresses that the email is a 'reply'. Obviously, the initial email was about the *'new institution officer',* however, the current email is a request. It appears that the writer of example (5.5) clicked '*reply'* on one of the previously sent or received emails to/from the addressee to establish a new communication regarding a new communicative purpose without changing the 'identifying topic' move, which created this uninformative 'identifying topic' move. The 'identifying topic' move is the most common move in the corpus as it occurred in 376 emails, which is 99.6 percent of the emails in the corpus. This reflects email writers' tendency to identify the subject of their email messages.

5.2.2 Salutation and Opening Moves

'Salutation' move is the fourth most common move in the corpus. 'Opening' move, however, is the least common as it appeared in only 15 email messages. The writers of the emails mainly used formal and informal salutations. Formal salutations usually carried a title or a formal salutation-marker in front of recipients' names as in *'Dear Mr. Name'*, *'Dear Name'*, *'Mr. Name'*, *'Dear Sir/madam'* or *'Salam Mr. Name'*. Informal salutations, however, refer to the salutations that either included an informal salutation-marker in front of recipients' name, as in *'hi name'* or *'hello name'*, or used no salutation-markers at all, as in *'Name'*. In addition to these two main categories, some email writers used a salutation that did not entirely fit into any of the above-mentioned categories, that is *'Hi Mr. Name'* or *'Hello Mr. Name'*. The use of *'hi'* or *'hello'* in professional communication is considered to be an "informal linguistic option" (Al-Ali and Sahawneh, 2008, p. 59), yet the use of 'Mr.*'* is a "formal conventional lexical option" (p. 58). As such, the use of 'Hi' or 'Hello' jointly with 'Mr. Name' is an unconventional linguistic form in professional communication.

The use of the unconventional salutations depends highly on the context. The use of these salutations mainly depended upon relational factors between the sender and the recipient of the email, on the one hand, or reflected a private intention (Bhatia, 2004) that the member of the discourse community intended to communicate, on the other. As example (5.6) shows, Ms. BP, the head of studies, sent this email to Mr. RA, who is a business ethics lecturer in another institution to ask him a favour. Obviously, the business ethics lecturer in the institution could not continue teaching the module; as a result, Ms. BP decided to contact an external lecturer, who is also a close friend, to

continue teaching the module for the remaining five sessions. In order to persuade Mr. RA to teach the remaining sessions, Ms. BP mixed a formal title and informal marker to show the professional aspect of the matter but in personal terms building on the closeness of the relationship between them. This can also be noticed in the shift-in-focus between the corporate *'us'* and personal *'I'* and *'me'* in the pre-closing move, *'I am praying that you will do this for us and bail me out'*.

Ex 5.6: 3.50. **Superior, expertise, age, close friend, fortnightly** From: BP
To: Vasu
Subject: Business Ethics Module Descriptor
Hi Mr RA
We use the book Corporate Governance by Kenneth Kim, John Nofsinger & Derek J Mohr, however if you have the notes we could forward to the students. it is in 5 sessions, however we are left with 3 sundays before the exams, you could perhaps do 5 hours each session and one additional session.
I am praying that you will do this for us and bail me out.
Many thanks

'Opening' move, however, was not a common practice in the email messages. The writers mainly used informal conversational greetings such as *'how are you?'*, *'Good day'*, or *'I hope you are well'* after the 'salutation' move. The main intention of using these 'opening' moves is establishing rapport.

5.2.3 Referring to Previous Contact Move

'Referring to previous contact' move' occurred in 45 email messages. It mainly intends to link the email message to a previous email or communicative event as in 'as per our discussion this morning'. The writers mainly referred to previous email messages, faxes, letters, face-to-face conversations or meetings and telephone calls. This move, as such, is an intertextual move (Fairclough, 1992).

The writers mainly used formulaic constructs to refer to previous events and link them to the current correspondence. They mainly used the adverbial subordinates

'with reference to…' and *'according to …'*. The use of '*according to'* meant to put the email in its context. In addition to the use of the adverbial subordinates, the writers also used the compound preposition as in *'as per'* to link previous contact to current action. In '*as per our discussion this morning',* the writer linked the request to a previous discussion. This linguistic construct, according to Burchfield (2000), is "more or less restricted to business letters" (p. 71). The use of this construct in the emails shows that the writers applied their knowledge of writing formal business letters when constructing the emails.

5.2.4 Requesting-Responding to Request Super Move

This move is the second most frequent content move in the corpus. As the name of the move suggests, it includes two communicative intentions that are the 'request' and the 'response'. The main purpose of joining the two moves in a single super move is the actual practice of using these two moves in the emails. Presenting the 'requesting' move in an email created a reply that includes the 'responding' move in another (functional intertextuality). That is, the initiative presented in the first email, which is a request, almost always generated a reply from the recipient that included the 'response'. The actual practice of these two moves seems close to turn-taking in conversations. In fact, the content and the communicative intention of some 'responding' moves are difficult to recognize if taken in isolation. As such, the two sub-moves were joined in a single super move that was identified as 'requesting-responding to request' super move.

The requesting and responding to requests moves occurred in two main patterns in the email messages. As Figure 5.1 below shows, the structure of the request and the response appeared to reoccur as (request-response-(thanking)) (RRT) or (request1-

request2-response-(thanking)) (RRRT), in which '*thanking'* in both patterns is optional.

Pattern I

Requester	Request	Appreciate if you could Photostat the following chapters
Responder	Response	OK, Mr. HA, will get it done
requester	Thanking	Thank you

Pattern II

1st requester	Request	What is the USN number of the following student?
2nd requester	Request	please give them Ahmad's USN number
Responder	Response	The following is the USN number of the student…
1st requester	Thanking	Thank you

Figure 5.1: Patterns in Requesting-Responding email messages

This underlying exchange structure is close to Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) proposed structure of teacher-pupil talk (initiation-response-feedback) and Coulthard and Ashby's (1975) proposed structure of doctor-patient talk (initiation-response-follow-up). In RRT structure, the requester fills the first and the third slots, and the first and the fourth slots in the RRRT structure, while the responder fills the second slot in the first pattern and the third slot in the second pattern. The second requester, who either mistakenly received the request or does not have the proper information to answer it, however, fills the second slot in the second pattern.

5.2.5 Discussing Issues Move

'Discussing issues' move is the most frequent content move in the corpus of email messages. It occurred in 136 emails, which is equal to 36 percent of the corpus. The writers used this move to discuss or negotiate an issue. As such, the emails that included this move are always part of a chain or a thread. The practice of carrying out the email discussion starts with the 'initiating' email, in which the writer

introduces an issue that he/she intends to discuss or negotiate. In response to the 'initiating' email, the addressee replies giving suggestions, explanations, clarifications, or his personal opinion regarding the issue. This email may seal the discussion or it may become the subject of another email. This exchange of out-going and in-coming email continues until the communicators reach an agreement regarding the issue or the writer of the initiating email feels satisfied with the outcome.

Ex 5.7: 5.33. M1: Identifying topic M2: Salutation M3: Discussing issue M4: Closing M5: Signature	 **Subject:** Re: qualification assessment-NED Good morning KL. According to your explanation, she cannot continue in diploma 2 because she did not complete diploma 1. But she has a Bachelor in Computer science from university of computer studies, Dangon. And she already complete the first semester of diploma in Malaysia. It's impossible to ask her to do Diploma 1 in ABE. So please give some clarification and advice. thank you, VK Assistant Academic Director NED

In Example (5.7), the writer obviously received an explanation from the addressee *'according to you explanation'*, however, he is still not satisfied with this explanation *'but she has …'*. This email, in fact, is the fourth email in a chain of seven emails that was exchanged between Mr. VK and Mr. KL. Mr. VK insists that a student should be granted exemptions as she has a previous degree in the field. Mr. KL, however, believes that the degree is not equivalent to the offered program. These contradicting points of view regarding the issue result into a longer exchange of email messages between the interactants. At the end of the seventh email, Mr. KL was convinced of the correctness of Mr. VK's opinion, which sealed the issue.

The 'discussing issues' move in this email included a number of declarative mood simple past sentences to refer to demote actions and simple present tense to refer to

actions of immediate relevance (Biber, 1995). The occurrence of the third person singular pronoun, '*she',* indicates the involvement of a third party (Biber, 1988, 1995). The sentences in this move are active in relation to encouraging involvement as in, '*please give some clarification and advice'*. The writer used the polite imperative using public and suasive verbs '*give'* and '*advise'* to specify the required action from the addressee. The use of the nominal '*clarification'* intended to state the referent (Chin, 2011).

5.2.6 Indicating Enclosure Move

The 'indicating enclosure' content move occurred in 64 email messages with an overall frequency of 17 percent of the emails in the corpus. As the name suggests, this move was always used to direct the recipient to the attached file. The emails that included this move were always short. In fact, this move was usually the only content move in the emails that included it. The majority of email writers preferred 'indicating enclosure' using formulaic linguistic constructs such as '*please find attached'* and '*enclosed please find'*.

Ex 5.8: 2.46. M1: Identifying topic M2: Indicating enclosure M3: Closing M4: Auto signature	Subject: new syllabus and lecturer guides for new TTH management programme find attached Regards Auto signature

As example (5.8) shows, the 'indicating enclosure' content move is the only content move in the email message. The writer used the imperative '*find attached'* to direct the attention of the recipient to the attached documents or files. Noticeably, even though the content did not include an explanation about the attached file, the

'identifying topic' move in the 'subject' box of the email played a significant role in informing the recipient about the name and the nature of the files.

5.2.7 Informing about Issues Move

The 'informing about issues' move was used to notify the recipients about general interest issues. The use of this move was not very common in the corpus as it occurred in 53 email messages with an overall frequency of 14 percent. However, this move stands as an important communicative move in the email messages as it always comprised some important information about institutional and academic issues. The email writers mainly used this move to inform, notify or update the recipients about class cancellation, the dates of replacement classes, examination timetables, lecture notes, and important due dates. This content move almost always occurred in the emails that were sent to a number of recipients at the same time.

> **Ex 5.9:** 3.62. Emarketing and Entrepreneurship class is on from this week onwards, 16th May 2010, 2pm to 6pm. Lecturer is

The head of studies sent example (5.9) to the students of 'E-marketing and Entrepreneurship' module. The 'informing about issues' move intends to inform the students about the date, the time and the name of the lecturer of the named module. The writer used the simple present tense twice to reflect the immediate relevance of the presented information (Biber, 1995). The move is fully informative as it included detailed information about the issue of interest. Even though the 'informing about issues' move in this email message was relatively short, the majority of the 'informing about issue' moves were relatively longer as they included detailed information about the main issue of the email message.

5.2.8 Providing Extra Information Move

This content move occurred in 83 email messages, which is 22 percent of the emails. As the name of this move suggests, it is a supporting move that was usually used to 'provide extra information' or further explain the main issue of the email.

Ex 5.10: 6.7. M1: Informing about issues	Our BABA program is an approved program by MQA and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) Malaysia. The BABA comes with a specialization either in HR, Marketing, Accounting and Finance and is equivalent to a full Degree.
M2: Providing extra information	Upon completion of the taught modules, you will embark upon a dissertation - the mark of premium Degree. This is a taught program and unlike many of the program offered, this is not a distant learning program.

As the two excerpts in example (5.10) show, the 'providing extra information' move was used as a supporting move to further explain the main issue of the email message. The writer in example (5.10) was involved in informing the recipients about one program offered by the institution. She explained that the program was accredited by MOHE and had a number of pathways from which the students could choose. As she wanted to differentiate the program from other programs that are offered by other institutions, she 'provided extra information' regarding the specifications and emphasized that it was not a distant learning program. As the main function of this move is 'giving information', this was reflected in the linguistic features used. The writers mainly used declarative sentences to provide information, simple present tense to reflect on the immediate relevance, and passive voice constructs to reflect abstract and informational style of writing (Biber, 1995).

5.2.9 Requesting Confirming Receipt Move

This move occurred in 23 email messages, which is 6 percent of the email in the corpus. It is a follow-up move intended to solicit an action from the recipient. The writers mainly used two formulaic constructs to 'request confirming receipt'. They

either used the conversational '*appreciate confirming receipt',* which embraces conversational deletion (Thrasher, 1974) as a result of omitting the first person singular or plural pronouns, *'I'* or *'we'*, or the imperative formal construct '*Kindly acknowledge receipt'*. Both constructs, as mentioned earlier, intended to solicit an action from the recipient. This move was always placed before the pre-closing or closing moves.

5.2.10 Offering Help if Needed Move

The 'Offering help if needed' is a follow-up move intended to express the availability of the sender. It was uncommon in the email messages as it occurred in only 19 emails, which is 5 percent of the corpus. To 'offer help if needed, the writers mainly used conditional clauses as in *'if you have any quires regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me'* or '*should you need an assistance, please feel free to call me'*. The use of the conditional if-clause reflects the conditional nature of the offer in this move. Similarly, in '*should you have an enquiry'*, email writers inverted the subject and the modal in the place of 'if' to create what is called conditional inversion. As the use of the if-clause, the conversational inversion also intended to express the availability of the addresser in case the addressee wanted further information or clarifications. This move was always used before the pre-closing or closing moves.

5.2.11 Pre-Closing and Closing Moves

The 'closing' move is the third most common move in the corpus as it occurred in 325 (86 percent) email messages. The 'pre-closing' move, however, has the second lowest frequency among the framing moves as it occurred in 68 (18 percent) email

messages. The writers of the emails mainly used *'thank you'* (53 instances) as a 'pre-closing' marker. The remaining 15 pre-closing moves, however, were irregular and informal pre-closings such as *'have a nice holiday'* and *'have a nice day'*.

The 'closing' move, however, is an intrinsic move in business communication, in general, and workplace emails, in particular. It is mainly used to express politeness and give deference (Waldvogel, 2007). Examining the use of the 'closing' move shows that the interactants used three main closing markers that are the different levels of regards such as *'Best regards'*, *'Kind[est] regards'*, *'Sincere regards'*, *'with regards'* or only *'Regards'*; the different levels of wishes such as *'Best wishes'* and *'Warm wishes'*; and *'Thank you'*. In addition to these three main closing markers, email writers used a large number of informal markers such as *'Take care'*, *'Cheers'*, *'Good luck'*, *'Warmest'*, and *'All the best'*. The use of these markers, in fact, was either a general practice by the employee, as in the use of *'Cheers!'* in all the email written by Ms. Mal; or a specific practice that reflected the content of the email messages as in the use of '*Good luck'* or '*All the best'* in the emails that were sent to students informing them about exam dates or the due dates to submit assignments.

5.2.12 Signature Move

The 'Signature' move was the second most common move in the corpus as it occurred in 355 email messages, giving an overall frequency of 93 percent. The main function of this move was creating credibility. The writers used two different types of signatures, which are the auto signature and the signing off using the first name. Auto signatures are manually prepared and appear automatically at the bottom of every new email message sent by the writer, unless manually deleted. These

signatures usually included the sender's full name, position, the name of the institution, full address, and contact details. It is found that 195 email messages (55 percent) included the auto signature move, whereas the remaining 160 emails (45 percent) were signed off using the first name.

5.3 Lexico-Grammatical Features

The investigation on the rhetorical moves revealed that the employees used fourteen moves in constructing their email messages. In this section, in line with Bhatia's (2004) suggestions, the lexico-grammatical features of these rhetorical moves are investigated. The examination of the lexico-grammatical features in this study is carried out in relationship to Biber's (1988, 1995) and Conrad and Biber's (2001) multi-dimensional framework to investigate register variation.

Biber (1988, 1995) presented seven basic dimensions for register variation in English. These dimensions are "involved vs. informational production", "narrative vs. non narrative discourse", "situation-dependent reference vs. elaborated reference", "overtly expression of argumentation", "non-abstract vs. abstract style", "on-line informational vs. edited not on-line informational", "tentative interpretation" dimensions. To examine register variation, Biber (1988, 1995) presented 67 linguistic features that are classified into grammatical and functional categories. Researchers, according to Conrad and Biber (2001), do not need to examine all the features; they may select the features that better reflect the use of language in the text genre. Biber suggested examining the occurrences of the linguistic features using software, their occurrences in this study, however, were manually counted.

Stemming from this viewpoint, the instigation into lexico-grammatical features of the email corpus was carried out by investigating ten main lexico-grammatical features that represent all the dimensions in Biber's (1988, 1995) framework. The investigation into the lexico-grammatical features in this study examined the use of grammatical mood (declarative, imperative and interrogative), tenses (simple present, simple past, present perfect, present continuous, simple future), passive voice (agentless passive and 'by' passive), public verbs, suasive verbs, cognitive (private) verbs, pronouns (first, second, and third person singular and plural pronouns), demonstrative pronouns, hedges (general hedges, seem/appear), modal verbs and place and time adverbials. These features were selected as they better reflect language use in the email messages, on the one hand, and as they provide a fuller view about register variation in the email messages in relation to Biber's (1988, 1995) seven dimensions, on the other.

5.3.1 Grammatical Mood

The grammatical mood carries the interpersonal function of the clause (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). It can be divided into imperative and indicative clauses. The indicative clause can also be divided into declarative and interrogative. The interrogative clause can be divided further into yes/no questions and 'Wh' questions. The identification of the grammatical mood depends on the '*subject+ finite'*. If the subject was placed before the finite, the sentences is declarative that meant to express information, however, if the finite is placed before the subject, the mood is interrogative that mainly functions to ask a question (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). If the subject were "absent" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1997), the sentence is imperative that meant to direct or request (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Fantin, 2010).

As such, the investigation of the grammatical clauses provides a fuller view about the interpersonal function in the rhetorical moves.

Investigating the main content moves of the email messages shows that email writers used declarative, interrogative and imperative clauses. The declarative clause was the most common clause in the emails messages, which reflects that exchanging or giving information was the main function of the email messages. This clause was particularly common in 'discussing', 'informing' and 'responding to requests' rhetorical moves. In the 'discussing' move, the declarative clause was used mainly to express ideas and provide opinions. In 'informing' move, however, the declarative clause was used mainly to present information and generalize facts. These functions seem in line with the main communicative intention of these moves.

Ex 5.11: 6.46. The class scheduled on Saturday, 22nd May 2010 at 11am to 1pm is cancelled.
Ex 5.12: 6. 39. I recommend that you have breakout groups and presentations. You would also need to include learning outcomes for each class as well.
Ex 5.13: 2.43. I'm afraid the syllabus is not yet available and will not be published until July.

As example (5.11) and example (5.12) show, the use of the declarative clause intended to communicate information regarding the two attributed issues. In example (5.11), that is an 'informing' move, the writer intended to notify the students that the class was cancelled. The use of the declarative clause was meant to provide information. In example (5.12), a 'discussing' move, the writer intended to provide recommendations and suggestions to the recipient. The use of the declarative clause here intended to express opinion. In addition to the frequent use of the declarative clause in 'discussing' and 'informing' rhetorical moves, the writers of the 'responding to request' sub-move made use of 62 declarative clauses as they intended to provide information regarding the requested issue. The use of declarative

clauses was also a very common practice in ‘providing extra information’ supporting move as the writers were mainly involved in further explaining the points in the main content move.

The second most common clause type in the email messages was the imperative clause. Imperative clauses were used in 80 out of the 378 main content moves. This clause type was particularly common in ‘indicating enclosure’ and ‘requesting’ rhetorical moves. Imperative clauses, according to Fantin (2010), are usually used for directing, however, by adding a mitigation device in front of the verb, the clause, according to White (1993), becomes a request. Investigating the use of the imperative clauses in the emails shows that the writers have used this clause type to request and direct. As example (5.14) below shows, the writer, who is the head of studies, directed her administrative staff to ‘*call’* the lecturer, as he did not submit the assignment yet. In example (5.15) below, however, the imperative was used to request or solicit an action from the recipient. In addition to these functions, the writers of the emails, especially in ‘indicating enclosure’ rhetorical move, used the imperative clause to seek “horizontal intertextuality” (Johnstone, 2008, p. 139) by directing the attention of the recipient to the attached documents or files. As example (5.16) below shows, the writer used the linguistic construct *‘please find attached’* to direct the attention of the recipient from the body of the message to the attached file. This imperative clause, which was identified as ‘indicating enclosure’ move, was usually used as the only move in the body of the emails. Even though the use of the imperative mood is the most direct method of requesting (Carrell and Konneker, 1981), the writers mainly used a mitigation device such as ‘*please’*, ‘*kindly’* or

'*please kindly'* in front of the verb to weaken the imposition (Ng, 2003; Treece, 1994).

Ex 5.14: 3.52. Regarding Mr. GS, **call him.** He should have submitted the assignment by now.

Ex 5.15: 4.32. **Please inform** Mr VK that i wont be able to teach CS from June onwards.

Ex 5.16: 4.26. Please find attached

The use of the imperative clause was also used in 'informing' and 'requesting confirming receipt' moves. In the 'informing' move, the writers used the imperative clause to express information as in '*please note that'*. This clause was almost always followed by 'that clause' to state the information or express the obligation. The writers in 'requesting confirming receipt' move, however, mainly used formulaic constructs such as '*kindly confirm receipt'* to solicit an action from the recipient. As it is shown above, the construction of the imperative clauses almost always involved a public or a suasive verb such as *'confirm', 'submit', 'inform', 'write', 'give', 'find',* and *'attach'* to express the direct or indirect speech acts (Quirk et al, 1985) in the imperative clause.

In addition to the declarative and imperative clauses, the writers of the emails also used the interrogative clause. The use of the interrogative clause was uncommon as it occurred in 45 rhetorical moves that were mainly 'requesting' and 'discussing' moves.

Ex 5.17: 3.3. Do you have a USN for him?

Ex 5.18: 2.7. When and where the reports were sent?

The use of the interrogative clause was divided into the use of 'yes/no' and 'wh' questions (see example 5.17 and example 5.18 above). The 'yes/no' questions, according to Halliday (1967), are questions about unknown polarity, that is, the answer of 'yes/no questions are either the positive polarity 'yes' or the negative polarity 'no'. In example (5.17), the writer asks whether the recipient has the 'USN'

or the matrix number of the student or not, which means that the polarity in unknown. In this case, the answer could be the positive ‘yes’ or the negative ‘no’. In example (5.18), however, the polarity is known that is the date of sending the reports and the address. As such, the question is about a missing piece of information (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). The interrogative clauses in the email messages were mainly ‘wh’ questions that occurred in the ‘requesting’ sub move, and ‘yes/no’ questions, which occurred in the ‘requesting’ and ‘discussing’ moves. The use of the interrogative clause in ‘discussing’ move intended to ask for clarifications. This practice, however, was uncommon as the writers mainly used the declarative clause to exchange options or negotiate an organizational or academic issue.

The investigation of the grammatical moods showed the type of interactions between the writer and the reader of the email messages. In the ‘discussing’ move, the communicators were mainly involved in exchanging ideas and sharing opinions using the declarative clause. In ‘informing’ move, the writers were involved in generalizing facts and giving information. In the ‘requesting’ sub-move, the communicators were involved in asking for a missing piece of information, and giving or sharing information in the ‘responding’ sub-move. Finally, in ‘indicating enclosure’ move, the writers were mainly involved in directing the attention of the recipient from the body of the message to the attached document. This was usually carried out using the formulaic construct ‘*please find attached’*.

5.3.2 Tenses

As previous sectioned showed, the writers of the email messages mainly used the declarative clause, which indicates that the emails were mainly concerned with

expressing and exchanging information. In this section, the temporality of the actions in the email messages is investigated (Biber, 1988). The use of past tense, for example, indicates referring to past events, which reflects narrative writing (Biber, 1988); the use of the present tense, however, indicates immediate circumstances and reflects non-narrative informational writing (Biber, 1988). The use of the present perfect tense indicates narrative writing as the writer refers to past event that has current relevance (Biber, 1988; Harder 1996). Thus, the investigation of the tenses reflects the time in which the actions took place (Downing and Locke, 2006), which also indicates the type of writing, whether it was a narrative or non-narrative discourse (Biber, 1995).

Investigating the use of tenses in the rhetorical moves shows that the writers mainly used the simple present, present perfect and simple past tenses, which means that the emails included narrative and non-narrative writing discourse. In addition, the rhetorical moves also included instances of present continuous and simple future tenses, which reflect discussing upcoming events or unfinished business.

As Table 5.3 shows, the use of the simple present tense was common in the four main content moves of the emails, which reflects non-narrative discourse. The simple present tense was used a method of generalizing fact, expressing opinions and giving information. The second most common tense was the present perfect tense. This tense was used as a method of referring to past events with current relevance. As Table 5.3 shows, it was mainly common in ‘discussing’, ‘responding’, ‘providing extra information’ and ‘informing’ rhetorical moves. The use of the simple past tense, however, was used in ‘providing extra information’, ‘discussing’ and

'responding' rhetorical moves alone with a single occurrence in 'informing' move. This reflects the narrative type of writing in discussing, providing extra information and responding to request rhetorical moves as they referred to previous events. In addition, the writers in the 'discussing' rhetorical move also made use of the present continuous tense mainly to highlight unfinished business and the simple future tense to refer to an upcoming event.

Table 5.3: Tenses in the content moves

Tenses / Moves	**Simple Present**	**Simple Past**	**Present Perfect**	**Present continuous**	**Simple future**	**Total**
Referring to previous contact	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discussing	49	16	29	4	15	113
Requesting	**8**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**13**
Responding	**27**	**12**	**17**	**0**	**0**	**56**
Indicating enclosure	**15**	**0**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**20**
Informing	**17**	**1**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**25**
Providing extra information	**28**	**19**	**12**	**5**	**7**	**71**
Requesting conforming receipt	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offering help if needed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	144	53	**69**	**10**	**22**	**298**

The type of the email message (solitary or chain) influenced the type of discourse used in the email messages. As mentioned earlier, the communicative intention of 'discussing' and 'requesting-responding' rhetorical moves was usually exchanged in a number of email messages. The writers of the initiating email usually established a discussion or placed a request for information or action. The recipients of these emails responded by giving an opinion or a suggestion. This usually sealed the chain, especially in the emails that included the 'requesting' move. The reply to the 'discussing' move, however, usually became the subject of a following email that further discussed or negotiated the issue. This exchange of emails continued in a number of out-going and in-coming email messages until an agreement was reached between the communicators. This practice has obviously influenced the type of

discourse used in these rhetorical moves as they included narrative and non-narrative discourse. The use of non-narrative discourse was mainly associated with current issues such as deadlines, timetables, exams, marksheets and venues. The use of the narrative discourse, however, was associated with past events such as exam results, conversations, applications or actions that have current relevance. As example (5.19) shows, the writer of the email advised the part-time lecturers about the deadline of submitting the marked assignments using a simple present tense.

> **Ex 5.19:** 1.9. The deadline for submission of these marked assignments and answer scripts to Ms Lxxx, Academic Manager and Chief Moderator of NCC Malaysia, **is** 28 May 2010.
>
> **Ex 5.20**: 1.1. I **have printed** out the hardcopy of the marking scheme and **will give it** immediately to Ms NS who is the lecturer and examiner for the VB module.
>
> **Ex 5.21:** 1.11. As **I am still waiting** for the payment to come through for the 2 new students, I will not be able to…
>
> **Ex 5.22:** 2.31. **I asked** Mr. HS and **he told** me that **he sent** your application 10 days ago.

In example (5.20) above, the writer updates the external partner about the latest actions taken regarding the attributed issue using the present perfect tense to refer to the previous action and linking it to the upcoming action, using the simple future tense. The main purpose of using the present perfect tense in example (5.20), not the simple past tense, was the writer's intention to explain why he had not delivered the marking scheme to the Ms. NS. In example (5.22) above, the writer used the simple past tense three times in a single sentence. The main function was convincing the student that his visa application was sent and awaiting approval. This email was a reply to an enquiry from the student regarding his visa application.

In addition to these narrative and non-narrative discourses in chain-type messages, the writers of the 'discussing' move used present continuous and simple future tenses. The usage of the present continuous tense in the 'discussing' move was

mainly associated with unfinished business. As example (5.21) shows, the writer does not literally mean that she is sitting down waiting for the payment; it is a reminder that the payment was not received yet. That is, '*I did not receive the payment for the 2 new students'*. The usage of the first person singular pronoun '*I'* and the present continuous tense in example (5.21) above, in fact, reflects an interesting technique some interactants used to avoid imposition in their correspondence. As the content of the email shows, the writer wanted to remind the recipient that the payment is not received yet; however, she did not '*want'* to sound direct and imposing. Therefore, the reminder was presented indirectly by referring to her current situation, using the first person pronoun '*I'* and the present continuous tense, followed by the simple future tense, which explains the possible consequences. All this was made indirectly without referring to the recipient or declaring openly that the payment was not made. The use of the simple future tense in this move functioned as a method of referring to upcoming actions. In example (5.20) above, the writer related a present perfect action to future action to ensure the recipient that the issue was attended.

The writers of 'informing' and 'indicating enclosure' moves, however, mainly used non-narrative discourse. They mainly used the simple present tense to generalize information, present facts or refer to the rules and regulations of the institution. In 'informing' move, the writers mainly used the simple present tense to inform about due dates, class cancelation, replacement classes, and general updates regarding administrative and academic issues (see 5.23 & 5.24).

Ex 5.23: 3.68. **This is an invitation** for the Business Research Methods Presentation (Viva/Oral)

Ex 5.24: 6.27. **This little note is** to serve as a reminder to you on the examination…

In example (5.23), the head of studies sent this email to all MBA students inviting them to attend an oral defence in the institution. In example (5.24), the writer wrote the email to remind the students about the rules and regulations for the exams. The use of the present simple tense in both moves meant to show the immediate or the current relevance of the issues. As such, the moves above are associated with informational rather than narrative writing. They meant to bring to the attention of the recipients the two communicated issues. In the 'indicating enclosure' move, however, the use of the simple present tense was associated with presenting the given action. As example (5.24) above shows, the writer used the simple present tense to inform the recipient about the taken action. As explained in previous section, the writers of indicating enclosure move mainly used the directing-like-requesting formulaic expression '*please find attached'* to direct the attention of the recipient to the enclosed file. The agent in that expression was always '*absent'*. In example (5.25) below, the writer also meant to direct the attention of the recipient to the enclosed file, however, using a simple present active voice sentence.

> **Ex 5.25:** 1.4. I, herewith, forward to you the attached softcopy of the marking scheme for the VB exam.

The investigation on the use of tense in the rhetorical moves reflected the type of discourse used. The writers of 'informing' and 'indicating enclosure' moves mainly used non-narrative discourse, which reflects the current nature of the issues involved. The writers of 'discussing', 'responding to request', and 'providing extra information' rhetorical moves, however, made use of narrative and non-narrative discourse. This reflects discussing or referring to current, past remote and past relevant issues. This means that the writers of 'informing' and 'indicating enclosure' moves were involved in informational discourse, whereas the writers of 'discussing', 'responding' and 'providing extra information' moves were involved in

informational and narrative discourse. All these instances were used in active voice, which reflects an obligation on the agent (Biber, 1988, 1995).

5.3.3 Passive Voice

Passive voice is used for abstract presentation of the information (Biber, 1988). This includes agentless passive, which is used when the agent has no role in the discourse and '*by'* passive, which is used when the action maker or the agent has a role in the discourse (Biber 1988). According to Biber (1988, 1995), the use of agentless passive voice reflects 'informational production' in texts, that is, the use of the agentless passive reflects information-oriented discourse. This type of production is opposed with the "involved production", which reflects involvement between the communicators. In addition, Biber (1995) stated that the use of the '*by'* passive and agentless passive reflect abstract style. That is, their use reflects less interactivity between the communicators. According to Biber (1995), the use of '*by'* passive reflects logical relations among propositions, the agentless passive, however is used to "promote an inanimate referent and demote animate referent" (p. 164).

Investigating the use of passive voice in the content moves carrying the communicative intentions of the email messages shows that the writers used 73 passive voice times, 38 of which were in 'informing about issues' rhetorical moves, 17 in 'providing extra information' supporting move, 16 in 'discussing issues' move, and two occurrences in the 'responding to requests' rhetorical move. Passive voice was not used in any of the 'indicating enclosure' main content move. These 73 instances were 13 'by' passive and 60 agentless passive.

Table 5.4: Passive voice in the content moves

Type of passive / Moves	'by passive	Agentless passive	Total
Informing	6	32	**38**
Discussing	3	13	**16**
Responding to request	0	2	**2**
Indicating enclosure	0	0	**0**
Providing extra information	4	13	**17**
Total	**13**	**60**	**73**

As Table 5.4 shows, the writers of 'informing about issues' move made use of 32 agentless and 6 'by' passive clauses, which, according to Biber (1988, 1995), reflect an informational rather than involved production. The writers of these moves intended to draw the attention of the recipient to the presented information in which the agent has no role to play. The majority of passive voice instances in 'providing extra information' and 'discussing about issues' and the two instances in 'responding to requests' rhetorical moves were also agentless passives.

> **Ex 5.26:** 1.47. **It has been found that the** June 2010 IT Skills Examination paper, Section B, Question 1 (Spreadsheets) is missing.
>
> **Ex 5.27:** 1.22. I know what you mean, don't worry**. The Exam Papers will be sent** once we finalize them.

In example (5.26) above, which is an 'informing about issues' rhetorical move, the writer intended to inform the recipients about the missing section in the IT paper regardless of the animate agent. This practice was also used in example (5.27) above, which is a 'discussing issues' rhetorical move. The writer used the agentless passive to promote an inanimate referent, which is the *'exam'*, and demote the animate agent, who is the person who will send the papers.

In addition, the results showed that the writers used the agentless passive to distant the self and minimize imposition. As example (5.28) below shows, the writer

informed the recipient that the application of one student was held pending because no qualifications were submitted. He did this using the agentless passive without stating who held the application pending and why. It is obvious from the content that the sender held the application pending as the addressee did not send the qualifications. However, to distant the self and minimize the imposition (Brown and Levinson, 1987), the writer used the agentless passive.

> **Ex 5.28**: 4.13. The application for **Mxxx Kxxx has been held pending because no qualifications were submitted**

Investigating the use of the *'by'* passive shows that it was used mainly to inform about the agent when required. As example (5.29) below, which is a 'discussing issues' move, shows, the writer used the *'by'* passive to identify the channel in which the delivery will take place. As mentioned earlier, the use of the *'by'* passive was an uncommon practice, as the majority of the passive voice instances were agentless passives.

> **Ex 5.29:** 1.22. the exams will be sent to you by email

Overall, the use of passive voice was mainly common in 'informing about issues' and 'providing extra information' moves, which reflects the abstract style and informational production in these two rhetorical moves. The use of passive voice in 'discussing issues' and 'responding to requests' rhetorical moves was an uncommon practice and was not used in the 'requesting' rhetorical move. As mentioned earlier, 'requesting' moves mainly included imperative and interrogative clauses to seek information or actions, whereas 'indicating enclosure' move mainly included imperative clauses to divert the attention of the addressee to the attached file. The use of passive voice in the emails mainly intended to emphasize the information and promote an inanimate referent. It was also used to demote or distant the animate agent from the imposition.

5.3.4 Public and Suasive Verbs

Public verbs reflect actions that can be observed publicly; they are "primarily speech act verb such as say and explain" (Biber, 1991, p. 242). According to Hinkel (2008), public verbs are also used to introduce indirect or reported statements. Suasive verbs, however, present a directive or the intention to bring some change (Biber, 1991; Hinkel, 2008). The importance of investigating these two classes of verbs lays in their ability to reflect the type of discourse used in the email messages (Biber, 1995). The occurrence of public verbs reflects "narrative discourse", whereas the use of suasive verbs reflects an "overtly argumentative discourse" (Biber, 1988, 1995).

Ex 5.30: 3.116. I suggest that you record this….

Ex 5.31: 6.39. I recommend that you have breakout groups and presentations'

Ex 5.32: 1.55. Please arrange for the necessary and send us all the samples electronically

Ex 5.33: 4.58. Here I attach the list of students

Ex 5.34: 1.35. Kindly acknowledge receipt

Even though public and suasive verbs occurred in 'discussing issues', 'responding to request', 'providing extra information' and 'requesting confirming receipt' communicative moves, but this was not a very common practice. The employees mainly used '*explain'*, '*suggest'*, '*write'*, '*give'*, '*offer'*, '*tell'* and '*send'* public verbs to solicit an action from the recipient. As example (5.30) above shows, the writer used the verb '*suggest'* followed by '*that clause'* to present his input regarding the issue. The verb '*suggest'* in this excerpt is a public and suasive verb (Biber, 1991). It is public verb as it reflects an action that can be observed, which is the suggestion followed by the '*that clause',* and suasive verb as it intends to bring some change, which is the suggestion after the '*that clause'* (Quirk et al., 1985). In addition to '*suggest'*, the writers of these moves also used '*recommend'* (see example 5.31), '*arrange'* and '*ensure'* suasive verbs. In example (5.32) above, the writer, in this

'requesting' move, used the suasive verb '*arrange'* to indicate the required change from the addressee, and the public verb, '*send'*, to indicate the required action. The main purpose of using these suasive verbs in the discussing issues move is to present a directive to change (Biber, 1991; Hinkel, 2008). Similarly, the writer of example (5.34) above, which is a 'requesting confirming receipt' move, intended to solicit an action from the addressee.

In the 'indicating enclosure' move, however, the writers mainly used '*submit'*, '*enclose'* and '*attach'* public verbs preceded by the first person singular pronoun *'I'*. The use of these verbs mainly intended to indicate the action that is carried out by the addresser in the email message. As example (5.33) above shows, the writer refers to her action, which is attaching the list of the students. Unlike the use of public verbs in 'discussing issues', 'requesting' and 'responding to request' moves, the use of public verbs in 'indicating enclosure' move did not explicitly solicit an action from the addresser. It was merely a representation of carrying out a task.

Ex 5.35: 6.67. Please be informed that Introduction to marketing classes is scheduled as follows

Ex 5.36: 5.55. You are required to follow the instructions in the future exam cycle

The use of public and suasive verbs was a common practice in 'informing about issues' communicative moves. The writers mainly used '*require'*, '*inform'*, '*instruct'* and '*advise'* as part of passive voice constructs to solicit actions from the addressee or present information. The construction of the passive voice took two formulaic forms that are 1) using the second person pronoun '*you'* as a subject followed by the passive voice as in '*you are required'* and '*you are instructed'* or 2) using the formulaic expressions '*you are informed that'* and '*you are advised that'.* As example (5.35) above shows, the writer used the signposting formulaic expression '*please be informed'* to express information (Chin, 2011). This expression was

always followed by '*that clause'* to 'indirectly' specify the given information. The verb '*inform'* is a public verb as it is used to introduce an indirect statement (Biber, 1991) and suasive verb as it is used "to bring about some change in the future" (Biber, 1991, p. 242). That is, the use of '*informed'* as part of the expression intended to provide indirectly the amended schedule of the given module. In example (5.36) above, however, the writer used the passive voice construct '*you are required to'* to indicate an obligation on the part of the addressee. A direct, firm and imperative statement that intended to emphasis a point always followed this construct. As such, '*required'* is a public and suasive verb as it intends to indirectly enforce a change (Biber, 1991).

The use of public and suasive verbs in the email messages reflects email writers' engagement in narrative and overtly argumentative discourse (Biber, 1991). In the 'discussing issues', 'responding to requests' and 'informing about issues' moves, the writers intended to indirectly introduce an issue to bring about some change using '*suggest'*, '*recommend'*, '*inform'*, '*require'*, '*instruct'*, and '*advise'*. The writers of 'indicating enclosure' move, however, make use of public verbs alone as in '*enclose'*, '*submit'* and '*attach'* to present actions that can be publicly observed (Biber, 1991).

5.3.5 Cognitive Verbs

Cognitive verbs, often referred to as psychological verbs, psychological predicates (Leech, 1983), or private verbs (Biber, 1988), are the verbs that are used to "denote the speaker's *psychological disposition*" (Fetzer, 2008, p. 388, original emphasis). According to Palmer (1974), private verbs are "those that refer to states or activities

that the speaker alone is aware of. These are of two kinds: those that refer to mental activities and those that refer to sensations" (p. 71). As the main purpose of examining cognitive verbs in the emails is analysing the psychological disposition of the correspondence, the focus is drawn on the former.

Email writers have repeatedly used eight cognitive verbs in their email messages that are: know, think, find, understand, feel, hope, like, want and wish. A close look at these verbs shows that they may be divided into three semantic subcategories that are 1) private factual verbs: know, feel, think (Quirk et al., 1985); 2) private mental verbs that indicates an unfulfilled desire: like, want, hope, wish (Souter and Atwell, 1993); and 3) the mental state verb: understand.

The writers of ‘discussing issues’, ‘requesting’, and ‘responding to request’ rhetorical moves email were engaged in the three different categories of cognitive verbs. As they ‘discuss’ academic and organizational issues and ‘request’ and ‘responded to requests’, they mainly referred to their aspiration of achieving an unfulfilled action (feedback, explanation and request), presenting facts according to their own point of view or stating their mental position. The writers of ‘informing about issues’ move, however, mainly used cognitive verbs to present facts and state a tendency of achieving an action. The use of cognitive verbs in ‘indicating enclosure’ move was not a common practice. They occurred in seven ‘indicating enclosure’ moves to state facts and mental position. This shows that the usage of cognitive verbs in ‘discussing issues’, ‘requesting’ and ‘responding to request’ moves mainly attributed to expressing a desire to be fulfilled in the upcoming messages, whereas

the usage of cognitive verbs in 'informing about issues' move is mainly attributed to presenting facts.

Examining the functional use of the factual verbs shows that they had the same function in all the rhetorical moves that is, expressing personal opinion regarding an issue in accordance with interactants' interpretations of the institutional rules and regulations. The function of the private mental verbs that indicate an unfulfilled desire, however, varied according to the move type whether a chain (discussing issues and requesting-responding to request moves) or a solitary (indicating enclosure and informing about issues moves) type move. In chain-type moves, for example, the usage of these private verbs has functioned mainly as an indication of a true future desire to obtain a feedback, explanation, more information, or response from the recipient of the email, whilst the usage of these verbs in the solitary-type moves referred backwardly to the presented information. That is, the desire in chain-type moves can stand as an initiative to acquire information or feedback, whereas the desire in the solitary-type moves stands as a desire that the provided information, updates, or explanations meet the expectations of the recipient. Therefore, the usage of the private mental verbs in chain moves motivated a response, but their usage in the solitary-type moves merely expressed a personal aspiration that the attributed issue is clear and concise.

> **Ex 5.37:** 6.44. **I do hope that** the above suitably throws light on issues of concern with regard to
>
> **Ex 5.38:** 5.26. **I hope that ABE will assist me in** this matter.

As the excerpts above show, the usage of the cognitive verb '*hope'* has two different functions. In example (5.37) above, which is an excerpt from a 'providing extra information' move, the writer '*hope[s]'* that the presented information in the

previous move (informing about issues move) *'throws lights on issues'*. That is, the information is already presented, and the writer hopes that the given information explains the attributed subject. In example (5.38) above, however, the writer '*hopes'* that the reader of the email '*assist her*' by providing the '*syllabus and the lecture guide*'. That is, the hope will not be fulfilled, unless the reader of the email provides the requested information or further explains the issue.

The use of the private verb '*find'* was particularly common in indicating the enclosure move. The writers mainly used this cognitive verb as part of formulaic expressions as in '*please find attached'* and '*enclosed please find'* to divert the attention of the recipient to the attached file. This private verb reflects a non-observable intellectual act. The act of finding the attached or the enclosed files, as such, should be intellectually carried out by the 'hidden second person'.

Ex: 5.39: 6.44. Please feel free to contact me for any further clarifications.

The use of cognitive verbs was also a common practice in 'offering help if needed' follow up move. The writers mainly used the cognitive verb '*feel'* as part of a formulaic polite imperative construct to express availability. In example (5.39) above, the writer expresses availability to give further clarifications using the formulaic expression *'please feel free'*. The use of this construct intends to give permission to the addressee to take certain actions or do the specified act, which is in this move is contacting the addresser regarding further clarifications.

As such, the writers of 'discussing' rhetorical move were equally engaged in presenting facts, expressing desire and explaining the mental statues using '*understand'*. The usage of cognitive verbs in the 'requesting' rhetorical move intended to express an unfulfilled desire, their use in the 'response' rhetorical move,

however, intended to present a fact. In 'informing about issues' move however, the use of cognitive verbs was a technique to provide facts and re-emphasis the given points. Finally, the usage of cognitive verbs in 'indicating enclosure' move was particularly common, especially the private verb of non-observable intellectual act '*find'*, which always occur as part of formulaic expressions.

5.3.6 Pronouns

The importance of investigating the use of pronouns in the text genre arises as it reflects involvement. According to Biber (1988, 1995), the use of the first and second person pronouns reflect great involvement between the writer and the reader. It also reflects the personal nature of the correspondence. The use of the third person pronouns, however, reflects the involvement of other participants. Given that the emails were exchanged in a workplace, the use of the first person plural subjective and objective pronouns, '*we'* and '*us'*, may reflect inclusive or exclusive nature (Brawn and Levinson, 1987). The inclusive use reflects the writer and the reader, which also adds to the personal nature of the emails; the exclusive use, however, refers to the writer as a part of the institution, which is a common practice in business communication. As such, investigating the use of pronouns reflects the personal or institutional nature of the email genre types.

The use of pronouns was common in the corpus. The 378 email messages included 1763 pronouns. The emails included the first, second and third person singular and plural subjective and objective pronouns (I, me, he, she, it, we, us, they, them, it) and possessive pronouns (our, my). Interestingly, the first person singular subjective and objective pronouns, *'I'* and *'me'*, and the second person pronoun, *'you'*, were the

most commonly used pronouns in the corpus as they occurred in 609 and 543 instances respectively, which reflected great involvement between the addresser and the addressee in the email messages (Biber, 1988, 1995). The first person plural subjective and objective pronouns *'we'* and *'us'* occurred in 194 instances. The use of these pronouns as mentioned earlier may refer exclusively to the corporate contexts or inclusively to the addresser and the addressee. The possessive pronouns *'my'* and *'our'* occurred in 184 and 69 instances respectively. The reference to the third person was also common in the email messages as the animate third person singular and plural subjective and objective pronouns, *'he'*, *'she'*, *'him'*, *'her'*, *'they'*, and *'them'*, collectively occurred in 164 instances, which also reflects the high involvement of a third party in the email messages (Biber, 1988, 1995).

Examining the practice of using pronouns in the 'discussing issues' move reveals an interesting practice was carried out creatively by the writers of the emails. That was the shift-in-focus between the personal *'I'* and *'my'*, on the one hand, and the plural organizational represented *'we'* and *'our',* on the other. Even though an auto signature that identifies the organizational position of the sender usually supported the usage of *'I'*, *'me'* and *'my'* in the emails, the acceptance of the decisions that were carried out using the singular personal pronouns was not always a straight-forward process. Therefore, as a strategy of enforcing the decisions and giving a corporate value to the communicated issue, the writers shifted the focus from the personal '*I'* into the plural exclusive '*we'*.

Chain 1:
Ex 5.40. 5.7. Dear VK,

For Axxx and can confirm that **he** is legible for entry to the Diploma level based on his Bachelor of Economics Degree from the University of Sindh , Pakistan **He** will be required to complete both part 1 and part 2 of the Diploma.

Ex 5.41.5.8. Dear KL The student keen to take Diploma 2. **He** said is waste for him to repeat the subject in diploma 1. There have few student was eligible take diploma 2 and advance diploma with same qualification from Pakistan. Anyhow, KL **I** try convince him take diploma 1, if still **he** cannot make it, **I** will ask him take other programme. Thanks for your advised.
Ex 5.42: 5.9. Dear VK **We** do not offer students direct entry to the Diploma part 2; **our** systems do not even allow this. Diploma students are required to pass both parts. … It is not a waste of time for the student; the subjects in the ABE Diploma (level 5) are of a much higher standard than the subjects **he** did in his Degree (level 3). The assessment that **I** have made is correct and the offer is final. …- this is something **he** may wish to look into if **he** wishes to apply elsewhere. **I** hope this information provides clarification on the matter; thank **you** for your cooperation.

As the chain 1 shows, Mr. VK, the assistant academic director is involved in a discussion with Mr. KL regarding the assessment of a qualification. Mr. KL made his assessment, but Mr. VK and the student, obviously, do not accept the outcome. The personal presentation of the assessment using '*I'* in '*I have received and assessed the faxed qualifications'*, seemed negotiable to Mr. VK, who challenged the initial assessment declaring that other students who have the same qualification were granted exemptions, and that, if this student does not receive the exemption, he will study another program. This response, as example (5.42) above shows, was taken as a personal challenge by Mr. KL, who re-emphasized his initial assessment, however, using the plural exclusive *'we'* foregrounding the organization, and backgrounding the self, *'We do not offer students direct entry to the Diploma part 2'*. To back up his assessment, he made a general reference to the rules and regulations, using the plural possessive pronoun *'our'*, *'our systems do not even allow this'*. After explaining the issue and proving that his assessment is in proportion to the rules and regulations of his association, He foregrounded himself and backgrounded the organization to emphasis his initial assessment that was challenged earlier by Mr. VK, *'The assessment that I have made is correct and the offer is final'*.

This shift-in-focus by foregrounding and backgrounding the self and the organization according to the communicative need was common in 'discussing issues' rhetorical move. As mentioned earlier, the overwhelming majority of employees preferred foregrounding the self, using the first person singular pronoun, *'I'*, in their discussions. However, if there were a point to be imposed or a point that needed to be taken seriously, the writers usually foregrounded the organization and backgrounded the self, using the plural *'we'*. The same technique was used when referring to actions. Mainly, the reference to people, actions and communications was carried out using the singular possessive pronouns, *'my'* as in *'my students'*, *'my email*', and *'my findings'*. However, if the issue needed general acknowledgment from the recipient, the reference to the same people or actions by the same writer was carried out on the corporate level as in *'our students'*, *'our email'*, and *'our findings'*.

Additionally, the reference to a third party was exceptionally high in the 'discussing issues' rhetorical move. As mentioned earlier, third person pronouns occurred in 164 instances in the corpus, 101 (61 percent) of which occurred in the 'discussing issues' rhetorical move. The writers mainly discussed granting exemptions, registration issues, exam results, leave-related issues, renewing visas and suggestions given by governmental authorities or external partners. The 101 instances of referring to a third party occurred in thirty-four 'discussing issues' moves, which means that around 40 percent of the 'discussing issues' moves discussed a third-person, mainly students, related issues.

The use of first person plural pronouns, however, was the highest in the 'informing about issues' move. The average of using first person plural subjective and objective pronouns, *'we'* and *'us'* in this move was 1.1 pronouns per message. Examining the usage of these pronouns shows that the majority of them were used exclusively referring to the employee as part of the institution. As the 'informing about issues' move functions as a method of informing, notifying or updating the recipients about general interest issues, the choice of the plural *'we'* intended to give a corporate value to the communicated issue.

Ex 5.43: 1.23.
Examination Venue for IDCS global papers
Dear All
Please be advised that **we** have changed the exam venue for IDCS global papers to the following venue for the June 2010 cycle:
Name of the college
Venue ……
Best regards
Auto signature

In example (5.43) above, the first person plural pronoun *'we'* refers to the institution. As such, this message is a formal notification regarding the change of venue of the paper. In fact, the overwhelming majority of the first person plural subjective and objective pronouns in 'informing about issues' moves exclusively referred to the institution or a group of people that does not include the addressee. The remaining occurrences were used to inform about activities that are planned internally where '*we'* and '*us'* referred to the writer and every recipient of the email as in *'I thought that we should pep up the semester with an activity that would benefit us'*, that is the writer and the recipient of the email.

The usage of pronouns in 'requesting', 'responding', and 'indicating enclosure' rhetorical moves was mainly constrained to the usage of the first person singular *'I'* and the second person pronoun *'you'*, which reflects a high level of involvement

between the communicators (Biber, 1988, 1995). Interestingly, the occurrence of the first person singular pronoun *'I'* and second person pronoun *'you'* in the 'requesting' and 'responding to request' rhetorical moves enjoyed an equal frequency to the number of moves. The occurrence of these pronouns was 1.03 and exactly 1 pronoun per message occurred in these two moves respectively. Given that 'requesting' and 'responding to request' rhetorical moves are typically short, the match between the frequency of using *'I'* and *'you'* with the number of moves reflects the personal nature of these rhetorical moves. Noticeably, the frequency of using the plural *'we'* and *'our'* is less than using them in 'discussing' and 'informing' rhetorical moves with an average of 0.28 and 0.09 per move respectively, whereas the usage of the singular possessive *'my'* was around 0.57 per message. This re-emphasizes the personal nature of 'requesting' and 'responding to request' rhetorical moves as the writers mainly personified the correspondence by foregrounding the self and backgrounding the institution as in *'my next semester'*, *'my timetable'*, and *'my requirements'*. The reference to the absent other 'third person' is also uncommon in 'requesting' and 'responding to request' moves as it occurred in merely 4 of the 125 moves. As such, the usage of pronouns in these two moves reflects the personal nature of these moves as the communication was intentionally directed to reflect the self and the other on the personal capacity, backgrounding the organization.

Examining the usage of pronouns in 'indicating enclosure' move shows a low frequency of involvement between the sender and the recipient. Even though the two most frequent pronouns in 'indicating enclosure' move are the second person '*you'* and the first person singular pronoun '*I'*, their average per message is lesser than one pronoun per message. The average of using all other pronouns collectively is around

0.8 per message, which also reflects a low frequency of referring to the plural context of the institution and the absent other. The most frequent reference in the 'indicating enclosure' move is the reference to the enclosure, '*please find attached*", which enjoys a 100 percent frequency. Obviously, the core focus in this move is the attached files or documents. In fact, the 16 'indicating enclosure' moves did not have a reference to the self and the other, except in the 'From' and 'To' boxes in the formatting of the email, and another 22 moves included the reference to the enclosure and a short explanation about its nature.

The use of the first person singular and plural pronouns was also a common practice in 'providing extra information' supporting content move. The use of pronouns in this move highly depended on the tone of the main content move. For the emails that the writer was personally involved in the communication, as in 'discussing', 'requesting' and 'responding to request' rhetorical move, the use of pronouns in this move was mainly first and second person pronouns. However, if the writer used an informative abstract style as in 'informing about issues' move, the use of pronouns in this move was mainly first person plural pronouns. Nevertheless, some email messages including the 'discussing issues' move had two different tones in a single message. The writers were personally involved in the 'discussing issues' move, but constructed the supporting move, 'providing extra information', using first person plural pronouns. The main purpose of this switch in tone was putting an end to the on-going discussion by referring to the rules and regulations using the corporate *'we'* and *'us'*.

Examining the use of pronouns in the main content moves revealed that 'discussing', 'requesting' and 'responding to requests' rhetorical moves mainly included the use of first, second, and third person pronouns, which reflected an involved style of writing (Biber, 1988, 1995). The 'discussing issues' move also included third person pronouns, which reflected narrative discourse (Biber, 1988, 1995). The use of pronouns in 'informing about issues' move, however, mainly included the corporate *'we'* and *'us'*. These pronouns were mainly used to refer to the addresser as part of a group. The use of pronouns in the indicating enclosure move, however, was not a common practice.

5.3.7 Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns, according to Biber (1995), stand "for an unspecified referent that must be inferred from the discourse or the situational reference" (p. 144). In English, there are four demonstrative pronouns that are *'this'*, *'that'*, *'these'* and *'those'*. The occurrence of these demonstrative pronouns in a discourse, according to Biber (1988, 1995), reflects "on-line information" style of writing opposed to the "edited" or the "not on-line informational" style.

Examining the use of the demonstrative pronouns in the email messages revealed the exceptionally high occurrence of the singular demonstrative pronouns *'this'*, which occurred in 124 instances and *'that'*, which occurred in 65 instances. The use of the plural demonstrative pronouns *'these'* and *'those'*, however, was not a common practice, occurring in only 14 and 9 instances respectively. This reflects the exceptionally high reference to a single issue in the email messages. Remarkably, the overwhelming majority of demonstrative pronouns, singular and plural, referred to

nominal entities (199 instances); the reference to animate referents was not a common practice, however, as it occurred in 13 instances only. This practice reflects great involvement regarding institutional and academic issues in the email messages. The employees used the demonstrative pronouns to refer to a list of students, receiving late payments, an explanation or a suggestion that was presented earlier, a point that need to be clarified, an attached file[s] or document[s] and a single or a number of personnel as in (i.e., this is Kxxx Oxxx).

Ex 5.44: 1.25. Can you help me to check on **this**

Ex 5.45: 2.22. **This** is due to one of the following reasons..

Ex 5.46: 5.54. **These** are all small issues that can be sorted..

Ex 5.47: 1.11. I found that **this** does not match with **those** on the Control Forms

Ex 5.48: 7.29. **These** are the exam marks of ICCS and IDCS exam.

The demonstrative pronouns in the email corpus referred to text-internal, endophoric, and text-external, exophoric, elements. Endophoric referring or text-internal referring was used to refer to elements that were already mentioned in the email message, anaphoric referencing, whereas exophoric referring or the text-external referring was used to refer to elements that were not mentioned in the email message. The writers used the exophoric referring to bring a text-external element into the text of the email message, which reflects functional intertextuality (Devitt, 1991). In example (5.44) above, which is a 'requesting' move, the demonstrative pronoun '*this'* is an endophoric referring to a text-internal element, which is the list of the students who registered for the exam that was mentioned earlier in the same email message. Additionally, in example (5.47) above, which is a 'discussing issues' move, the writer used two demonstrative pronouns '*this'* and '*these'* to compare between two text-internal elements that were mentioned earlier in the email. The comparison in this email is between the list of registered students that was received by the employee

earlier and bank drafts on the control form that were mentioned earlier in the email message. In example (5.45) above, which is a 'responding to request' move, however, the demonstrative pronoun '*this'* is an exophoric referring to a text-external element that is the problem the student mentioned in the previous email. Similarly, in example (5.46) above, which is a 'discussing issues' move, the writer used the plural demonstrative pronoun '*these*' as an exophoric referring to text-external elements, which are the problems that students face to receive approvals. The occurrence of exophoric referencing in the email messages emphasizes the importance of placing the emails in their context as meaning is carried from one email to another.

All demonstrative pronouns discussed earlier referred to a specific endophoric or exophoric nominal entity. However, the writers of the emails also used the demonstrative pronouns to refer to an implicit entity that was not mentioned in the text or outside the text. The identification of the referent in this case depended on the context or the situation. In example (5.48), the employee used the plural demonstrative pronoun '*these'* to refer to the attached files. Even though the nominal entity '*the attached files'* was not mentioned in the email message, the situation reveals that, as the marks were not provided in the body of the email message, they were attached into it. The reference here is a horizontal reference as the "text builds on text with which they are related syntagmatically" (Johnstone, 2002, p.139).

The demonstrative pronouns were also used to refer to an abstract concept (Biber, 1988) that is not mentioned in the email message. As example (5.49) below shows, the writer used the plural demonstrative pronoun *'those'* twice in the email to refer to inexplicit elements. From the context, the two demonstrative pronouns refer to

'students'. This is case as the demonstrative pronouns are followed by two relative clauses, which state that *'those'* are *'seeking extensions'* and *'those'* are *'travelling'*. Given that the email was sent by administrative staff in the institution to *'All'* students, the two demonstrative pronouns, then, refer to *'the students'* who are seeking extensions and going to travel.

Ex. 5.49: 6.47.
Dear All

Those who are seeking extension, kindly submit your reason in writing along with the assignment. **Thos**e who are travelling, please submit your travel documents also and the decision will only be made at the Examination Board.
Thanks.
IFF

The use of demonstrative pronouns was particularly common in the 'discussing issues', 'requesting', 'responding to request', 'providing extra information' and 'offering help if needed' moves. In the latter, email writers used the demonstrative pronouns to refer to previously mentioned nominal entities as in as in *'if you have an quires regarding this, please feel free to contact me'*, which reflects the on-line not edited style in these rhetorical moves. Even though the demonstrative pronouns were used in a number of 'indicating enclosure' and 'informing about issues' moves, their occurrence was not common as the writers mainly strived to use the nouns or the nominal entities as part of the text as in *'students who are sitting for the Accounting and Finance paper…'*, which reflects a "not on-line" "edited" style in these rhetorical moves (Biber, 1995).

5.3.8 Modal Verbs

The usage of modal verbs in the email messages was a common practice as the corpus of emails included 484 modal verbs. The importance of modal verbs lies in their ability to modify the verb occurring after them and presents a number of

different pragmatic communicative intentions such as ability, permission, obligation, necessity, probability, etc. Their function intertwines, but with different degrees. The use of modal verbs, especially possibility modals, according to Biber (1988, 1995), reflects an involved style of writing.

According to Crystal (2003b), there are three different types of modalities that are: deontic modality, which is "concerned with the logic of obligation and permission" (p. 130); epistemic modality, which is "concerned with the logical structure of statements which asserts or implies that the PROPOSITIONS are known and believed" (p. 163, original emphasis); and alethic modality, which is "concerned with the necessary or contingent truth of proposition" (p. 18). "The car must be ready", according to Crystal (2003b, p. 130), can be interpreted as "an obligation that the car be ready" in deontic modality; "it is metaphorically necessary for the car to be ready" in alethic modality; and "it follows from what is known that the car must be ready" in epistemic modality. Clearly, deontic modality is concerned with obligation, whereas epistemic and alethic modality are interconnected as they mainly look at two interlinked views that are speakers' judgments, evaluations and the logical necessity of the truth (knowledge). Having said that, analysing modality in the four different types of emails can be examined in alignment with the three-made-two modalities that are the obligation, deontic modality, and knowledge, epistemic modality. However, as Crystal's (2003, p. 130) example above shows, the use of the same modal verb in the same sentence could be interpreted differently according to the three-made-two modalities. As such, the interpretation of the modal verbs in the emails depended on the context of the email.

In example (5.50) below, the writer used the modality *'will'* twice, and the modality *'can'* once but with different functions. The first occurrence of *'will', 'I'm afraid the syllabus is not yet available and will not be published until July'*, is used as an epistemic modality, as the writer refers to his knowledge regarding the matter. As such, the modality *'will'* is used in a predictive statement based on previous knowledge, and the statement is interpreted as *'based on what I know, the syllabus will not be published until July'*. In the second occurrence of '*will', 'We are very sorry for the inconvenience and will ensure the syllabus is…'*, however, the writer of the email is apologizing for the late action and he 'oblige' himself and the institution to deliver the requested material *'as soon as it possible can'*. The use of the statement *'as soon as possible'* only makes the obligation to deliver the requested documents seems in the very near future, therefore, the writer chose to give himself an open option using the modal *'can'*. That is, he joined the possibility in *'as soon as possible'* with the ability in *'can'*. As such, the whole obligation presented after the apology, *'will insure the syllabus is made available…'* became a conditional obligation that depends on the ability. In this sense, the interpretation of the sentence becomes as *'we are sorry for the inconvenience and 'we oblige ourselves to delivering' the syllabus as soon as we have the ability to do so'*. Therefore, the second *'will'* and *'can'* are deontic as *'will'* presents the promise and *'can'* presents the conditional possibility, '*when we have the ability to deliver the requested documents, we oblige ourselves to delivering it'*. As such, the writer of the email used the first *'will'* as an epistemic modality, whereas he used the second *'will'* and *'can'* as a deontic modalities.

Ex 5.50: 2.43.
I'm afraid the syllabus is not yet available and **will not be published until July.** We are very sorry for the inconvenience and **will ensure the syllabus is** made available **as soon as it possible can**.

Examining the usage of deontic modality shows that the obligation was presented on the part of the addresser, see example (5.50) above, the addressee, *'You may go to her and…'* and a third person singular and plural, *'All diploma students must complete'*, *'I may send you my participation'*. The use of these modalities intended to reflect necessity, *'[I] must call all student before exam'*, promises, *'Ms. MA will call you by this week'*, and evaluation, *'it will be good for the college'*. The usage of epistemic modality, however, mainly expressed speakers' opinion about the attributed topic, as *in 'I am sure Ms BP would like to know…'*, where the speaker shows certainty that Ms. BP wants to know the proposition.

Examining the actual usage of deontic and epistemic modality in the rhetorical moves shows that 55 percent of the modal verbs used were deontic and 45 percent epistemic. Even though these frequencies are close in occurrence, the actual average of using them per email message shows great deal of variation. The 'discussing issues' move, for example, has an almost equal percentage of using deontic and epistemic modality. The usage of modal verbs in 'requesting', 'responding' and 'informing' rhetorical moves was mainly deontic. The 'indicating enclosure' move, however, has the highest frequency of using deontic modality among all content moves.

The overall usage of deontic modality in the four different types of email messages belong to different subcategories. The 'requesting' move, for example, comprised more directive modality as a way of presenting requests, commissive modality for expressing obligation mainly on the addresser, and volitive modality wishing or

hoping assistant from the addressee. The 'informing about issues' move, however, used more commissive modality mainly willing the second and third persons to take an action. The usage of deontic modality in the 'discussing issues' move included commissive modality expressing obligation on the addresser, addressee and third person, while the usage of deontic modality in 'indicating enclosure' move was mainly commissive on the part of the addresser. The overwhelming majority of modal verbs in the emails that included the 'indicating enclosure' move were mainly deontic as they connotes writers' commitment to do something as in '*Please kindly see me personally (please inform Ms Kamala also) so that I <u>can</u> brief you on this COMPULSORY electronic…'*, or explaining possibility as in '*You can also collect the printed hardcopy*…'. The usage of epistemic modality in 'indicating enclosure', however, mainly dealt with writers' judgments regarding the proposition as in '*As per our conversation i have understand your direction and branding awareness is a must especially for newly change management*'. As this excerpt shows, the writer confirmed her judgment regarding the issue as a technique to further explain the proposition.

The writers of 'discussing issues' move were involved in explaining the possibilities, informing about the necessities, giving permissions, expressing obligations, giving opinions, requesting more information, granting approvals, and offering help regarding the attributed topics and propositions. These actions involved the addresser, the addressee, and third person singular and plural, which reflect the high tendency of involvement and richness in this move (Biber, 1988, 1995). The 'requesting' move included more directive and volitive modalities (especially requesting and wishing response) than any other rhetorical move in the corpus. The

'responding to request' move, however, mainly included the commissive modality to express commitment as in '*I shall send the assignment soon'*. The 'informing' move, however, had the highest frequency of using commissive modality in the corpus. Unlike the overall usage of commissive modality in 'discussing' and 'responding to request' moves that mainly committed the self, the other, and the third person to take an action, commissive modality in 'informing about issues' move was audience oriented. That is, the obligation was directed to the recipient or the institution that he/she represents. The usage of modal verbs in 'indicating enclosure' rhetorical moves, however, mainly expressed obligations on the part of the addresser and judgments regarding a given proposition.

5.3.9 Hedges

Hedges are "linguistic forms which express the speaker's certainty or uncertainty about the topic under discussion" (Michael et al., 2010, p. 25). They are mainly used in oral communication (Carter, 1998); however, they are also used in written communication (Salager-Meyer, 1994). The actual usage of these linguistic forms functions as mitigation devices that facilitate interactions between communicators by making them more precise and compose. The occurrence of general hedges, according to Biber (1988, 1995) reflects involvement, whereas the occurrence of seem/appear hedges reflects tentative interpretation academic hedging.

According to Hyland (1998), hedging could be categorized into content-oriented hedges and reader-oriented hedges. Content-oriented hedges hedge "the correspondence between what the writer says about the world and what the world is thought to be like" (Hyland, 1998, p. 162). This type of hedge includes accuracy-

oriented attribute hedges, which reflect writers desire to be as precise as possible, which could be marked by the use or adverbs (e.g., approximately, on average, usually) (Hyland, 1998), and accuracy-oriented reliability hedges, which indicate the level of certainty or uncertainty of the writer about the attributed proposition. Reliability hedges could be marked by the use some auxiliary verbs (e.g., may, can), phrases (e.g., I guess, I am sure), verbs (e.g., seem, appear), adjectives (e.g., possible, probable) and nouns (e.g., tendency, possibility). In addition, the content-oriented hedges also include what Hyland (1998) called the writer-oriented hedges, which intend to "limit personal commitment" (Hyland, 1998, p. 174). The reader-oriented hedges, however, acknowledge the readers' role in rectifying the claims and invites readers' involvement (Hyland, 1996), which establishes a dialogue between the communicators to consider different points of view and the thoughts of others (Hyland 2001; Koutsantoni, 2007).

Table 5.5: Hedges in the main content moves

Hedges / Content moves	Content-oriented			Reader-oriented
	Accuracy-oriented		Writer-oriented	
	Attribute	Reliability		
Discussing	28	18	12	99
Responding	18	5	1	75
Informing	4	2	28	12
Indicating enclosure	5	3	0	4
Total	**55**	**28**	**41**	**190**

As Table 5.5 above shows, hedging was a common practice in the email messages. The reader-oriented hedges were the most common as they occurred 190 times. The use of the content-oriented hedges likewise was a common practice but had a lesser frequency. Overall, the high tendency to use reader-oriented hedges reflects a great deal of involvement between the communicators in the email messages. This type of hedge was particularly common in the 'discussing issues', 'requesting' and

'responding to request' moves. It was also used in the 'informing about issues' and 'indicating enclosure' moves, however, with a lesser frequency. The reader-oriented hedges were mainly used to provide recommendations or suggestions, ask questions, suggesting alternative possibility and personal attribution (see examples 5.51, 5.52 & 5.53).

Ex 5.51: 3.118. I also **suggest** that at the next staff meeting…

Ex 5.52: 2.23. **If** this wouldn't solve the problem, please contact ABE England to ….

Ex 5.53: 3.92. According to **my records** we have not received any reports

The excerpt in example (5.51) above was taken from a 'discussing issues' move that debated an issue. The writer, in this excerpt, gave a suggestion to the recipient to bring up the issue in the meeting. It is up to the reader to take the suggestion or not. It depends on his judgment. In example (5.52) above, the writer hedged using the if-clause to suggest alternative possibilities. As the reader could not login to his account, the writer suggested a solution to the problem. However, as the writer is not sure whether this solution would work or not, she further suggested another possibility in case the given solution did not work. In example (5.53) above, the writer hedged using personal attribution. That is, she did not make it a fact that the reports did not arrive. She referred to her own records. The reports could have arrived, but she did not receive them yet. Alternatively, as she is in charge of the reports, this could also mean that the report did not arrive at all. This type of hedge appeared in the four main content moves in the email messages; however, it appears to be particularly common in the 'discussing issues' and 'responding to request' rhetorical moves, which reflects a great deal of involvement between the communicators.

The use of the content-oriented hedges, however, included the accuracy-oriented attribute, accuracy-oriented reliability and writer-oriented hedges. The use of the accuracy-oriented attribute hedges was the most common type. It occurred as the writers wanted to be as precise as possible by modifying the degree of certainty. This mainly occurred by the use of epistemic adverbs as in example (5.54) below.

Ex 5.54: 4.9. although post does **usually** take **approximately** three to four weeks to reach

In this excerpt, the writer provides the degree to which the attribute could be true. The use of the adverb *'approximately'*, here, is meant to reflect on the degree of variation, which was stated as from three to four weeks. The adverb *'usually'*, however, is an adverb of indefinite frequency that meant to communicate the degree to which the approximated time is regular. The writer of this excerpt hedged by giving an approximation, and the approximation was hedged by regularity, which is also subject to variation. That is, if the writer wrote *'post does take approximately..'*, this would mean that the approximation is accurate. However, by hedging the approximation, *'post does usually take approximately…'*, this means that the approximation may not be accurate, and the post may even reach the receiver later. In addition to approximately, the writers in the email messages used *'generally'*, *'on average'*, *'quite'*, *'almost'* and *'more or less'* adverbs or adverbials to reflect on their degree of precision. The use of the accuracy-oriented attribute hedge appears to be a common practice in discussing issues and responding to request rhetorical moves, which reflect the writers' desire to be as accurate as possible.

Ex 5.55: 6.44. **I guess** I spoke too soon,

Ex 5.56: 6.60. **I am sure** Ms BP would like to know…

Examining the accuracy-oriented reliability hedges, however, shows that the writers used a number of verbs and tentative phrases (Lakoff, 1975) to hedge their opinions.

In example (5.55 above), the writer used *'I guess'* as she was reluctant to force her point of view. This, according to Lakoff (1975) is a tentative hedge meant to present the opinion in an 'extra-polite' form. That is, the use of *'I guess'*, does not literally mean that the writer is not sure, however; she used this phrase to weaken the effect of the upcoming sentence. The context of the email shows that the Ms. BP wrote this email to students who asked for extensions to submit their assignments. Ms. BP wrote to the students earlier regarding the rules and regulations of submitting assignments and that no extensions were allowed except in the case of having an emergency and this should be supported by a signed document. However, to weaken the direct and imposing tone in the sentence, she hedged using *'I guess'*. In example (5.56) above, however, the writer of the email, who is Ms. BP's assistant, used *'I am sure'* for the opposite purpose of using *'I guess'*. This email was written in response to a request from a student to have an extension for submitting his assignment. However, as Ms. IFF does not have the authority to give extensions, as it is Ms. BP's responsibility, she clarified this to the student emphasizing that he must have a strong reason, as Ms. BP will definitely ask about the purpose of the extension.

In addition the verbal and tentative phrases, the writers also used auxiliary verbs (e.g., it 'may' be good for you to meet up with them tomorrow), verbs (e.g., it 'seems' that this student already has a transcript), and adverbs (e.g., some of the emails that may be repeated are 'possibly' those…) to form accuracy-oriented reliability hedges. These hedges are overall meant to communicate possibility or probability. The use of this type of hedge was particularly common in the 'discussing issues' rhetorical move, which reflects involvement as a result of writers' assessments of the level of certainty of the proposition. The use of '*seems'*, according

to Biber (1988, 1995), reflects tentative interpretation academic style. This was used mainly in ‘discussing issues’ moves to reflect on a point that was mentioned earlier in the email.

The use of the writer-oriented hedges, however, was used to demote the agent so to minimize any personal involvement in the communication. This practice, according to Hyland (1998), is usually used by constructing passive voice clauses. As shown in section 5.3.3 above, passive voice occurred in 73 rhetorical moves that were mainly ‘informing about issues’, ‘discussing issues’ and ‘providing extra information’ moves.

Drawing on the findings above, the use of the reader-oriented hedges was a common practice in ‘discussing issues’ and ‘responding to request’ communicative moves, which reflects a great deal of involvement between the communicators in these rhetorical moves (Biber, 1988, 1995). Similarly, as the use of the content oriented attribute and reliability hedges was also common in the above-mentioned moves, this also reflects involvement in tentative issues requiring opinions that were subject to possibilities and probabilities. The use of the writer-oriented hedges was particularly common in the ‘informing about issues’ move, reflecting the content-oriented abstract presentation of the proposition (Biber, 1995) in this rhetorical move. The use of hedges was uncommon in the ‘indicating enclosure’ rhetorical move, reflecting the factual presentation of the proposition in this move. Overall, as the use of hedges is regarded as an informal feature in written discourse (Biber, 1988), the common use of hedges in ‘discussing issues’ and ‘responding to request’ rhetorical moves reflects an informal writing-like-speaking discourse.

5.3.10 Place and Time Adverbials

The use of place and time adverbials in a text, according to Biber (1988, 1995), reflects a "situation-dependent" reference, which is opposed to an "elaborated reference". They, according to Biber (1988), serve as "deictics that can only be understood by reference to an external and temporal situation" (p. 110). According to Quirk et al. (1985), place adverbials could be distinguished to position, direction and distance adverbials, whereas time adverbials could be distinguished to position, duration, frequency and relationship adverbials.

The use of time adverbials was exceptionally high in the corpus. These time adverbials were used largely to state or mention a position in a certain time as in the use of *'today'*, *'tomorrow'*, *'yesterday'*, *'this week/ month/ semester'*, *'last week/ month/ semester*', *'next week/ month/ semester'*, *'[day] ago'*, *'in[month]'*, *'on [day]'*, *'this afternoon'*, *'immediately'*, *'soon'*, *'shortly'*, *'now'* and *'after'*. The use of these time adverbials of position, according to Quirk et al. (1985), reflects "fixed position on temporal scale" or "time as stasis" (p. 481). That is, the use of these adverbials in the email messages reflects the writers' tendency to refer to specific positions about when the action took place and when it applies (Quirk et al., 1985). The employees used these position time adverbials to refer to the time and date of replacement classes, the date and time of cancelled classes, the date of exams, due dates for assignments submission and registration (see example 5.59 below), the time or date of a previous action or communication (see example 5.58 below) and the time and date at which an action or a rule will be applied (see example 5.57 below). The use of position time adverbials was particularly common in 'discussing', 'informing',

'requesting', 'responding to request' and 'providing extra information' moves, which reflects the situational-dependent discourse in these rhetorical moves.

Ex 5.57: 1.1. and will give it **immediately** to Ms. NS.

Ex 5.58: 5.38. **Last week** I asked you about the syllabus for TTH subject..

Ex 5.59: 4.53. IDCS student registration is due on **next Monday**,

The email messages also included instances of duration, frequency and relation time adverbials. Duration time adverbials were used as a method to extend "the point of time to which the speaker and hearer are oriented" (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 481). In example (5.60) below, the part-time lecturer used the duration time adverbial '*since'* to reflect upon the period in which she was involved in the action '*checking her account'*. Obviously, the employee promised the part-time lecturer to bank-in the payment on '*Monday'*, but the payment was not received until the time of sending the email. In addition to '*since'*, the writers of the email messages also used '*for [time*]', '*till'*, and '*until'* duration time adverbials to stretch the period of time of the referent. In regard to frequency time adverbials, the writers mainly used '*sometimes'*, '*always'*, '*usually'*, '*never'*, '*normally'*, '*frequently'*, and '*every day/week'* to refer to the regularity of occurrence of the referents that were carried out in the email messages. In example (5.61) below, the head of studies used the frequency time adverbial '*frequently'* to state '*how often*' the telephone rings after 5 pm. Frequency time adverbials were used to state the degree of reoccurrence of certain institutional and academic issues. The use of duration and frequency time adverbials mainly occurred in the 'discussing', 'requesting' and 'responding to request' rhetorical moves to reflect on the degree of reoccurrence of issues.

Ex 5.60: 2.4. I have been checking my account **since Monday** for the salary bank in

Ex 5.61: 2.30. The phone rings **frequently** from 5pm onwards

Ex 5.62: 3.41. I am **still** running a high fever and will not be able to make it to class **today.**

Ex 5.63: 4.43. She **already** sent that packs on 14 May, but **till now** I did not receive them.

In regard to relationship time adverbials, the writers mainly used the time adverbial *'already'*, *'still'*, and *'till'* to show the relationship between two different times (Quirk et al., 1985). In example (5.62) above, the part-time lecturer informed the head of studies that she cannot attend the class as she has a fever. In carrying out this communicative intention, the writer made use of two time adverbials that are *'still'* to refer to the time of writing the email and the position time adverbial *'today'* to refer to the class time. The use of these two time adverbials expressed the relationship between the two different times. That is, as the lecturer *'still'* has a fever in the time of writing the email, she cannot attend the class *'today'*. Similarly, in example (5.63) above, the writer used two time adverbials to draw a relationship between two different times. The writer in this excerpt made use of the time adverbial *'already'* to refer to a past accomplished action that is the sending of the pacts and related it to the time of sending the email using *'till now'*. The expressed relationship in this excerpt is between a past action and current status. The use of relationship time adverbials was used mainly in the 'requesting', 'responding to request' and 'discussing issues' rhetorical moves to link past accomplished action or issues to current or future issues or consequences.

Ex 5.64 3.118. DA, as you know, she is still new **in the department.**

Ex 5.65. 4.40. I haven't been able to meet Mr. VK **in NED**

Ex 5.66. 6.65. Please be informed that Introduction to marketing classes is scheduled **as follows:**

Ex 5.67. 6.53. The assessment for Human Resource module is **as below**:

The use of place adverbials, however, was particularly common in the 'informing', 'discussing', 'indicating enclosure' and 'responding to request' moves. The employees mainly used position and direction place adverbials to state the location

and direct the addressees to the "directional path" (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 480). In example (5.64) above and example (5.65) above, the writers used the position place adverbials '*in the department'* and '*in NED'* to state the locations or the position of the referent. The reference to departments, classes, in general or specific classes, and the institution was a common practice, especially in the emails that were sent to students informing them about the location of the referents such as exam venues. Stating the location in these emails intended to identify the site at which the referents took or will take place. In addition to these position place adverbials, the writers also make use of direction place adverbials to direct the addressees to the location of the referent. In example (5.66) above and example (5.67) above, the writers used the direction place adverbials '*as follows'* and '*as below'* to direct the addressees to the location of the new schedule and the assessment. These direction place adverbials were mainly used in the 'informing about issues' move as signposts to present the information.

Ex. 5.68. 6.50. Enclosed **herewith** the hotel reservation.

Ex. 5.69. 1.20. I **hereby** forward the announcement

The writers of 'informing about issues' and 'indicating enclosure' moves also used the place adverbials *'hereby'* and *'herewith'* to give an official and formal status to the carried task. The place adverb *'herewith'* was always part of a formulaic expression in the 'indicating enclosure' move to divert the attention of the recipient to the attached files (see example 5.68 above). The use of *'hereby'*, however, was either part of an 'indicating enclosure' move as in example (5.69) above, that intends to give an official status to the act of forwarding the announcement, or an 'informing about issues' move as in *'you are hereby informed that'*, which intends to officially inform, notify, update the recipients regarding issues or present information to the recipients about a general interest issue.

5.4 Summary

The corpus of emails included fourteen moves that are six framing and eight content moves. The eight content moves are the 'identifying topic' move, which stands as the 'reference' move in formal letters; two opening moves that are the 'salutation' and 'opening' moves, which intend to establish rapport, give deference and express politeness; two closing moves that are the 'pre-closing' and 'closing' moves, which also intend to give deference and express politeness; and the 'signature' move, which intends to create credibility and trustworthiness in the part of the addressee.

The eight content moves appeared to be main, supporting, intertextual and follow-up moves. The main content moves are the moves that carry the communicative intentions or the discursive practices of the email messages. This included 'discussing issues' move, which is used to elaborate or negotiate an issue. The communicative intention of this move was carried out in a number of "embedded emails" (Gimenez, 2005).

The second main content move is the 'requesting-responding to requests' move. As the 'discussing issues' move, the communicative intention of this super move was carried out in a number of email messages. The request in an email almost always created a reply. Therefore, it was decided to join the two moves into single super move that reflects the communicative purpose of the chain or the thread. This is the case as the request-response took structured turn-taking patterns.

The third main content move is the 'informing about issues' move, which was used mainly to notify, update, or advise the recipients regarding a general interest issue. It

mainly included abstract style and informative production in addition to narrative discourse.

The fourth main content move is the ‘indicating enclosure’ move, which was used mainly to direct the attention of the recipient to the attached file in the email message. The employees also used a single intertextual move that intended to link the email to a previous email or a communicative event. This move was placed mainly after the salutation and the opening. In addition, the emails included a supporting move that mainly intended to ‘provide extra information’ about the main issue of the email message and two follow-up moves that intended to ‘request confirming receipt’ and express availability by ‘offering help if needed’.

The email messages included instances of the seven basic dimensions of register variation presented by Biber (1988, 1995). The “abstract style” and the “informational production” were mainly reported in the ‘informing about issues’ move as the writers of this move mainly used agentless passive and ‘by’ passive to demote the agent and highlight the action (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The “involved production” was reported mainly in the ‘discussing issues’, ‘requesting’ and ‘responding to requests’ rhetorical moves as the use of cognitive verbs, public verbs, first and second person pronouns, ‘Wh’ clauses, hedges and modal verbs was a common practice in these moves (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The use of the “narrative discourse” was reported mainly in the ‘discussing issues’ and ‘providing extra information’ moves as the employees used public verbs, third

person pronouns and simple past tenses to construct these moves. The "non-narrative discourse", however, was reported mainly in 'discussing issues', 'responding to requests', 'informing about issues' and 'providing extra information' as they included simple present tense (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The occurrence of the "overtly argumentative" style was reported mainly in 'informing about issues', discussion issues', and 'responding to request' moves as the writers of these moves used suasive verbs and necessity modals (Biber, 1988, 1995). The use of the "online-information" style mainly occurred in the 'discussion', 'requesting', and 'responding to request' moves as the occurrence of demonstrative pronouns was a common practice in these moves.

The style of 'informing about issues' move, however, was "edited or "not on-line informational", as the writers mainly used nouns or nominals to create a direct reference. Finally, the common use of place and time adverbials in the four main content moves reflects a "situation-dependent" discourse in the email messages.

This section investigated the second perspective in Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional framework for analysing genre. The investigation of the rhetorical moves revealed that email writers used four main content moves that carry four different communicative purposes or intentions. This point suggests that the emails were written to communicate four types of email genres. This point is further investigated in next section, the socio-cognitive perspective.

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIO-COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

This chapter examines language use as a genre (Bhatia, 2010a). The investigation on the textual perspective in previous chapter revealed that the emails included four main content moves and instances of the seven basic register variations. This suggests that the emails belong to more than a single genre. This chapter further examines this aspect by analysing the complete texts as sequences of discourse units (moves) and describes the general patterns of discourse organization across the texts in the corpus (Biber, et al, 2007; Upton and Cohen, 2009). As such, this chapter targets the third research question pertaining how the genre of email is constructed and exploited in the educational institution subject of the study.

The investigation on the socio-cognitive perspective in this chapter is concerned with examining the patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity (Bhatia, 2004). The investigation on the patterns of generic integrity examines how the genre of email is constructed by analysing the generic structures (Hasan, 1977) or general patterns (Biber et al., 2007) of email genre in the institution, whereas the investigation on the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity examines how and why the genre of email is exploited by the discourse community using the genre. The findings in this chapter are validated in relation to a focus group that was selected from two educational institutions in Kuala Lumpur.

6.1 Patterns of Generic Integrity

The investigation on the textual perspective, in previous chapter, revealed that the corpus of email messages included fourteen rhetorical moves, four of which are main content moves that carry the discursive practice of the email messages. These four moves are the 'discussing issues', 'requesting-responding to requests', 'indicating enclosure' and 'informing about issues' moves. Interestingly, these four main content moves did not cross occur in the overwhelming majority of the email messages.

The writers mainly used the emails to discuss an issue with other employees, students or external partners; request information or documents or respond to requests by giving information or sending documents; deliver a file or a number of files including examination papers, assignments, reports or marking schemes; or inform fellow colleagues, students, external partners or everyone together about a general interest issue. As such, these four content moves were considered obligatory and genre-defining moves in recognizing the generic structures (Hasan, 1977) and the patterns used in the email messages (Biber et al., 2007).

The remaining content moves, however, were either optional or reiterational moves depending upon their frequency of occurrence. Optional moves refer to the moves that occurred in at least two-third of the emails in a generic structure, whereas reiterational moves refer to the moves that occurred in less than a third of a generic structure. As mentioned earlier, these content moves were used mainly to support or to give more information about the main content move of the email messages, link the email to a previous email or other communicative events, provide future contact directions or requesting confirming receipt. The following are the four generic

structures (Hasan, 1977), general patterns (Biber et al., 2007), or patterns of generic integrity (Bhatia, 2004) identified in the corpus of email messages:

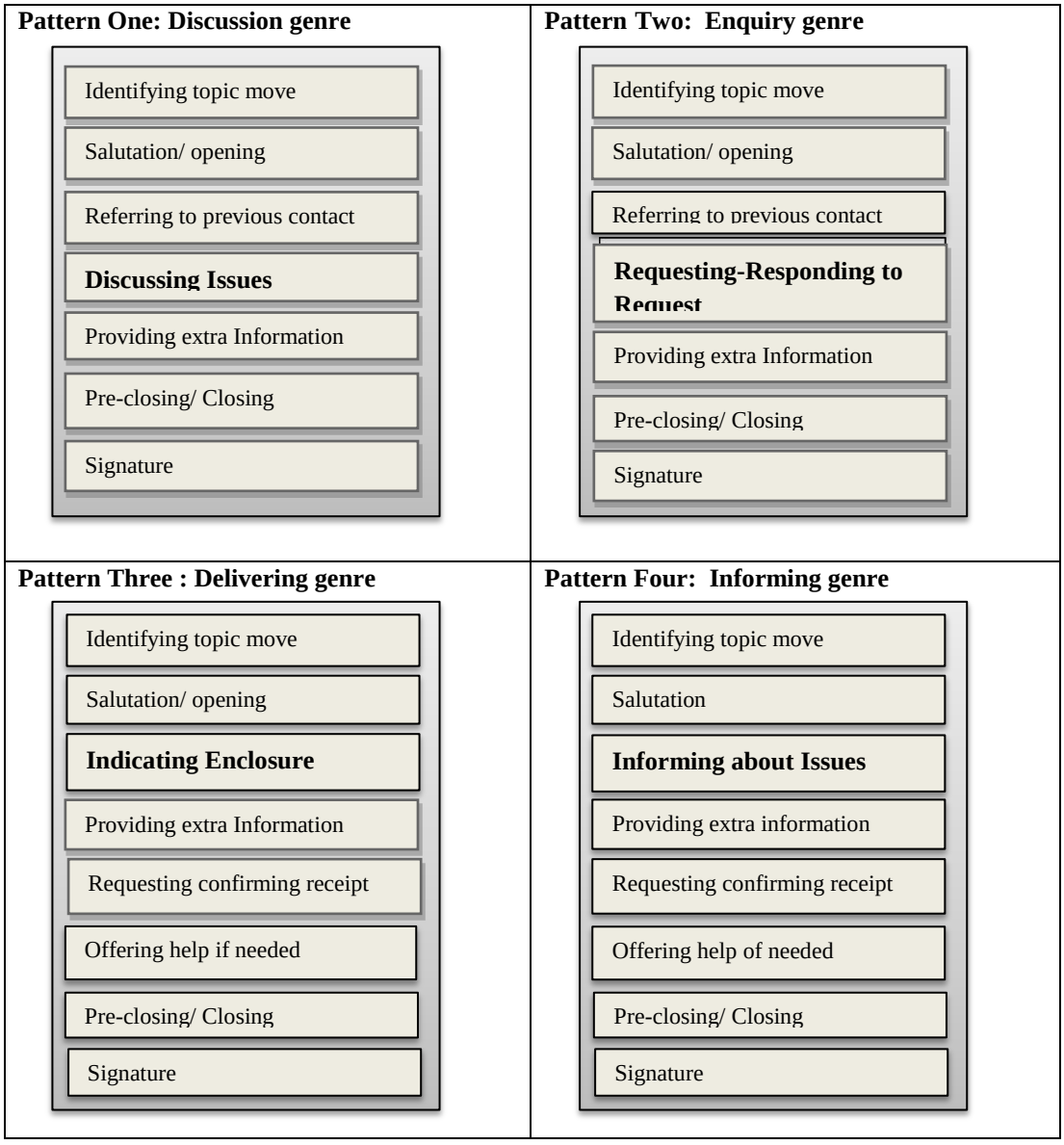

Figure 6.1: Generic structures in the corpus of emails

The overall communicative purpose of these patterns was identified by drawing on the communicative intention of writing the email in its context. As long as the emails maintained the same communicative purpose (Bhatia, 1993, 2004; Swales, 1990) and topic (Yates and Orlikowski, 1992), they were considered a single genre, however, when the communicative purpose or intention changed, the emails were identified as another genre (Hasan, 1977). That is, as genre is "consistencies in the communicative

purposes" (Bhatia, 1993, 2004; Swales, 1990), the four identified patterns are four types of email genres that convey different communicative purposes. In this sense, the 136 email messages that intended to 'discuss issues' were named 'discussing genre'. The 125 email messages that intended to 'request-respond to request' were named 'enquiry genre'. The 64 emails that 'indicated enclosure' and included an attachment were named 'delivery genre'. The 53 email messages that intended to 'inform about issues' were named 'informing genre'. The following sections present more details about the four types of genres in the email messages.

6.1.1 Discussion Email Genre

The discussion email genre was used to negotiate issues. The writer of the first email, '*initiating email'*, establishes the discussion or the negotiation by presenting an issue that he/she wants to address. In reply, the addressee responds by giving suggestions, explanations, clarifications, or his personal point of view regarding the issue. This response may seal the communication, however, if the writer of the initiating email was not clear enough or wanted more clarification, he replies, which creates a chain or a thread of out-going and in-coming emails till the communicators reach an agreement regarding the issue. The length of the chains varied from 3 to 9 email messages.

The structural pattern of this type of email genre included nine rhetorical moves that were three content and six framing moves. The content moves included an obligatory move that carried the communicative purpose of the email genre message, 'discussing issues' (move 5); an intertextual reiterational move that linked the email to previous contacts or communicative events, 'referring to previous contact' (move

4); and a supporting reiterational move that further explained the main communicative move, 'providing extra information' (move 6). The framing moves included an obligatory move that stands as the reference of the email, 'identifying topic' (move 1); the optional 'salutation' (move 2) and 'closing' (move 8) moves, which intended to express politeness and give deference; the optional 'signature' (move 9) move that intended to create credibility; and two reiterational framing moves that were the 'opening (move 3) and 'pre-closing' (move 7) moves, which also intended to express politeness and give deference (see Table 6.1 below).

Table 6.1: Generic structure of discussion email genre

No	Moves	Occurrences	Percentage
1	Identifying topic	136	100%
2	Salutation	118	86%
3	Opening	12	9%
4	Referring to previous contact	24	18%
5	**Discussing issues**	**136**	**100%**
6	Providing extra information/ further explaining issue	20	15%
7	Pre-closing	35	26%
8	Closing	124	91%
9	Signature	132	96%

In regard to register variation, discussion email genre messages were mainly 'situation-dependent', which was reflected in the excessive use of time and place adverbials (Biber, 1988, 1995). The writers were mainly "involved" in the discourse, which was reflected in the use of first and second person pronouns, hedges, private verbs, and modal verbs. The writers also used "narrative" and "non-narrative" discourse, which was reflected in the use of third person pronouns, simple present and simple past tenses and public verbs (Biber, 1988, 1995). The occurrence of demonstrative pronouns was also common, which reflects an "on-line informational" "not edited" discourse (Biber, 1988, 1995). Additionally, the occurrence of possibility modals and suasive verbs in discussion email genre reflected "overtly argumentative" discourse (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The main content move that carried the communicative purpose of this email genre was 'discussing issues' (move 5) move, which is an obligatory move (Hasan, 1977) that occurred in all discussion email genre messages. As the writer of the email seeks an opinion, suggestion or clarification, this move was an active move that encouraged the addressee to participate. This was perceived by the use of declarative mood sentences, public verbs (i.e., provide, explain), private verbs (i.e., want, wish, hope, need, appreciate), nominals (i.e., explanation, suggestion, clarification) and interrogatives (i.e., what do you think? would it be better to…) to indicate the required action (Ching, 2011). The provided explanations, suggestions, clarifications were based either on solid information or the personal opinion of the writer; this was reflected in the excessive use of hedges in this type of email genre (i.e., I guess, I am sure, perhaps, it seems, it appears). The writers of this type of email genre discussed several issues including granting exemptions, extensions on assignments, setting the marking scheme, filling the marking sheet, setting timetables, preparing exam papers, texts books selection, late registrations, arrangements to pay fees, etc.

> **Ex 6.1: 3.14.** With regard to the examination questions, this is a suggestion, would it be better to have a section each for E-marketing & Entrepreneurship with perhaps 4 questions in each section and students will select 2 questions from each section.
>
> **Ex 6.2: 5.37.** I just want some more clarifications regarding Cho xxx xxxx exemption. According to your explanation, she cannot continue in diploma 2 because she did not complete diploma 1. But…
>
> **Ex 6.3: 3.126.** I have misunderstood that submission for the're do' assignment was after Research Method assignment. Can I submit the assignment now or how do I go about it. Please advise.
>
> **Ex 6.4:6.42.** In terms of text, the Unit Description makes mention of Legge. Legge is a bit general. Another text that can be considered is Human Resource Management: International Perspectives (ISBN 9780826468246)

The cognitive strategy of 'discussing issues' move is negotiating institutional or academic issues. In example (6.1), the writer, who is the head of studies, suggests to the lecturer of the module a mechanism to prepare the final exam paper. The head of

studies emphasized that the given opinion is a '*suggestion'*, that is open for discussion and that the recipient of the email may agree about the suggested mechanism or otherwise suggest his own. The writer also used two hedges, *'would'* and *'perhaps'*, which reflect involved production (Biber, 1988), to show indirectness in her approach. This pragmatic politeness provides options to the addressee and also indicates that the given suggestion is open for discussion.

In example (6.2) above, the writer intends to further discuss the issue. Obviously, this email is a reply to a previous email discussing the granting of exemptions. In previous email, clarifications were given regarding exemptions, however, the writer of this email still not clear and he seeks *'some more clarifications'* regarding the issue. As mentioned earlier, discussion email genre messages belong to chains or threads that varied in length from three to nine email messages. This move was named 'discussing issues' move as the exchange of emails elaborating on an issue is comparable to oral discussions that include turn-taking. The writer of the first email presents an issue or seeks an opinion. In reply, the recipient provides a suggestion or a clarification that may seal the discussion, or otherwise, the exchange of email continues till they reach an agreement.

In example (6.3) above, the writer used the "collocated phrase" (Ching, 2011, p 577) *'please advise'* to solicit the action. The writer of this email has obviously *'misunderstood'* the procedures and asks for clarifications. She explained the issue and probed for clarifications from the recipient. The use of the suasive verb *'advise'* indicates the required action from the addressee (Quirk et al., 1985). The use of public and suasive verbs was a common practice in the 'discussing issues' move,

which reflect narrative discourse (Biber, 1995, 1988). The writers used *'advise'*, *'provide'*, *'explain'*, *'clarify'* and *'require'* as part of collocated phrases to solicit actions, which reflects narrative discourse (Biber, 1988). As mentioned earlier, discussing moves were active moves that encouraged participation.

In example (6.4) above, the writer, who is a lecturer, discusses with the head of studies the textbook that will be used in one of the modules. In previous email, the head of studies sent the module outline that was prepared earlier. The lecturer, in this email, provides his input. After going through the model description, he recommended another possible textbook for the given module. The use of *'can be considered'* implies that it is merely a suggestion. The modal *'can'* is an epistemic modality that indicates possibility as there are other options that could be *'considered'* (Biber et al., 1999).

The 'discussing issues' move could be an initiative, in which the writer presents an issue that he/she wants to discuss, or a reply, in which the writer gives his/her suggestions or explanations. The use of the move in chains or threads discussing an issue is comparable to turn-taking in oral discussions. The length of chain depended on reaching an agreement regarding the discussed issue (see chain 6.1 below).

CHAIN 6.1:

A: I collected my timetable from Ms. ZA today. I wanted to see you, but you were not around. Why three modules in three days lah! Can we have it in two days? I mean can we have the Introduction to marketing on Tuesday afternoon. 2-5 is ok with me.
B: You teach diploma 4. This semester they have five modules only. According to MOHE, students need to come to college at least four times a week. I allocated the other two modules on Wednesday and Thursday.
A: You know I have other commitments in other colleges, so it is difficult for me to come three days to the college to teach three modules only. in this case I have to cancel other classes, which is no good for me., I may come two days and Ms. NY come the other two days, it is fair, isn't?
B: I talked to Ms. Ms. NY. She agreed. Your new timetable will be Intro. To Business (Mon 10-1), Business Strategies (Tue 10-1) and Introduction to Marketing (Tue 2-5). ok
A: Thank you Sir, ☺

In this chain, the lecturer is not happy with the timetable because he needs to come to the institution three days a week to teach three modules. He wants the assistant academic director to change the timetable to place his modules on two days. The discussion was carried out in five email messages. Examining the cognitive aspects in the exchanges shows that the communicators used several strategies to communicate their messages. In the first message, for example, even though the part-time lecturer used a number of interrogative forms to question the decision made by the assistant academic director, he tried to weaken the effect of the interrogative by using the discourse marker *'lah'*. The use of discourse markers, according to Matisiff (1991), facilitates the communication of emotional attitude and contributes to the degree of politeness. It is a "habit or common practice to make the sentence sound better" (Keong et al., 2012). In the second email, the writer backed his decision by referring to the rules and regulations the MOHE sets. This strategy of referring to the rules and regulations is a common practice in the institution. It is usually used as a convincing strategy to show the addressee that the writer has little or nothing to do regarding the issue. In the third email, the writer used the personal approach to influence the decision of the assistant academic director. He referred to his other commitments and that he needs to cancel other classes. The use of this strategy intended to make the recipient of the email change his mind. Obviously, this strategy worked and the assistant academic director agreed to change the timetable, after discussing the issue with the other lecturer. In the last email, the writer used an emoticon or a smiley to show emotional tone. The use of this strategy in this email intended to simulate a face-to-face non-verbal communication technique (Krohn, 2004).

The discussion email genre dealt with past, present and future issues. This is reflected in the use of tenses, which reflects involved and narrative production (Biber, 1995). Email writers mainly used past tense to refer to remote actions, *'I collected my timetable'* (chain 6.1above); present perfect tense to refer to the current relevance, *'I have understood'* (example 6.3 above); simple present to refer to immediate relevance *'you teach diploma 1'* (chain 6.1 above); and simple future tense to refer to upcoming events or actions *'the students will select 2 questions'* (example 6.1 above) (Biber , 1988; Quirk et al., 1985). These tenses were written mainly in the active voice, which reflects giving information and direct involvement between the communicators (Biber, 1988). This involvement was also apparent in the excessive use of first, *'I'*, second, '*you'*, and third, *'he/she'*, person singular pronouns (see chain 6.1 above).

The use of the 'discussing issues' move in discussion email genre was supported by two reiterational content moves that are the 'referring to previous contact' (move 4) and 'providing extra information' (move 6) moves. In regard to 'referring to previous contact' move, the writers mainly referred to previous email messages, faxes, letters, face-to-face conversations or meetings or telephone calls. It was used mainly in the 'initiating email' to link the email message to a previous point of contact or communicative event.

Ex 6.5: 5.61. According to the letter, ...

In example (6.5 above), for instance, the writer used the adverbial subordinate *'according to…'* to link the upcoming discussion to the previous event of receiving the letter. That is, the use of *'according to'* in this email meant to place the email in its context.

‘Providing extra information’ content move (move 6) is also a reiterational content move in discussion email genre that occurred in 15 percent of the discussion email genre messages. It functions as a supporting move that intends to elaborate on the main communicative purpose of the message. This move was not common in discussion email genre messages as the discussions were usually a straight-forward exchange of ideas regarding issues arising daily. The occurrence of this move in this type of email genre depended on the topic of the email. If the email was regarding a personal suggestion or explanation, the writers mainly depended on the ‘discussing issues’ move alone; however, if the suggestion or clarification was based on the rules and regulations, policies, or formal procedures and processes, the writers further explained their stand using this supporting move, as in example 6.6 below. In example (6.6), the writer in the ‘discussing issues’ move gave suggestions regarding an academic issue raised by the head of studies. The writer explained that making changes to the guidelines of the degree had to be made duly and should be agreed upon by the ‘staff’ (lecturers and head of department). As such, the writer suggested that in the *‘next staff course meeting’,* the head of the department has to table the issue and seek approval to revise *‘the degree guidelines’* officially and duly so that they allow two options ‘EITHER..,OR..’. The capitalization here did not mean ‘*shouting’* as suggested by Turnage (2007). It meant to emphasis a point. At this stage of the email, the writer presented his opinion or suggestion regarding the issue. In the ‘providing extra information’ move, the writer further explained the procedures that needed to be taken. This was carried out using declarative active voice sentences to provide information, and if-clause and modal verbs to clarify the possibilities or obligations. As in the ‘discussing issues’ move, the writers made use of public verbs (write, give, require, attach, discuss, report, confirm) to provide

information and solicit actions. This move also included explaining and clarifying possibilities or reporting obligations, which was carried out using modal verbs (can, may, shall, must), conditionals (if-clause), and explaining options (either-or).

Ex 6.6: 3.45 **Discussing academic issues** **Provide extra information**	Dear BP, I suggest that at the next staff course meeting you consider revising the degree guidelines to allow students to EITHER follow all four of the pathway modules OR to elect to substitute one module (to the value 10 credits) from another pathway. The staff can decide whether such an adjustment makes sense. If they decide to go with a modification of the elective taught part of the degree then it will be appropriate to record this at the subsequent Joint Board of Studies with the external examiners.

In addition to these three content moves, the writers of discussion email genre used six framing moves. The 'identifying topic' move (Move 1) in this type of email genre was an obligatory move that reflects the communicative purpose. The writers used clearly informative, broadly informative and uninformative identifying topic moves in this type of email genre. Interestingly, the actual use of these three clusters of identifying topic moves in the discussion email genre reflected awareness about the importance and the value of the message. The emails sent to the governmental authorities, MOHE and MQA, and external partners mainly included clearly informative identifying topic moves. The emails that were sent to students included clearly and broadly informative moves. However, the majority of the instances of using the uninformative move mainly occurred in internally exchanged emails. This reflects the reluctance of employees to state the subject of the internally sent discussion email genre messages.

In regard to the use of 'salutation' (move 2) and 'opening' (move 3) moves, the writers used formal '*Dear Mr. name'*, informal '*Hi name'* and unconventional '*Hi*

Mr. name' salutations. Interestingly, the writers mainly used formal salutation in the first email; the variation occurred in the following email messages as the writers used informal, conversational or even no salutation at all. As in the 'identifying topic' move, the use of the 'salutation' move depended on the institutional activity or professional practice. That is, the emails that were sent to MOHE and MQA regarding 'accreditation' and external partner regarding 'collaboration' mainly included formal salutations. The emails sent to students included formal and informal salutations. The emails that were exchanged in the institution, however, included formal, informal, unconventional, and conversational or even no salutation depending on power relations and social distance. Superiors and close colleagues had the lowest rate of using formal salutation and the highest rate of using informal, conversational or no salutation in discussion email genre messages, especially in the embedded emails. They usually used a salutation in the 'initiating' email and first reply email; as the chain grew longer, however, the variation in using salutations occurred. The conversational nature of discussion email genre was also noticed in the usage of the 'opening' reiterational move. The 'opening' move occurred 19 times in the entire corpus, 16 of which were in the discussion email genre. The openings were mainly informal conversational greetings such as '*how are you?', 'Good day', or 'I hope you are well'* that merely intended to establish rapport with the recipient.

As the writers of discussion email genre used two greeting moves, they also used two closing moves that were the 'pre-closing' reiterational move (move 12) and the 'closing' optional move (move 8). Examining the use of the closing move shows that the interactants used two main closing markers that are '*regards'* and *'thank you*'. In addition to these two main closing markers, the interactants used a large number of

irregular closing markers that were mainly informal closings. The majority of irregular informal closings occurred in the internally exchanged discussion email genre messages.

As the frequent exchange of emails in discussion email genre influenced the formality of the salutations, it also influenced the formality of the closing markers. The writers mainly used proper closing markers in the 'initiating' email and the first reply email; the variation, however, occurred in the following email exchanges in the chain. The writers in the 'embedded email' (Gimenez, 2005) used fewer closing markers and more minimizations such as *'rgds'* for *'regard'* and *'tq'* for *'thank you'*. Obviously, the frequent exchange of emails makes the communication more of a computer-mediated conversation (i.e., on-line chitchat) than a proper email message (Hancock, 2004). This latter point was apparent in the several typographical errors such as spelling mistakes and errant use of lower case, which reflected the writers' reluctance to proofread or edit the email. These features, however, mainly occurred in internally exchanged emails. The externally exchanged emails, however, always included proper closing markers.

Examining the use of the 'pre-closing' reiterational move (move 8) in discussion email genre messages shows that, unlike the use of 'salutations', 'openings' or the 'identifying topic' moves that highly depended on the direction of the messages, power relations and/or the social distance, the pre-closing move depended more on the ethnicity of email writers. The majority of the 'thank you' pre-closing moves were used by Malay (45 percent), Chinese Malaysian (30 percent) and Indian Malaysian (20 percent) employees. The Jordanian lecturer wrote the remaining 5

percent. Interestingly, the emails sent by the British partners did not include a 'pre-closing' move.

The last move used in the discussion email genre is the 'signature' move (move 9). The main function of this move is creating credibility. The writers used two different types of signatures, which were the auto signature and the signing off using the first name. Auto signatures usually included the writers' full name, position, the name of the organization, full address, and contact details. Noticeably, the signing off using the first name was common in internally sent emails. The use of the auto signature, however, was common in externally sent emails. Even though the auto signature appears instantly when composing or replying to a correspondence, several employees deleted the auto signature in internally sent emails. Ms. BP, for example, mainly used the auto signature when writing to external contacts. All her internally exchanged emails, however, were signed off using her first name. Given that the emails were exchanged regarding academic and organizational issues, the name, position, organization, and contact details of the sender are significant as a method of determining the eligibility of the sender to have access to the given information. However, as the employees of the institution know each other, the first name of the sender is enough of an identifying strategy.

6.1.2 Enquiry Email Genre

Enquiry email genre was the second most common type of email genre in the corpus. It occurred in 125 email messages. The generic structure (Hasan, 1977) or the structuring pattern (Biber et al., 2007) of this type of email genre included nine rhetorical moves that were three content and six framing moves. The main content

move that carries the communicative purpose of this type of genre is the obligatory 'requesting-responding to request' super move (move 5). It is a request-reply strategy. The main purpose of including these two sub moves in a single super move is the contextual practice of occurrence of these two moves in the corpus. These two sub moves occur in two different email messages, however, the occurrence of the request in an email almost always created another correspondence in another email that included the response sub move. The other two content moves are the reiterational 'referring to previous contact' (move 4) and the reiterational 'providing extra information' (move 6) moves. The framing moves included the semi-obligatory 'identifying topic' (move 1), the optional 'salutation' (move 2), 'closing' (move 8) and 'signature' (move 9) moves and the reiterational 'opening' (move 3) and pre-closing (move 7) move (see Table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2: Generic structure of enquiry email genre

No	**Moves**	**Occurrences (out of 125 emails)**	**Percentage of occurrence**
1	Identifying topic	124	99%
2	Salutation	98	79%
3	Opening	1	1%
4	Referring to issue/contact	17	13%
5	**Requesting-responding to request**	**125**	**100%**
6	Providing extra information/ explaining issue	10	15%
7	Pre-closing	18	20%
8	Closing	100	80%
9	Signature	115	92%

In regard to register variation, enquiry email genre messages were mainly written in an involved style as the use of first and second person pronouns, simple present tense, hedges, private verbs, modal verbs and 'wh' questions were a common practice. As the discussion email genre, enquiry email genre was situation-dependent as the use of time and place adverbials was a common practice; this also reflects "informational production" (Biber, 1988, 1995). The requesting sub move included

narrative and non-narrative discourse, as the use of simple past, simple present and public verbs was common practice in this move. Additionally, the enquiry email genre included on-line informational and overtly argumentative styles, as the use of demonstrative pronouns and possibility modals was a common practice (Biber, 1988, 1995).

Table 6.3: Direct and indirect requests in enquiry email genre

Requests	**Examples**	**Frequency of occurrence**
Direct Requests		**56%**
Imperative	[Please] give the exact number of students	39%
Interrogative	How many copies I need to make for semester 2 and 3? Do you have a USN for him?	17%
Indirect Requests		**44%**
Conditionals	If the student is a new student, kindly indicate this next to the student's name.	13%
Desire statement	I would like to have valid reason why you did not attend the BRM.	5%
Need statement	I need the result summary of Abe/TTH April 2010 examination for updating the student information.	4%
Modal initial	Could you please send me either the password or the unprotected document.	19%
Passive voice	It would be appreciated if you could assist me with checking the payment for our External Examiner Mr Rxxx.	3%

The main cognitive intention of the 'requesting' move is soliciting an action or information from the addressee. To achieve this, the writers make use of direct and indirect requests. The direct requests included the use of interrogatives and imperatives, whereas the indirect requests included the use of conditionals, desire statement, obligatory statements, modal initials and the passive construction of the request (see Table 6.3 above). In regard to direct requests, the imperative mood occurred in 25 instances, which is 39 percent of the total. Even though the use of imperative is the most direct requesting technique, email writers almost always used a politeness marker in front of the imperative, which softened the imposition. The writers used *'please'*, *'kindly'* or *'please kindly'* to weaken the impact of the direct

imperative in 99 percent of imperative requests. According to Treece (1994), the usage of *'kindly'* is conventional in business communication as it is formal and polite, whereas the usage of *'please'* is less formal and mainly occurs in oral correspondence (Angell and Heslop, 1999; Stubbs, 1983). In the emails, however, the conventional practice was the usage of *'please'* as it occurred in 18 out of the 24 direct imperative requests comprising a politeness marker. The remaining six instances were preceded by *'kindly'* (2 instances) and *'please kindly'* (4 instances). It is perceived that the use of the double mitigation in *'please kindly'* intended to reflect more politeness.

The use of interrogative was an uncommon practice as it occurred in 11 enquiry email genre messages. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the usage of the interrogative requests may occur in task-oriented communication where face threatening is not relevant. The 11 direct interrogative requests were 6 'wh' questions and 5 'yes/no' questions. According to Schiffrin (1987), yes/no questions give two options, while 'wh' questions states the type of information needed, which gives a wider possibility. In practice, however, it appears that the 'yes/no question' in the table above is an extended question. That is, if the answer was affirmative, the writer of the email expected the addressee to provide the 'USN' number.

In regard to indirect requests, the use of modal initials has the highest frequency as it occurred in 12 requests, which was 19 percent of the requests. According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), the modal initial requests are conventional indirect requests. The use of *'could'* and *'would'* intends to prepare the addressee and softens the imposition. Investigating modal initial requests in the email messages shows that the

requests were both self and other oriented. The personal pronoun *'I'* in *'could I know the exact number?'*, for example, may refer to the self or the organizational *'we'* (Kankaanranta, 2005; Yli-Jokipii, 1994). '*Could you please send ...'*, however, is other-oriented, where '*you'* refers to the addressee. The majority of the modal initial indirect requests were other-oriented. This means that email writers mainly stated the required action or information from the addressee.

The second most popular type of indirect requests is the conditional requests. The conditional requests refer to the requests that are accumulated with specific conditions (Kankaanranta, 2005). The conditional requests in the emails included an imperative form that was either preceded or followed by a conditional clause that stated the specific condition. In '*If the student is a new student, kindly indicate this next to the student's name'*, for example, the writer requested an indication next to the name of the new students. As returning students or the students who sat for the external exam already have a file in the database, she requested an indication next to the name of the new students so that she would add them to the database. The imperative form in this type of requests was always preceded by a politeness marker such as '*please'* or '*kindly'*.

The writers of the emails also used the desire and obligatory statements indirect requests. They occurred in 5 percent (4 instances) and 4 percent (3 instances) of the requests respectively. The difference between these two types of requests is that the desire statement requests expresses the '*want'* of the addresser as in *'I would like to..'* and *'I want..'*, while the need statement requests, however, expresses the obligation or the need of the addresser as in *'I need…'*. Previous researchers coded

the want statement and need statements requests as direct requests (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989; Biesenbach-Lucas, 2006, 2007) and indirect request (Iwai and Rinnert, 2001; Kim and Bresnahan, 1994; Rinnert and Kobayashi, 1999; Trosborg, 1995). The main purpose of coding them as indirect requests in this study is that low imposition was found in the structuring of the statements. In the want statement, the writers of three out of the four want statements requests hedged their statement using the modal '*would'* as in '*I would like to know the exact number of students'*. The use of the expression '*I would like*', which is typical in business communication (Bovée et al., 2003), softens the request and makes more of an "inferred request" (Garvey, 1974, p. 47). The use of the need statements in the emails, however, were considered to be indirect requests as they were interpreted as hints (Iwai and Rinnert, 2001; Rose, 1996; Weizman, 1993) that expresses the addresser's state of affair as in *'I need the result summary of Abe/TTH April 2010 examination'.* The writer here did not directly request the result summary, he, nevertheless, expressed his '*need'* and left it to the addressee to work out the implied.

In addition, the writers of the email messages used the passive construction indirect requests. The use of passive voice, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is a negative politeness strategy as it impersonalizes the speaker and/or the hearer. The deletion of the agent in passive voice requests could be interpreted as avoiding reference to the agent involved in the face-threatening act (FTA). The use of passive construction indirect requests was not a popular practice in this move as it occurred only in three email messages. In *'It would be appreciated if you could',* for instance, the writer deleted the reference to himself to impersonalize the request. The passive voice was followed by a conditional, which provides options to the addressee.

Even though the use of direct requests is more common than indirect requests in the email messages, the textualization of requests reflects email writers' tendency to save the face of the addressees (Goffman, 1956). This is reflected in the use of politeness markers in front of 24 out of the 25 direct imperative requests. The use of a politeness marker in front of the imperative was regarded as a polite enough request in business communication (Ng, 2003; Nickerson, 1999).

Examining the 'responding to request' sub-move shows that the writers comprehended the requestive nature of the requesting move. They mainly replied to the direct and indirect requests using declarative active voice sentences, which represents giving information (Biber, 1995). In case the request was regarding a file or document, the writers sent the file as an attachment. In the content of the email, they usually wrote a requesting-type-directing phrase to divert the attention of the addressee to the attached file. (See 6.7 & 6.8 below.)

> **Ex 6.7:** 4.4. The welcome packs were sent on the 22nd of April. It usually takes three weeks to arrive.
>
> **Ex 6.8:** 6.37. Please find the handouts for the class on 18 May 2010 attached.

A first look at example (6.7) above may imply that the move is an informing move. However, examining the email in its context reveals that this move was written in response to a requesting email. The requesting email was written by Ms. MA who requested the '*welcome packs'* for the new students. As such, this email is not an initiative; it is a reply. The use of passive voice in the first sentence intended to foreground the action. In example (6.8) above, however, the writer used the imperative form to respond to the request. In the requestive email, the writer, who is the administrative staff in the department of studies, requested that the lecturer send the hand-outs for a specific class. It is a regulation in the institution that lecturers

send the hand-outs to the respective department at least three days before the lecture so that the administrative staff has have enough time to photocopy them. Thus, in response to the requesting email, the lecturer sent the hand-outs for the specific class. The use of imperative in this email is a requesting-like-directing phrase that intended to shift the attention of the recipient from the content into the attached file.

Ex 6.9:1.65	From: DS Date: Mon, May 25, 2010 at 11:48 AM Subject: Re: June 2010 QP To: Leo Cc: MA; VK> Dear Ms. Ch, Requesting a document: Please kindly e-mail me ASAP the Excel marksheet. Providing more information: The deadline for submission of all the marked NCC projects and marked answer scripts, Turnitin scans and Marksheets is 28 May 2010

In support of the 'requesting' or 'responding to request' moves, the writers, at times, used the reiterational 'providing extra information' move (move 6). This move occurred in 10 enquiry email genre messages either to explain the purpose after the request or to provide extra information about the provided file or document. As such, the 'providing extra information' move in enquiry email genre messages was used as a stating motive and an elaborating-on-issues strategy. In example (6.9) above, which is a requesting email, the writer requested the 'excel marksheet' from the addressee. Obviously, the writer is eager to receive the requested document and this can be noticed in the use of the double politeness marker *'please kindly'* and the abbreviation *'ASAP'* (as soon as possible). To state the purpose of the request, the writer 'provided extra information' stating his motive. As the automatically generated 'date' entry in the formatting of the email shows, the email was sent on the 25th of May, and the deadline for submitting the marked and scanned assignments is the 28th of May as stated in the email. By providing this extra information, the writer showed the urgency of sending the file the soonest possible.

As in the discussion email genre, the writers of the enquiry email genre also made use of the reiterational 'referring to previous contact' intertextual move (move 4). The reference in this type of email genre was mainly in the 'requesting' email as in *'with reference to your email, please…'*. The writers mainly used formulaic expressions to refer to email messages and link them to the current correspondence. They mainly used the adverbial subordinates *'with reference to…'* and *'according to …'*. In example (6.10) below, the writer sent the given email in order to 'forward' a document. It is apparent that the recipient of this email had sent an email earlier to the sender of this email to request a file. In return, the writer of this email linked the previous event of requesting to the current event of forwarding the file.

Ex 6.10: 1.1. With reference to your e-mail, I now forward..

Ex 6.11: 6.70. As per your email, attached is...

In addition to using adverbial subordinates, the writers also used the compound preposition *'as per'* to link previous contact to current action. In example (6.11) above, the writer used the linguistic construct *'As per your email, attached is..'* to link the request in previous email message with the action of the current email message. This suggests that the addressee has requested the attached files in the requesting email.

In relation to the framing structure of enquire email genre messages, the writers, as in discussion email genre, used six framing moves. The use of the 'identifying topic' move was a semi-obligatory in this type of email genre as it occurred in 99 percent of messages, which reflects the importance of identifying the subject of the enquiry in this type of email genre. However, as in discussion email genre messages, this move was also clearly informative, broadly informative and uninformative. The majority of emails that included the broadly informative and uninformative identifying topic

moves dealt with the ‘internal staff-related issues’ identified in the ethnographic perspective analysis. The emails that were sent to governmental authorities, external partners, and the majority of the emails that were sent to students mainly included clearly informative ‘identifying topic’ move. This reflects the influence of who writes to whom regarding what factors (Bhatia, 1993) on the appropriateness of the ‘identifying topic’ move in this type of email genre message.

In regard to the ‘salutation’ move, the frequency of using salutations in enquiry email genre messages was the lowest among the four types of email genres (79 percent). Enquiry email genre messages had the longest list of salutation markers in the four types of email genres. The interactants used fifteen different salutations that were nine regular and six irregular that occurred a single time each. These salutations were formal, *‘Dear Name’*, informal, *‘Hi name’*, unconventional *‘Dear Mr. Name’* and conversational, *‘Good morning’*. The overwhelming majority of formal salutation markers were used in the externally exchanged email, whereas the majority of the informal and conversation markers occurred in the internally exchanged emails. This reflects the influence of the direction of the messages (internally or externally exchanged) and relating factors (power relations and social distance) on the use and the preferred choice of the salutation move. It is noted that, if the requester was a superior writing to a close colleagues, the preferred choice was either a no salutation or an informal salutation; if the requester was a superior requesting from a distant colleague, the preferred choice was a more formal salutation. On the other hand, if the requester was a subordinate requesting from a close colleague superior, the choice was mainly informal or the use of *‘Mr. name’*, whereas if the requester was a

subordinate requesting from a distant superior, the main choice was a formal salutation *'Dear Mr. name'* or *'Dear name'*.

Ex 6.12: 3.32. (Superior, close colleague, frequently **Fw:** PENGESAHAN NAMA KURSUS Monday, 14 June, 2010 11:49:47 AM From: BP TO: Iff Please translate and give me the synopsis. Thanks Auto signature	**Ex 6.13: 3.50**. *(Superior, distant colleague, frequently)* *Fw: failure to attend the Business Research Module* *Monday, 10 May, 2010 3:06:35 PM* *From: "BP* *To: "* <IFF Dear Shu I would like to have valid reason why you Kindly respond to this email asap. Auto Signature

The emails in example (6.12) and example (6.13) were written by the same employee who is the superior of the two recipients. As the coding on the top of the email shows, the sender and both recipients frequently send to and receive emails from each other. However, the choice of salutation is different. In example (6.12), the subordinate is a close colleague to the superior, which make the superior feel freer to send an attachment to the recipient requesting a *'translation and synopsis'* without using any salutation or opening. In example (6.13), however, the recipient is a distant colleague, which makes the sender's choice a formal salutation, *'Dear Name'*, and more polite content when making the request. This shows that the writers of enquiry email genre messages were more formal and polite to distant colleagues than they were to close colleagues. This helps explain the excessive use of formal salutations in the emails that were sent to distant colleagues, external partners and authorities.

In regard to the closing moves in enquiry email genre, the use of *'Thank you'* and *'regards'* were the most common closing markers. As enquiry email genre messages includes two moves, 'the request' and 'the response', the use of the closing move in enquiry email genre messages highly depended on the sub-type of the enquiry

message. Most 'requesting' sub-type messages included *'thank you'* as a closing marker, whereas most 'responding to request' sub-type enquiry genre messages included *'regards'*. The cognitive practice of the choice is quite comprehensible. As the request sub-type was initiated to ask or enquire about issues, the requester felt the need, as a polite person, to thank the recipient for his/her help or information, in advance. However, as the response included the requested information, the respondent felt the need to seal the correspondence neutrally mainly using *'Regards'* or sometimes a *'thank you'* in response to the initial thanking move.

The emails in (6.14) and (6.15) below are a chain of request-response enquiry genre messages. Obviously, the head of studies sends the *'assignments of the BABA program'* to the examiners '*for approval*', before delivering them to the students. She closed the email using '*Many Thanks*' as a way of showing appreciation in advance. In response, as example (6.15) shows, one of the examiners approved the assignments with *'no comments*', which seals the whole correspondence regarding the matter. In order to close the email and the whole chain, the external examiner used *'Regards'*, which is a relatively formal and neutral closing marker as it simply shows respect.

Ex 6.14: 3.10. Superior, expertise, monthly**)** **Subject:** assignments for approval Dear Examiners Assignments for the BABA programme for your approval. Many Thanks BP Auto Signature	**Ex 6.15:** 3.11. (Subordinate, expertise, monthly) RE: assignments for approval The assignments are fine with me and I have no comments. Regards Andrew

The use of the optional ‘signature’ move (move 9) was a quite common move in enquiry email genre as it occurred in 92 percent of the email messages. As in the use of this move in the discussion email genre, the writers mainly used the first name signature in the internally sent emails as the first name is a good enough identifying strategy among the employees, but an auto signature was used in the externally sent email. The use of the auto signature, which includes the full name, institutional position, name of institution and contact details of the sender, in the externally exchanged email meant to reflect on the requester’s eligibility to have access to the requested information and respondent’s eligibility to give such information. This is particularly important especially in the institutional context as circulating or having access to certain information is governed by the organizational positions of the employees.

6.1.3 Delivery Email Genre

Delivery email genre was used mainly as a method to send, deliver or provide files, examination papers, assignments and documents. The writers of this email genre used ten rhetorical moves that are four content and six framing moves. The content moves included the obligatory ‘indicating enclosure’ (move 4) move, which carried the main intention of this type of email genre, the optional ‘providing extra information’ (move 5), the reiterational ‘requesting confirming receipt’ (move 7) and the reiterational ‘offering help if needed’ (move 6) moves. The six framing moves are the obligatory ‘identifying topic’ move (move 1), three optional moves that are ‘salutation’ (move 2), ‘closing’ (move 9) and ‘signature’ (move 10) moves, and two reiterational framing moves that are the ‘opening’ (move 3) and ‘pre-closing’ (move 8) moves (see Table 6.4 below).

Table 6.4: Generic structure of delivery email genre

No	Moves	Occurrences (out of 64 emails)	Percentage of occurrence
1	Identifying topic	64	100%
2	Salutation	51	80%
3	Opening	1	1%
4	**Indicating enclosure**	**64**	**100%**
5	Providing extra information/ further explaining issue	27	42%
6	Offering help if needed	12	19%
7	Requesting confirming receipt	7	10%
8	Pre-closing	7	10%
9	Closing	51	80%
10	Signature	55	85%

With respect to register variation, delivery email genre messages were mainly written in a non-narrative style as the use of present tense verbs was a common practice. The occurrence of place adverbials as in *'hereby'* and *'herewith'* in this email genre also reflected informational production and situational-depended reference (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The main content move that carries the communicative intention of this email genre is the 'indicating enclosure' (move 4). This move is an obligatory move in all delivery email genre messages. The main function of this move is diverting the attention of the recipient to the attached file. The employees mainly used two formulaic styles to indicate enclosure that are the use of 'please plus activity verb' and the 'passive voice using nominals as a subject'. Some of the indicating enclosure moves, however, included simple present declarative sentences. The average word count of this move, which is six words, was the shortest among all the content moves in the corpus. The shortest move was two words *'find attached'*, while the longest move was twenty-two words.

Ex 6.16: 3.73. ex-students mailing letters
Monday, 17 May, 2010 4:35:56 PM
Please find attached

The constructs *'Please find attached'* and *'enclosed please find'* were used in more than 70 percent of the 'indicating enclosure' moves. They appeared in 31 and 19 email messages respectively. Their use created horizontal intertextuality (Johnstone, 2008) because they referred to attached files and documents. The overwhelming majority of the emails that included *'please find attached'* did not include any explanation about the nature of the file (see example 6.16 above). That is, this move was the only content move in the body of the email. To find out the nature of the attached file, the recipient had to refer to the obligatory 'identifying topic' move (move 1) in the subject box of the email that always was a clearly informative move in this type of email genre messages. As example (6.16) shows, the writer used the formulaic construct *'please find attached'* to divert the attention of the recipient to the attached file. The content of the email did not include any explanation about the nature of the attachment. The 'identifying topic' move, however, presented a clear description about the attached file, which is regarding the mailing letters of ex-students. This is the practice in the majority of the email messages that included *'please find attached'* as an indicating enclosure content move.

> **Ex 6.17:** 3.65. Enclosed please find a compilation of the University of XXX External Examiners Moderators' reports.
>
> **Ex 6.18:** 6.13. Enclosed please find the following revised documents:
> 1. Minutes of the Joint Board of studies meeting
> 2. Minutes of the Exam Board 2010
> 3. ACCR for MBA
> 4. ACCR for BABA

The use of the 'passive voice using nominals as a subject' linguistic construct (Ching, 2011), *'enclosed please find'*, however, was always followed by a brief explanation about the file or the list of the files that were attached. In example (6.17) above, the writer gave an explanation about nature of the attached file, whereas in

example (6.18) above, he provided the list of the attached files. This strategy is comparable to the '*enclosure'* section in professional business letters (Ching, 2011).

In addition to these two formulaic expressions of using a hidden second person, the writers of the emails also used active voice declarative sentences to indicate enclosure. As example (6.19) below shows, the writer '*forwarded'* the announcement as an attachment. The use of the simple present tense in this sentence shows the immediate relevance of the action (Biber, 1995). The use of the adverb '*hereby'* stands as a formality marker to give an official status for the forwarded announcement. That is, the forwarded announcement should be taken as an official notification regarding the *'electronic submission of ICCS moderation samples'*.

> **Ex 6.19**: 1.20. I hereby forward the announcement on the electronic submission of ICCS moderation samples

Delivery email genre messages were written mainly by the heads of department, lecturers and administrative staff to deliver timetables, reports, exam papers, exam results, marking schemes, marking sheets, and a number of official documents to external partners, governmental authorities, students or fellow staff members. Unlike 'discussing issues' and 'requesting and responding to requests' moves that encouraged participation, the 'indicating enclosure' move was mainly passive in relation to involvement. The occurrence of the first, second and third person pronouns was less than the number of the email messages, which reflects little involvement between the communicators (Biber, 1988). Similarly, the use of hedges was not a common practice, which also reflects informational production with little involvement (Biber, 1988, 1995). The main reference in this type of email genre messages was the reference to the attached file.

The writers of delivery email genre also made use of the optional 'providing extra information' content move (move 5). This move also occurred in discussion and enquiry email genre messages, however, it was a reiterational move. However, the occurrence of this move in the delivery email genre was more common and optional. Given that delivery email genre messages do not usually require a reply, the writers strived to further explain the issue and emphasize certain points in the attached file or document. In example (6.20), for instance, the writer indicated the enclosure of the *'overview report'*. Given that the report included a number of points, the writer felt the need to *'emphasize'* or further explain a point in the report. The writer, in this move, highlighted that the reports are generally positive, but a number of comments and recommendations needed to be addressed. As tackling these comments and recommendations was important, the writer chose to emphasize this point in the body of the email so that the recipient takes the required actions.

Ex 6.20: 3.66.	Dear All
Indicating enclosure	Please find attached an overview report of analysis conducted into External Examiners' and Moderators' reports for University of Xxxx validated schemes for Session 2008/09.
Providing more information	It is worth emphasising the point made on page 3 that these were generally a positive set of reports, with widespread satisfaction that comments and recommendations are being addressed.

As the delivery email genre is a solitary-type genre that does not usually require a reply, the writers used two follow up reiterational moves that are 'requesting confirming receipt' (move 7) and 'offering help if needed' (move 6) moves. These two moves did not occur in discussion and enquiry email genre messages as responding to the email is an expected practice. The 'requesting confirming receipt' move occurred in 7 delivery email messages, all of which included private and confidential documents such as exam scripts, marking schemes, and announcements. It is an endorsement strategy. That is, as delivery email genre messages included files

and documents that were sent to the recipient as part of institutional or professional practice, the writers requested that the recipients confirm the receipt of the files or the documents to hold them accountable for the next course of action. This practice is comparable to the circulation of internal memorandums in the educational institution. As the employees receive a written memo, they need to sign in confirmation. The signature confirms that the employee received the memo so he/she is expected to act upon the content.

Ex 6.21: 5.46. Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Ex 6.22: 4.16. Appreciate confirming receipt

The 'requesting confirming receipt' in the email messages took two formulaic styles that are the use of imperatives and the spoken-like construct *'appreciate confirming receipt'*. The use of the *'kindly acknowledge receipt'*, in example (6.21) above, meant to solicit action from the addressee. As mentioned earlier, the use of '*please'* or *kindly'* in front of imperatives makes that correspondence a polite request that saves addressee's negative face (Nickerson, 1999). The use of this construct to request confirming receipt was also common in formal business letters (Chin, 2011; Santos, 2002). The second formulaic style to request confirming receipt is the use of the linguistic construct *'appreciate confirming receipt'*. The use of this construct reflects a writing-like-speaking style that is called "conversational deletion" (Thrasher, 1974). Conversational deletion occurs when speakers/writers omit the first part of sentences, such as the subjects, possessives and conditional *if,* if vulnerable. This phenomenon is used mainly in spoken English. It is also used in email communication, as shown in example (6.22) above. In this email, the writer omitted the subject, which is vulnerable or exposed. From the content of the emails, it is obvious that the subject is a first person pronoun, singular or plural. It could be

interpreted as *'I'*, the writer of this email, or *'we',* the organization, in the general sense *'appreciate confirming receipt'*.

In regard to the 'offering help if needed' move (move 6), the writers intended to express availability. It is a reiterational move in the delivery email genre as it occurred in 17 email messages, all of which included institutional timetables, reports, assessments and official documents that were sent to students, employees or external partners as part of the collaboration. The writers of this move encouraged the addressees to contact them in case they need extra information or further clarifications, by stating the preferred channel of communication. The actual choice of channel depended on the location of the addressee, on the one hand, and the preferred channel of communication, on the other. If the email was sent to a local recipient, the writers specified the channel of communication that the recipient may use as in '*please feel free to call me'*. If the recipient of the email was abroad, however, the writers used '*contact me'*, as in '*please do not hesitate to contact me'*, which gives more options to the recipient. The recipients in this case may call, fax or simply reply to the email, in case they have an query.

In addition to these four content moves, the writers of delivery email genre used six framing moves. The use of the 'identifying topic' move, as explained earlier in this section, has a special importance in this type of email genre, as around 20 percent of the delivery email genre messages did not include any reference to the nature of the attached file, except in the identifying topic move that was always a clearly informative move. Examining the 'salutation' (move 2) and the 'closing' (move 9) moves reveals that, as in discussion and enquiry email genre messages, the use of

these framing moves depends on who communicates to whom and why. That is, if the email was sent to an external partner or authority, the framing structure of the email was mainly proper and formal as in the use of a salutation marker in front of recipients' name , *'Dear Mr. Name'*, and proper closing marker as *'kind Regards'*. However, if the email were sent to a student or a fellow colleague in the institution, the salutation marker was a less formal choice as in *'Dear Name'* or *'Mr. Name'*, informal as in *'Hi name'* or *'Name'* or no salutation at all. The actual choice of salutations in the internally sent emails mainly depended on the social distance between the communicators regardless of power relations. That is, if the email was sent to a close friend superior, the choice was either formal, informal or no salutation; however, if the email was sent to a distant colleague subordinate, the salutation was mainly formal or informal. The use of closing marker in this case depended on the nature of the file as in using '*All the best'* in the emails that delivered assignments, or no closing at all. In regard to the signature move (move 10), the writers signed off on their email messages using the first name in the internally sent emails, as the employees know each other and the first name is identifying enough, and an auto signature in the externally sent emails, as the organizational position, the name of institution, and contact details of the sender creates a sense of trustworthiness and credibility in the part of the recipient.

6.1.4 Informing Email Genre

The informing email genre messages mainly intended to advise, notify, inform, or update the recipient[s] of the emails about general interest issues. The generic structure of this type of email genre included nine rhetorical moves that are four content and five framing moves (see Table 6.5 below).

Table 6.5: Generic structure of informing email genre

No	Moves	Occurrences (out of 53 emails)	Percentage of occurrence
1	Identifying topic	53	100%
2	Salutation	53	100%
3	**Informing about issues**	**53**	**100%**
4	Providing extra information	25	47%
5	Requesting confirming receipt	16	31%
6	Offering help if needed	8	15%
7	Pre-closing	10	19%
8	Closing	51	96%
9	Signature	52	99%

The four content moves are the obligatory 'informing about issues' (move 3), which carries the communicative purpose of the email genre messages, the optional 'providing extra information' (move 4), and two follow up reiterational moves, which are the 'requesting confirming receipt' (move 5) and 'offering help if needed' (move 6). The five framing moves included the obligatory 'identifying topic' (move 1), 'salutation' (move 2) and 'signature' (move 9), the semi-obligatory 'closing' (move 8) and the reiterational 'pre-closing' (move 7) moves.

In regard to register variation, informing email genre messages were mainly written using 'informational production' and 'abstract style'. This was reflected in the excessive use of 'by' passive, agentless passive, word length and place adverbials (Biber, 1987). The use of place and time adverbials in this type of email genre also reflects 'situation-dependent reference'. Unlike the other three types of email genres, informing email genre reflects an 'edited or not on-line informational' style as the use of demonstrative pronouns was not a common practice in this type of email genre (Biber, 1988, 1995). The use of present perfect tense and public verbs in this type of email genre reflects narrative discourse (Biber, 1988, 1995).

The main content move that carries the communicative intention of this email genre is identified as 'informing about issues' move (move 3). It is an informative strategy that intends to notify, instruct or update the recipient[s] regarding institutional issues. Unlike 'discussing issues' and 'requesting' moves that are active moves, which encouraged participation, this move is a passive move that did not allow much space for negotiation. The writers mainly stated the notification or the instruction and expected the recipients to comply, take the necessary measurements or act in accordance with the given instructions. This move mainly tackled general interest issues such as class cancelation, replacement classes, assignment due dates, general announcements, changing the venue of an exam, information about the new grading system adopted by the institution, updates about the students' award scheme, and notification about the procedures of accessing information in the website. As these issues involved several people, informing email genre messages were sent mainly to a number of recipients at the same time. This included loops of students, lecturers, administrative staff, external partners or all.

This practice of sending the email to a number of recipients at the same time influenced the formality in this move and the genre type in general. Language use in this move is comparable to that of business letters (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995) and memorandums (Akar, 1998). This was apparent as the writers used formal and factual style including the excessive use of complex sentences, passive voice and little reference to the self (Eggins and Martin, 1997). The use of passive voice, which contributes to the formality of the correspondence (Jieun Yi, 2009), occurred in 38 out of the 54 'informing about issues' moves (70 percent), which was the highest frequency among all moves in the corpus. The main purpose of using passive voice

in this move was to reflect a firm stand regarding the issue. The fact that 32 (84 percent) out of the 38 passive voice statements were agentless passives supported this assumption. As example (6.25) below shows, the writer used the passive linguistic construct *'you are required'* to advise or inform the recipient about the action that need to be taken. Given that this construct has an imperative tone and the level of imposition and obligation is high, the writer chooses to omit any personal reference and promote an inanimate referent (Biber, 1988). In example (6.26) below, however, the writer used the passive voice construct *'please be informed that'* to minimize the imposition and the directness of the message, on the one hand, and to gain the addressees' attention, on the other. The use of *'please'*, according to Ng (2003), is polite. However, given that the message is direct, firm and informative, the writer opted to use the passive voice to promote an inanimate referent (Biber, 1988). As (6.23) and (6.24) below shows, the writer used 'that clause' as verb complement to introduce the main message and identify the relevance. This practice intended to make the tone of these direct messages less direct (Ching, 2011).

> **Ex 6.23:** 3.34. Following the success of the 2009 Administrative & Quality Conference**, I am pleased to inform you that** the institution will be running an Administrative and Quality Conference on the 12th and 13th August 2010.
>
> **Ex 6.24**: 5.31. **I wish to inform you** that our meeting will be held on Wednesday (16th June 2010).
>
> **Ex 6.25:** 3.22. As part of our Annual College and Course Review (ACCR), **you are required to**…
>
> **Ex 6.26:** 6.28. **Please be informed** that Dr Xxxx has scheduled his replacement classes as follows:

The writers of informing email genre messages used formulaic expressions to express the main communicative purpose of the email. In example (6.23) above, for example, the writer wanted to '*inform'* that the institution was organizing a conference. She used the 'that clause' as verb complement to establish the purpose and identify the relevance (Ching, 2011). The writer used *'I am pleased to inform*

you' as the message is regarded as a positive message. This is on the contrary of using the formulaic expression of *'I wish to inform you'* in the messages that were regarded undesirable (see example 6.24 above). The writer regarded the message in example (6.23) above as a positive message that she is *'pleased'* to inform the recipients about by referring to a previous *'successful'* conference that the institution had organized. In example (6.24) above, however, the message was regarded as an undesirable message as attending meetings requires class cancelation and class replacement, which may affect the already hectic schedule of the institution's lecturers.

The writers of the informing email genre messages strived to present the issue in a direct, clear and informative way. For this purpose, the writers used a number of public (Biber, 1988, 1995) and suasive verbs (Quirk et al., 1985). The list of public verbs used in this move included *'require'*, *'write'*, *'check'*, *'refer'*, *'deliver'*, *'submit'*, *'report'*, and *'provide'*. These verbs were mainly used to reflect on the action required from the addressee as in *'the assignments should be submitted'*. The list of suasive verbs used included *'inform'*, *'advise'*, *'instruct'*, *'note'*, *'ensure'*, and *'grant'*. These verbs mainly occurred as part of the constructs, *'you are informed'*, *'please be advised'*, and *'please note'*, followed by 'that clause' as a notice to present information or inform about the next course of action as in *'you are instructed to'*.

As this move has an informative and instructive nature; it was written mainly by employees with legitimate power. This move was used in emails that were written by the heads of department and directed to lecturers, administrative staff and students; lecturers and directed to administrative staff and students; administrative staff and

directed to students. This move also occurred in a few emails sent to colleagues to inform them about the time and venue of a farewell party organized for a leaving colleague or arising from organizational issues such as updating about the latest preparations for participating in an education fair function.

The writers of the 'informing about issues' move used a number of special techniques to emphasis important information. They bold face, italicized, underlined, capitalized all the letters of words or sentences, and used different colours and fonts for this purpose. Given that white-collar professionals might become victims of information overload (Eppler and Mengis, 2003; Thomas et al., 2006; and Russel et al., 2007), they sometimes quickly scan the emails paying little attention, which may result into missing important information or details. Therefore, the writers of this move used these special effects to draw the attention of the recipients into the important information communicated in the email. The writers highlighted special days, dates, names, modules, events, rules and regulations and requirements that have special importance in the correspondence. Given that this move mainly occurred in the one-to-many email messages, the writers obviously edited and proofread their correspondence before sending it to save their professional face. This proofreading was apparent because this move was free of any typographical errors such as the incorrect substitution of lower case letters for upper case letters and spelling mistakes.

In support of this move, the writers of informing email genre messages used 'providing extra information' move (move 4) to explain further the issue. The socio-cognitive strategy of this move in the informing genre is providing justifications,

rationalizations or details. In the informing about issues move, the writers directly notified the recipients about a general interest issue or decision. In providing more information/further explaining issue move, however, they usually justified the decision or detailed a fuller explanation. Unlike in discussion and enquiry email genres, this practice was commonplace in informing email genre. The 'providing extra information' move occurred in 47 percent of informing email genre messages, which is the highest among the four different types of email genres. As example (6.27) below shows, the writer informed the students about assignment extension policy in the institution. She listed a number of circumstances under which the students may request an extension. In order to justify this decision and further explain the procedures of having an extension, she referred to the *'rules and regulations'* that are set by the international partner in collaboration with the institution and explained the terms and conditions that governs the practices.

Ex 6.27: 6.44.	Dear Students,
Informing about issues	All students are to be informed that extensions are only permitted for extenuating circumstances. Under this clause, assignment submissions can be extended in serious conditions such as unforeseen circumstances, bereavement in the family or a hospitalization.
Providing more information	As a collaborative partner of Xxxx university, we have to abide by their rules and regulations. As such, any request for extension should be supported by official documents such as medical certificates etc..

As the informing email genre messages does not usually require a reply, the writers, in addition, used two follow up reiterational moves that are the 'requesting confirming receipt' (move 5) and 'offering help if needed' (move 6) moves. To request acknowledging receipt, the writers used the formulaic imperative construct *'kindly acknowledge receipt'*. This construct intends to solicit action from the recipient. As mentioned earlier, this move is a common practice in the institution as a validation strategy that the sender carried out the task, on the one hand, and that the

recipient is informed fully, on the other. This practice is significant in informing email genre messages because they do not usually require a reply. They require taking actions or acting upon the issue.

> **Ex 6.28:** 1.30. If you have any queries regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me.
>
> **Ex 6.29:** 4.11. Should you need any queries, please feel free to call me

To express availability and contact directions, the employees used the 'offering help if needed' follow up move. This move occurred eight times in externally sent emails. To 'offer help if needed', the employees used two formulaic conditional clauses that are the if-clause and the conditional inversion. The use of conditionals is deemed proper for the purpose of this move (see example 6.28 above). The writers used the if-clause, as in *'if you have any quires, please do not hesitate to contact me',* in five of the eight 'offering help if needed' moves in informing email genre messages. In the if-clause, the condition was given, and in the main clause, the action was stated. The writers used the imperative mood in all the main clauses in this move. The use of the weakened imperative (Brown and Levinson, 1987), '*please do not hesitate',* is considered a polite and common practice in business communication that is used mainly to solicit action from the addressee.

The second formulaic style used to 'offer help if needed' is the use of *'should you need any quires, please…*' (See example 6.29 above). This form of conditional is called conditional inversion. Conditional inversion, according to Iatridou and Embick, (1994), occurs when the writer inverts the subject and the verb instead of the '*if*'. The occurrence of the modal verb '*should'* in this conditional clause suggests and emphasizes possibility. The use of the private verbs, '*need'* and '*feel'*, in this

move intended to link the possibility to the intellectual status and acts of the addressee (Quirk et al., 1985).

In regard to the framing structure, the informing email genre had the highest frequency of occurrence of all basic framing moves (identifying topic, salutation, closing and signature moves), which was almost 100 percent. This reflects the formal nature of this type of email genre. In regard to the obligatory 'identifying topic' move (move 1), all the moves were clearly informative as they clearly stated the purpose of the message. The obligatory 'salutation' move (move 2) also enjoyed 100 present frequency of occurrence, the overwhelming majority of which were formal salutations. As 68 percent of the informing email genre messages were sent to email loops of students, lecturers, external examiners, and fellow colleagues, the influence of social distance was minimal in this type of email genre. The formality in the salutations of this type of email genre was also clear in the emails sent to a single recipient. Similarly, the 'closing' move (move 8) has also enjoyed an almost 100 present frequency. The writers mainly used '*Kind regards'*, '*Warm Wishes'* and '*Thank you'*. Finally, in regard to the 'signature move' (move 9), almost all informing email genre messages included an auto-signature move. This auto signature was used equally in the internally and externally sent emails. The main purpose of this practice is giving an institutional value for the message. That is, the communicated message was carried out on the institutional level regardless of social distance or power relations.

This type of email genre dealt with issues related to the four different tasks identified in the ethnographic perspective. Informing email genre messages were sent to

governmental authorities to '*attain and maintain accreditation'*; external partners to '*collaborate'* regarding the external programs and students to inform them about their class and exam timetables, assignments due dates, class cancelation and replacement classes. They were also circulated internally to call a meeting, enforce a rule, or send a notification about deadlines and due dates.

6.2 Patterns of Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity

The previous section examined the patterns of generic integrity, which revealed that the employees used four types of email genres. In order to count for the text-internal and text-external aspects of generic integrity in the four types of email genres (Bhatia (2004, 2008, 2010a), the interrelations within and across texts, (patterns of intertextuality) and the interactions within and across genres (patterns of interdiscursivity) are investigated. According to Bhatia (2008), this is an "effective and comprehensive analysis" that intends to provide a fuller understanding about the "discursive as well as professional practices" (p. 172) in the discourse community.

6.2.1 Patterns of Intertextuality

Intertextuality is "the way in which the texts are related to other texts" (Johnstone, 2008, p. 275). For Devitt (1991), intertextuality could be divided into generic intertextuality, referential intertextuality and functional intertextuality (Devitt, 1991). Generic intertextuality is the repeating of forms of a genre in reoccurring rhetorical situations (Devitt, 1991). Referential intertextuality refers to the presence of other specific texts in the given text (Devitt, 1991). Functional intertextuality refers to the "community consequences of intertextuality" (Devitt, 1991, p. 350). That is, functional intertextuality refers to the process of using a text or part of text to create

another text. Intertextuality, in this study, is examined in relation to the three different kinds of intertextuality that Devitt (1991) proposed.

6.2.1.1 Referential Intertextuality

As mentioned earlier, referential intertextuality refers to the presence of other texts in the given text (Chin, 2011; Devitt, 1991). The importance of this type of intertextuality lies in the "manner and function of such reference, for the patterns of reference reflect again the profession's activities and relationships" (Devitt, 1991, p. 342). This type of intertextuality occurred in 112 email messages belonging to the four types of email genres. The reference to other texts in a given text was particularly common in three content moves that were the 'referring to previous contact', 'indicating enclosure' and 'informing about issues' moves.

The 'referring to previous contact' move, as the name suggests, is intertextual in nature. The writers of this move related the email message to previous oral, written and computer-mediated communications. This move occurred in 45 email messages that were mainly discussion and enquiry email genre messages. The writers explicitly referred to previous email messages, telephone calls, business letters, faxes, meetings and discussions. The data showed that 11 moves (24 percent) referred to telephone calls, 8 moves (18 percent) referred to meetings or face-to-face discussions, 2 moves (4 percent) referred to faxes, 2 moves (4 percent) referred to business letters and 22 moves (49 percent) referred to previous email messages. This reflects the prominence of compute-mediated and oral methods of communications in the institution.

The “internal reference” to previous texts in a new text reflects the relationship between texts in the educational institution. The employees of the educational institution used these different methods of communication collectively or selectively to accomplish their institutional tasks and professional activities as shown in the ethnographic perspective. A telephone call or a face-to-face conversation or meeting, for example, may result in a discussion email genre message to discuss the issue further. A letter from the MQA or MOHE may result in an enquiry or discussion email genre message to clarify certain issues. A requesting or a discussing email produces a responding or suggesting email. The internal reference to these previous texts in the new texts intended to relate the texts into their immediate context, which assists the discourse community to “accomplish their work” (Devitt, 1991).

In the ‘indicating enclosure’ rhetorical move, however, referential intertextuality functioned as the main task of the email message as it “references to enclosed documents” (Devitt, 1991, p. 343). The writers of this move mainly used the linguistic construct ‘*please find attached’* or ‘*enclosed please find’* to direct the attention of the addressee to the attached document or file. This type of referential intertextuality, or what Johnstone (2008) called “horizontal intertextuality”, is used to refer to intertexts (Chin, 2011). It is called horizontal intertextuality as the writer of the email would attach a file or a number of documents to the email message and use this construct to refer to them. The reference in this case is to the attached files. This type of intertextuality was used mainly in the delivery email genre, but it also occurred in the responding to request move in enquiry email genre in case of enclosing attachment to the email message.

In the 'informing about issues' move, however, referential intertextuality occurred as a method of recalling previous texts. The writers mainly used '*in accordance with the…*' to refer to the rules and regulations of the institution, in general, or a certain policy, in particular, as in *'in accordance with our exemption policy…'*. This adverbial construct was followed mainly by a notification or instruction directed to the addressee. This type of intertextuality mainly occurred in informing email genre, which is dedicated to instructing, advising or notifying the recipients about general interest issues, which included, at times, some face threatening acts (FTA). The reference to the rules and regulations, in this sense, helped placing the text in its context, on the one hand, and acted as a negative politeness strategy to minimize imposition by stating it as a general rule, on the other (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

6.2.1.2 Functional Intertextuality

Functional intertextuality, according to Devitt (1991), may occur in different ways that are using the '*cut'* from a text and '*paste'* in another and the impact of past texts on future texts by forming the necessity for those forthcoming texts. The members of the discourse community may use these techniques to create functional intertextuality as they share the "professional knowledge" in the field and use "a set of genres" (Devitt, 1991, p. 351) to achieve their goals and communicative purposes. Even though functional intertextuality was not a very common practice in the email messages, instances of the three different techniques were recorded.

The "cut-paste" technique was noted mainly in the informing email genre messages. Three informing genre messages included whole segments from the rules and regulations to enlighten the employees and the students about certain issues.

According to Jones and Freeman (2003), the "cut-paste" functional intertextuality technique may occur on the segment level by providing complete sentences into a new correspondence.

Ex 6.30: 6.59. From: NED
To: NED
Date: Fri, May 7, 2010 at 1:13 PM
Subject: Examination Dates
Dear Students
Please note that your examination timetable is as follows:
Accounting and Finance
Saturday, 10th June 2010
10.30 am to 1.30 pm
Organisation Behaviour / Human Resource Management
Sunday, 11th June 2010
10.30 am to 1.30 pm
International Marketing (Major Module)
Sunday, 11th June 2010
10.30 am to 1.30 pm
Business Ethics and Corporate Governance
Friday, 16th June 2010
3.00 pm to 6.00 pm

- You are required to switch off all electronic equipment which cannot be allowed to be carried on your person.
- For students who are sitting for the Accounting and Finance paper - Calculators, including scientific calculators, are allowed providing they are not programmable and cannot store or recall information.
- Please ensure you attempt the required number of questions and adhere to proper time management.

Good luck
BP

In example (6.30) above, which is an informing email genre message, the head of studies sent this informing email to the students to give them the examination timetable. As the head of studies has the "professional knowledge" (Devitt, 1991) in the field and knows practices in the examination hall, she chose to "cut-paste" the rules and regulations of examinations in the institution in the body of the email. Exams rules and regulations are stated in '*students' handbook'* that is usually handed out to the students at their orientation session. They also appear on the cover page of every single exam paper at the institution. Therefore, the head of studies, ideally, does not need to "cut-paste" the rules and regulations in the body of the email.

Practically, however, as she knows the practices in examination halls, she chose to make the direct reference by using the "cut-paste" strategy, as a preliminary reminder. The other two informing genre messages that included the "cut-paste" technique were regarding the assignment extension policy and the rules and regulations for obtaining a full accreditation for a program.

This type of functional intertextuality in the informing genre messages served two main purposes or functions. Firstly, the "cut-paste" of the rules and regulations served as a reminding strategy. In example (6.30), the writer wanted to remind the students about the rules and regulations. For example, '*Accounting and Finance'* students are allowed to use '*normal calculators'* not '*programmable calculators'*. In addition, the head of studies wanted to remind the students that it is a rule to switch off electronic devices and keep them out of the examination hall. Secondly, the direct "cut-paste" technique is used to impersonalize the imposition. That is, the direct reference to the rules and regulations meant to minimize or abolish the role of the agent in applying these rules. This is reflected in the excessive use of agentless passive voice in the statements (i.e., 'you are required', 'cannot be allowed'). As such, this is a general rule that the invigilator and the institution need to adhere to.

Functional intertextuality in the email messages also occurred in the influence of previous texts on upcoming texts by generating the need for these upcoming texts. Devitt (1991), who investigated intertextuality in accounting firms, noticed that every written text is prompted by another text; however, this trace is hard to follow. The influence of past texts on creating future texts in the email messages, however, was marked by the electronically generated '*RE'* and '*FW'* initials in front of the

‘identifying topic’ move (move 1) of the replied or forwarded email messages. This type of intertextuality appeared to be common as it occurred in 45 percent of the email messages that were mainly discussion and enquiry email genre messages. Requesting emails were preceded by response emails, and response emails might be preceded by thanking emails. Additionally, clarification (discussion) emails were preceded by suggestion emails, and suggestion emails were preceded by another suggestion or opinion emails. This practice, as mentioned earlier, created threads or chains of intertextual email messages.

In addition to this explicit functional intertextuality, some email messages created the need for other emails that were not part of the chain or of the thread. Some email messages created the need for other emails that even belonged to other types of email genres. The “cycle of [email] texts” (Devitt, 1991, p. 252) in this type of functional intertextuality was not explicit as it took complex forms and was hard to follow (Devitt, 1991). However, as the corpus of emails was collected from day-in-day-out email communications for 45 days, it was possible to identify how certain texts created the need for other texts that belonged to another type of email genre. The data showed that a chain of discussion or enquiry email genre messages may lead to writing an informing email genre message, a delivery genre message may lead to a requesting email message and an informing email genre message may lead to a requesting email genre message. These intertextual emails were addressed to other recipients and had different functions.

Ex 6.31: 3.42. From: "MAL To: Bp Sent: Sunday, 16 May, 2010 10:11:33 AM Subject: Business Ethics Dear BP, Will it be possible for me to have an extra class (3 or 4 hours) to make up for the first class that the students had with Mr. VA. Although Mr. VA did an introduction on ethics with them, I had to start all over when I took over to keep the flow of my lessons.I may give the extra class on the 4th of June from 2 to 5 pm . Cheers! MAL	**Ex 6.32:** 3.56. From: BP To: MAL Sent: Monday, 17 May, 2010 5:48:23 PM Subject: RE: Business Ethics Dear MAL, OK, no problem. Friday 4th of June from 2-5 is fine. Regards, BP
Ex 6.33: 3.59. From: MAL To: BP Sent: Tuesday, 18 May, 2010 10:38:17 AM Subject: RE: Business Ethics Dear BP Thank you, I will tell the students next class. MAL	**Ex 6.34:** 3.79. From: BP To: STS Sent: Wednesday, 19 May, 2010 3:45:09 PM Subject: Business Ethics Extra Class Dear Students, Please note that Ms. MAL will conduct an extra class. Your class is scheduled as follows Date: 4th June 2010 (Friday) Time: 2 pm – 5 pm Kind regards BP

In example (6.31) above, the writer, who is a part-time lecturer, wrote a requesting email to the head of studies. She wants to give an extra class for the students. In reply, Ms. BP, in example (6.32), approved the request and confirmed the time and the date of the extra class. In example (6.33), the lecturer thanked the head of studies and confirmed that she will inform the students in class. This chain of email messages (from 6.31-6.33) was a typical chain of enquiry email genre message. In example (6.34), however, the head of studies wrote an informing email genre message to the students to notify them officially about the extra class. Even though this informing email genre message seems typical, however, its cycle is traced back to the chain of the enquiry email genre messages communicated earlier (from 6.31-6.33). That is, there is functional intertextuality between the chain of enquiry email genre messages and the informing email genre message as the content of the chain has created the need for the informing email. Even though the lecturer stated that she

would inform the students in class, which implies that she will use the face-to-face oral method, the head of studies wrote the informing message to formally notify the students about the extra class.

This type of intertextuality occurred in the four types of email genres. In addition to the example above, chains of discussion email genre messages regarding issues, such as extensions on submitting assignments, produced informing genre messages to notify the students about the rules and regulations for extensions. The informing email genre message regarding issues such as due dates to submit exam results produced enquiry genre messages to part-time lecturers requesting the examination results and the completed marksheet. A delivery genre message to external examiners that encloses proposed assignments or examination papers produced a discussion regarding about how to set up a good assignment or examination paper. These instances of functional intertextuality in the different types of email genres reflected how the employees of the educational institution linked past texts to future texts to accomplish their institutional tasks.

6.2.1.3 Generic intertextuality

Generic intertextuality or "vertical intertextuality" (Johnstone, 2008) refers to the reoccurring forms in reoccurring rhetorical situations (Devitt, 1991). As such, this type of intertextuality "defines and serves the needs" (Devitt, 1991, p. 339) of the discourse community. As a discourse community, the employees of the private higher educational institution, subject of the study, respond to reoccurring rhetorical situations. These reoccurring rhetorical situations arises as the academic and institutional needs of the employees be inclined to reoccur.

Generic intertextuality occurred in the use of certain framing moves, on the one hand, and several content moves, on the other. In relation to the framing moves, email genre messages comprised six moves that are the 'identifying topic', 'salutation', 'opening', 'pre-closing', 'closing', and 'signature' moves. These framing moves collectively or selectively occur in business letters, memorandums and business fax genres (Chadessy, 1993; Flowerdew and Wan, 2006; Louhiala-Salminen, 1999; Zhu, 2005). The occurrence of the 'identifying topic' (reference), 'salutation', 'closing' and 'signature' moves was an obligatory element, especially in informing email genre, which is also the case in business letter genre in the educational institution, as shown in the ethnographic analysis, and other institutions (Chin, 2011; Jalilifar and Beitsayyah, 2011; Santos, 2002). The occurrence of these moves in discussion, enquiry and delivery genres, however, appeared to be optional, which is also the case in memo and fax genres in the educational institution and in other institutions (Akar and Louhiala-Salminen, 1999; Yates and Orlikowski, 1992).

In relation to the content moves, however, the use of reoccurring forms in reoccurring rhetorical situations was recorded in the use of formulaic constructs in 'referring to previous contact', 'indicating enclosure', 'responding to requests', 'requesting confirming receipt', and 'offering help if needed' moves. In 'referring to previous contact' move, the main informants used adverbial subordinates '*with reference to'* and compound prepositions '*as per your email message'* to refer to previous contacts. They intended to link the email message to a previous point of contact, which created "referential intertextuality" (Devitt, 1991) or "manifested intertextuality" (Fairclough, 1992). It seemed that this practice occurred in two types

of email genres that are discussion and enquiry email genres, which also creates generic intertextuality (Devitt, 1991). As these two types of email genres occur in chains, the writers used the same formulaic forms to respond to the reoccurring situations by placing the genre in its communicative context.

This kind of "vertical intertextuality" was also recorded in the use of '*please find attached'* and *'enclosed please find'* formulaic constructs in 'indicating enclosure' and 'responding to requests' rhetorical moves in delivery and enquiry email genres. The act of sending files in delivery email genre was an 'initiative'. That is, the writer deliberately sent the file to the addressee as part of his/her organizational duties or responsibilities. In the 'responding to request' move, however, the act of sending the files or the documents is a 'reply'. That is, the delivery of the files or documents in the 'responding' move is a reaction to a 'requesting' email. As the rhetorical need for delivering files and documents reoccurred in these two situations, which belong to two types of email genres, the main informants used the same rhetorical forms in carrying out the intended tasks.

Generic intertextuality was also recorded in 'requesting confirming receipt' and 'offering help if needed' moves in delivery and informing email genres. The use of the 'requesting confirming receipt' move is an endorsing strategy that intended to validate that the sender carried out the action, and the recipient has received or is fully informed about the issue. Therefore, he/she is expected to act upon the given information. The main informants mainly used two formulaic expressions to 'request confirming receipt' that are '*kindly acknowledge receipt'* and '*appreciate confirming receipt'*. As the rhetorical need of confirming receipt reoccurred in delivery and

informing email genres, which do not usually require a reply, the main informants used these rhetorical forms to solicit an action from the recipients. Similarly, the main informants mainly used two conditional formulaic constructs, '*if you have any quires, please do not hesitate to contact me*' and '*should you have any quires, please call me*', in 'offering help if needed' move. The use of this move and the two constructs occurred in delivery and informing email genres to express the availability of the sender. As this rhetorical need reoccurred in two types of email genres, the main informants used the rhetorical moves to execute the same intention.

Overall, the occurrence of generic intertextuality in the four types of email genres reflects the reoccurring rhetorical needs of the discourse community. As the main informants write a new text, they refer to their previous knowledge and experience of writing such texts in the discourse community, which, as a result, creates these reoccurring forms in the reoccurring situation (Devitt, 1991).

6.2.2 Patterns of Interdiscursivity

Interdiscursivity, according to Jianguo (2011), refers to "the mixing of diverse genres, discourses, or styles associated with institutional and social meanings in a single text" (p. 95). Unlike intertextuality, which examines the text-internal factors, interdiscursivity examines the text-external factors of genres. Even though genres are defined as "conventionalized discursive action" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 87), they are, however, developing (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995) and dynamic (Bhatia, 2002). This could be noticed in appropriating the generic resources of certain genres when constructing others, which creates embedded, mixed or hybrid genres (Bhatia, 2002, 2004, 2008). This 'genre mixing' occurs as the expert members of the discourse

community exploit “private intentions” to achieve a number of complementary or even conflicting communicative purposes (Bhatia, 2002, 2004).

Overall, the four types of email genres were conventionalized and static, particularly, with respect to their communicative intentions and generic structure. However, a number of email genre messages invaded the generic integrity of other types of genres, which, as a result, produced hybrid or mixed genres. This appropriation of generic resources of a genre to create another was witnessed in three out of the four types of email genres and was carried out on the “lexico-grammatical, rhetorical or discoursal” levels (Bhatia, 2010 p. 87). Thus, interdiscursivity in email genres is produced through the mixing of two genres or two styles.

6.2.2.1 Hybrid Genres: Genre Mixing

Hybrid or mixed genres (Bhatia, 2012) in the email messages were created by the mixing of two types of email genres in a single email message. The writers appropriated the generic resources of a genre to create another. This practice was recorded in discussion and enquiry email genres. The members of the discourse community mainly appropriated the generic resources of a discussion email genre message to create a discussion-informing or a discussion-enquiry email genre message, and an enquiry genre message to create an enquiry-discussion email genre message, where the first communicative purpose was the main purpose of the message and the second purpose was a subordinate purpose. The employees mixed complementary and conflicting communicative purposes in one email message.

Ex. 6.35: 5.40. **From:** Kelly
Sent: 28 May 2010 09:23
To: ' VK '
Subject: RE: qualification assessment-NED
Dear Mr VK
We received only the diploma; this shows that the first year only has been complete, which unfortunately is not sufficient for diploma entry. We did not receive the Bachelor of Computer science from university of computer studies, Dangon.
By the way, can you please send me the list of the students who will sit for the external exam in June session?
Kind Regards
Auto Signature

In example (6.35) above, the writer mixed two main content moves that are 'discussing issues' and 'requesting' moves in a single email message. These two moves were identified as two obligatory or genre-defining content moves in two types email genres that are discussion and enquiry email genres. As the content of the email shows, the communicators discussed the case of a student who has a degree from another institution and applied to NED wishing to receive exemptions. This was carried out in a number of declarative mood sentences that intended to present information (Biber, 1995). However, towards the end of the email, the writer requested the list of students who will sit for the exam, using the modal initial indirect request '*can you please...*'. Requesting was identified as a type of email genre in this study. It appeared that the writers basically request information or documents in separate emails. In addition, the requesting move or communicative purpose seems to be in conflict with the original communicative purpose of the email, which discusses the possibilities of granting exemptions to a student. The writer of the email seems aware of changing the topic and the communicative intention of the email as he used *'by the way'* in front of the requesting move to indicate that the following statement or question is unrelated to what had been discussed earlier.

The main intention of mixing these two conflicting communicative purposes in a single email is the writer's intention to save time and effort. As the exchange of ideas in the discussion email genre chain was carried out over a period of time in a number of out-going and in-coming emails, another organizational need arises that also involves the academic director, who is involved in the discussion chain. As a matter of convenience, the writer chose to appropriate the generic resources of the discussion email genre chain to include the enquiry move.

In addition to mixing two conflicting communicative purposes in a single email genre message, staff members also mixed two complementary communicative purposes in a single discussion email genre message. This was the result of mixing a discussion and informing email genres. In this case, unlike the identification of the conflicting communicative purposes that was acknowledged by using different grammatical moods alone, the identification of the two complementary communicative purposes was recognized by the function of the segments, on the one hand, and the variation in the lexico-grammatical features used in the correspondence, on the other.

In example (6.36) below, the head of studies wrote an email to a student as they were discussing extensions on submitting an assignment. This argument was carried out in a number of emails that involved administrative staff and lecturers. As the discussion reached the head of studies, she wrote this email that included a number of passages. In these excerpts, it seems that the writer used two different tones to achieve two different communicative purposes. In the first passage, the writer used a personal tone to further discuss the issue of giving extensions. In this passage, the

writer was personally involved in the email as she mainly used active voice clauses and first and second person pronouns (Biber, 1995). The style of writing was more of spoken than written as she hedged her opinion using '*I guess',* which is an informal strategy that is used in oral communication (Biber, 1995), and used the private factual verb '*think',* which signify her state of mind (Quirk et al., 1985).

Ex 6.36: 6.45. From: Bp
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2010 1:43 AM
Subject: Re: Extensions of Assignments
I guess I spoke too soon, when I said nobody missed me, this time round, I realized there were mountains of emails discussing extension of assignments. I think that policy of extensions is clear. So you don't need to bother your lecturers and the staff. If you have any queries, you should talk to me. Your lecturers and staff members cant simply give you extensions.
Please be informed that extensions are only permitted for extenuating circumstances, under this clause; assignment submissions can be extended in serious conditions such as unforeseen circumstances, bereavement in the family or a hospitalization.
…….

In the second passage, the writer moved to a second communicative purpose, which is formally informing the student about the rules and regulations of granting extensions in the institution. This change in the communicative intention also carried a change in the use of the lexico-grammatical features. The style in the second passage changed from a personal writing-like-speaking into a formal and informative style. This is observed in the use of agentless passive voice clauses that demote any animate involvement and promote inanimate referents that are the '*extensions'* and '*assignment submissions'*. The second passage, in addition, did not include any hedges, private verbs, or personal pronouns, which reflect informational writing (Biber, 1988). To attract the attention of the student, the writers used the signposting device using a suasive verb, *'please be informed'*, which lessens or limits the role of the agent in the writing. The linguistic features of the first passage were conventional in discussion email genre as the writer and the recipient were directly involved in the communication. The informative style in the second passage, however, is

conventional in informing email genre messages. Appropriating the genic resources of discussion and informing email genres to create the hybrid 'discussion-informing' genre in this email message seems driven by a private intention (Bhatia, 2008).

Apparently, the main intention of mixing the discussion and the informing email genre messages in this email is writer's private intention to *'put-an-end'* for the on-going discussion. The active style in discussion genre messages encouraged the student to negotiate the issue. Even though the head of studies explained that she could not grant the student an extension, the student continued his negotiating style in a number of email messages. Therefore, the head of studies chose to mix the discussion and the informing communicative purposes to firmly conclude the on-going argument regarding the respected issue.

Mixed or hybrid genres occurred in 30 email messages that were 19 discussion and 11 enquiry email genre messages. Obviously, the prolonged exchange of ideas in a number of emails over a period of time in these two types email genres encouraged the writers to appropriate the generic resources of a genre to create another. As the communicative intention in delivery and informing email genres was carried out in a single email message, the writers maintained the generic integrity of these types of email genres. It appeared that hybridization occurred as a product of convenience and the writers' aspiration to save time and effort. This product seems irrelevant in delivery email genre messages as they are typically short, and inappropriate in informing email genre messages as they are usually sent to a number of recipients at the same time.

6.2.2.2 Hybrid Styles: Written Vs. Spoken Including Non-Verbal

The email messages included features of written and spoken styles. In general, the writers of the four types of email genres regarded their email communications as written discourse. This was reflected in the structural patterns of the emails as they included proper 'identifying topic', 'salutation', 'closing', and 'signature' moves. This was also apparent in the content of the emails, as the writers used structured declarative, imperative and interrogative sentences to present information, direct the addressee and enquire or request information. They also used passive voice constructs (Biber, 1988), public verbs, suasive verbs (Quirk et al., 1985) and professional terminology (Chin, 2011).

Ex 6.37: 3.5. **From:** LG
To: BP
Cc: MI
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 6:42 PM
Subject: New Institution Officer
Dear BP
You are informed that from today CA H will be your new Institution Officer. She will now be your first point of contact for all Credit Transfer, Matriculation, Uploading of transfers and Certificates and Transcripts.
Best Wishes
LG
Position
Name of organization
Address, contact details

As example (6.37) above shows, the writer used a clear 'identifying topic' move that reflects the content of the email, a proper 'salutation' that is preceded by a formal salutation-marker, proper 'closing' and proper 'signature' move that included the name, institutional position, name of institution, and the contact details of the sender. In the content of the email, the writer used the passive voice formulaic construct '*you are informed that'* to demote the agent, and the suasive verb '*informed'* to report or establish the purpose of the email message. The sentences are long, clear and direct, which makes it easier for the recipient to comprehend the message. In addition, the

writer used a number of professional terminologies (i.e., Credit Transfer, Matriculation, Uploading of transfers) to mark the referents (Chin, 2011). Thus, this informing email genre message is regarded as a formal email message.

The employees mainly used these formal features in their email communications with governmental authorities, external partners, students and internal emails that were sent to a number of recipients at the same time. These features also occurred in the internally sent emails that intended to enforce a rule, remind the employees about an institutional issue, or formally notify an employee or a lecturer about their duties. This style of writing was used mainly as an imposing method, as in informing email genre messages; convincing method, as in the discussion email genre messages that intend to sum up the discussion; or giving information or instructions, as in the responding to request email genre messages. The emails that included formal written features were mainly direct and passive in relationship to the involvement between the addresser and the addressee.

Ex 6.38: 5.19. Hi ZA.
Yes i already recived the master time table that you updated. I will do the lecturer time according the master time table that you gave. Sorry for late reply because couple of days i'm a bit busy
Thanks

In contrast to the features used in example (6.37), the writer of example (6.38) above was greatly involved in the email message. He used the first person pronoun '*I'* a number of times, which reflects great involvement and personal writing (Biber 1995). Additionally, the writer used a number of spoken features such as in the use of '*Hi'* as a salutation marker, '*thanks'* as a closing marker, and the use of the contraction '*I'm*'. In addition to these features, the writer apparently did not edit or proofread the email. Sign of this are spelling mistakes '*recived'*, the lower case used

for the first person pronoun '*i'*, and a number of missing comas and full stops. Additionally, the word order in the last sentence seems '*sloppy'*.

These spoken features mainly occurred in the internally exchanged email genre messages depending on power relations and social distance between the employees. Mr. VK, the writer of example (6.38), is the superior of Ms. ZA, the recipient. They are close colleagues, as they stated in the relational factors questionnaire. Thus, this email was written by a superior to a close colleague subordinate to respond to an internal email enquiry. The close social distance between the employees influenced the framing formality, on the one hand, and the formality of the content, on the other. This is also a result of the writers' reluctance to edit or proofread these internally exchanged emails before sending them. In addition to the hybrid discourse, these internally sent emails included some typographical errors, which may negatively affect the professional image of the writer.

In addition to relational factors, the frequent exchange of emails regarding an issue also influenced the type of discourse used in the emails. The occurrence of the spoken features mainly took place in discussion and enquiry email genre messages. As mentioned earlier, discussion and enquiry email genre messages were communicated in chains or threads, which created embedded emails (Gimenez, 2005). As the writers discussed an issue in a number of out-going and in-coming emails, the formality of the emails gradually declined. The writers mainly used formal written salutation and closing markers in the initiating emails and the first reply; however, as the discussion grew longer, the writers used a variety of formal, informal, conversational or even no salutation or closing markers. This practice also

influenced the formality of the content as the use of minimizations, ellipsis, substitution and contractions became a practice in these emails.

Ex 6.39: 2.16. (superior, close colleague, monthly)
On Wed,June 09, 2010. at 10:36 AM,ZA wrote
Subject: Fwd: Ncc Subjects
Hi NG,
How are you?
Ya, i'm really very busy with preparation for new semester...(**1**)so many things to do... **(2)**Ms. MA (Mr. VK assistant) will call you by this week to collect your timetable, material,… **(3)** Don't worry ...(**4**)Actually Mr.VK got the new materials few days ago only...(**5**)
sorry for the delay....(**6**)
Regards
ZA

In regard to the use of ellipsis, the writers used two different methods that are the dots technique (…), in which the writer hinted at the omitted words or clauses using a number of dots, or naturally as in spoken discourse. The usage of the dots technique reflects an intentional ellipsis (omission) as a result of writers' reluctance to detail the omitted part, whereas the usage of the natural ellipsis occurred as a result of writing-like-speaking style. As example (6.39) above shows, the writer, who is the head of students' counselling unit, used six instances of ellipsis in a single email, assuming that the recipient of the email is capable of working out the omitted words and clauses. The occurrence of these ellipses markers reflects an informal writing-like-speaking style. In addition, the writer used an informal salutation '*hi'*, which is a practice among close colleagues, a conversational opening '*how are you*?', and a contraction *'I'm'*. As mentioned earlier, ellipsis and ellipses markers only occurred in the internally exchanged discussion and enquiry email genre messages, which reflected the writers' awareness of the informal and spoken nature of this "syntactic process" (Kennedy, 1998, p. 90).

Ex 6.40: 1.31. I will do the correct **one** later

Ex 6.41: 7.52. Except **the ones** sent by Mr. DS

Ex 6.42: 6.31. We should make use of **the same**.

Ex 6.43: 7.53. If she **does**, will she be able to forward to me around fifty.

Ex 6.44: 3.13. If **so,** see you there then.

Similarly, the internally exchanged discussion and enquiry email genre messages included instances of substitution, which is usually used in oral communication (Halliday, 1994). As the examples from (6.40) to (6.44) above show, the writers of the emails used *'one'*, *'ones'* and *'the same'* to substitute a noun, *'does'* to replace a verb and *'so'* to replace a clause. The majority of the substitutions in the emails were used to replace a noun. The usage of '*one'* and '*ones'* were the most common substitution devices, as they were used to replace singular and plural nouns, as in example (6.40) and example (6.41). As the usage of ellipsis, the writers used substitution to skip the repetition of the same noun, verb, or clause a number of times and to extend the cohesion or the textual domain of a sentence to another sentence, which means that all substitutions refer to anaphoric items. In example (6.40) below, the writer used '*one'* to replace '*the marksheet'* mentioned in previous email, exophoric referencing. The writer submitted the marksheet previously; however, the recipient found a number of mistakes, which needed to be corrected. In response, the writer of example (6.40) below did not use the word '*marksheet'* however, replace it with '*one'*. In example (6.44), however, the writer replaced the whole if-clause using '*so'*. Returning to the email shows that *'so'* refers to the possible answer of question presented earlier in the email, endophoric referencing. The sender asked *'are you going to attend the workshop or not?'* so to avoid writing *'if you are coming'*, and to extend the semantic realm of the sentence, the writer used '*so'* to replace the whole if-clause. Substitution occurred in 26 email messages that were mainly internally sent discussion and enquiry email genre messages. This reflects employees' awareness of the informal and spoken nature of this feature.

In addition to these written and spoken discourse features, the writers of the emails also made use of non-verbal cues or paralinguistic features (Sully and Dallas, 2005). The corpus included twenty instances of emoticons that basically occurred in discussion (14 instances) and enquiry (6 instances) email genre messages. The emoticons were either manually typed as in (**:)**) or chosen from the provided list of emoticons in the formatting of the emails as in (☺). As example (6.45) below shows, the writer of the email, who is a part-time lecturer, used three manually typed emoticons. As the email included an enquiry, which is a face-threatening-act (FTA) (Brown and Levinson, 1987), the sender wanted to minimize the imposition by using friendly facial expressions. The first emoticon, which is a smiling face **(:))**, was used after an opening sentence, which shows sympathy to the addressee. The writer wanted to show understanding that the addressee is '*busy'*, which is a positive politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Ex 6.45: 2.14.
Hi ZA,
Hows things? Pretty sure that you have your hands full **:)**
Any news on when I shall come over for material collection? **;)**
With less than 3 weeks for class commencements, I am getting worried that I might have difficulties if the materials are going to be delivered late **:D**
Just give me a quick call on either my hp or house (xxxx xxxxx) yea !
Thank you.
-NZG

The second emoticon, which is a wink (**;)**), was used after the FTA, '*any news on when…".* The wink here intends to minimize the imposition implying that this is a friendly reminder, especially that there are only three weeks left before the new semester commences. However, wishing that the recipient did not take the previous sentence as a complaint or assertion, she used the third emoticon, which is an open-

mouth smile (**: D**), to minimize the imposition. The emoticons were used as a supportive technique to add lively facial expressions to weaken the impact of the FTA, especially among close colleagues in the internally exchanged emails.

6.3 Validation of Findings

In line with Bhatia's (1993) and Swales's (1990) suggestion that the new identified genre types should be validated by seeking professionals' reaction, samples of the emails that included different types of email genres were presented to a focus group of seven members who work in two different private educational institutions in Kuala Lumpur. The focus group consisted of two heads of program and two administrative staff from SEGI University College, Kuala Lumpur campus, and an administrative staff, a director and a lecturer from RIMA College, Kuala Lumpur campus. Given that SEGI and RIMA run international joint programs, their staff members also have the experience of writing to and receiving emails from internal and external partners. They had a minimum of two years of experience in the educational sector, and all of them write and receive emails on a regular basis. To collect their feedback, the researcher presented a questionnaire that included four email messages that represented the four types of email genres identified in this study followed by four questions regarding every single email. The members were asked to explain the communicative purpose of the emails, name the messages, and write down a possible response to the messages and comment on the style and formality of the emails. The following are the four email messages presented to the focus group members.

Ex 6.46: 1.23. Examination Venue for IDCS global papers

Dear All

Please be advised that we have changed the exam venue for global papers to the following venue for the June 2010 cycle: Venue (complete address given)

If you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Regards

Auto Signature

Ex 6.47: 5.52. Subject: Re: short course

We could easily do a 7 weeks, short sem on Academic Skills.

Week one - Orientation, getting to know Malaysia and Malaysian Culture
Week 2 - week 7
Study Skills - Dr Xxxx or myself
Computer Skills - Xxxx
Academic Writing - Xxxx
2-3 days, not more than 8 hours per week.

any other suggestions??

Ex 6.48: 6.21. Dear Mr Xxxxxx,

Attached is the revised Quantitative decision making and E-Marketing assignments.

Many thanks

Xxxx

Ex 6.49: 7.8
Hi sir,

this is Xxxxxx
Sir, do we have class on Monday?

Thank you Sir

The feedback provided by the focus group confirmed the findings. Six of the seven focus group members agreed that the emails had different communicative purposes. Although the seventh member proclaimed that the emails had the same communicative purpose, he classified the given examples differently.

Table 6.6: FGMs' feedback on the informing email genre message

Questions / FGMs	Why was the email written?	What would be a possible replay?	Do you have any comments?	What is the communicative purpose of the email?
FGM 1	To notify the receiver of changes	Acknowledge receipt	Formally written	**To: inform about changes**
FGM 2	To inform	Acknowledge	Formal	**To: inform about exam venue**
FGM 3	To inform about the changes	Acknowledge receipt	Must be more formal	**To: inform about examination changes**
FGM 4	To inform the staff about changes	Acknowledge receipt	Formal	**To: inform about changes**
FGM 5	Give notice	No reply	No response	**To: inform about changed exam venue**
FGM 6	About exams	No reply	No response	**To: inform about changes**
FGM 7	Notification of venue	Thank you for the schedule	Informative	**To: tell about examination paper**

FGM: focus group member

Commenting on example (6.46) above, which is categorized as an informing email genre message by the researcher, six of the members used the same verb used by the researcher to identify the communicative purpose, '*inform'*. The seventh member used the verb '*tell'*, which is synonymous with '*inform'* (see Table 6.6 above). Members believed that the email was written to notify, inform, or give notice about the change of venue. If the members had received this email, two of them would not have replied, and the rest would acknowledge receipt. Commenting on the email, five members believed that the email was formal, while one member believed that it *'must be more formal'*. Two members did not comment on the email.

Table 6.7: FGMs' feedback on the discussion email genre message

Questions / FGMs	Why was the email written?	What would be a possible replay?	Do you have any comments?	What is the communicative purpose of the email?
FGM 1	To get more suggestions	Give suggestions	No comments	**To: discuss schedule**
FGM 2	Suggestions	Give suggestions	No salutation	**To: ask for suggestions**
FGM 3	Survey suggestions	Agree or disagree with suggestions	Not very clear	**To: suggest a short course**
FGM 4	Suggestions	Agree or make counter suggestions	Formal	**To: propose short course**
FGM 5	Promote suggestions	Suggest	No comments	**To: promote suggestions**
FGM 6	Short course available	Suggest	No Comments	**To: advise about course**
FGM 7	Course feedback	Give feedback	No Comments	**To: get feedback**

FGM: focus group member

Commenting on example (6.47) above, which is categorized as a discussion email genre message, focus group members believed that the email was sent to '*discuss'*, '*suggest'*, '*promote'*, '*propose'*, '*advise'*, or '*get feedback'* (see Table 6.7 above). The writer of the email proposed or promoted establishing a short course for new students; however, as the idea was still in the initial stage, she asked for advice, suggestions, or feedback, which made the email open for discussion. All the members believed if they had received the email, they would have replied and given their own suggestions. Two members believed that the email was formal and clear. This feedback supports the analysis of this type of email genre.

Table 6.8: FGM's feedback on the delivery email genre message

Question / FGMs	**Why was the email written?**	**What would be a possible replay?**	**Do you have any comments?**	**What is the communicative purpose of the email?**
FGM 1	MBA assignments	No reply	Short and formal	**To: send assignments**
FGM 2	Assignments	Acknowledge receipt	Formal	**To: send assignments**
FGM 3	Revised MBA assignments	Confirm receipt	Some grammatical mistakes	**To: pass on the assignments**
FGM 4	MBA Assignments	Confirming receipt	Formal	**To: send papers**
FGM 5	Revised copy	No reply	No comments	**To: send email assignments**
FGM 6	MBA assignments	Please await grades	No comments	**To: deliver**
FGM 7	Assignments	It has been received	Straight to the point	**To: send assignments**

FGM: focus group member

The feedback regarding example (6.48) above, which is classified as a delivering email genre message, also seemed to support the findings. Focus group members believed that the main purpose of writing the email was to '*send'*, '*deliver'*, or '*pass on'* the assignments. Four members believed that if they had received this email, they would have confirmed receipt only and the other three members would not have responded at all. Four of the focus group members believed that the email was short and formal; two members did not respond. Obviously, the feedback regarding

delivery messages supported the analysis as focus group members agreed with the findings (see Table 6.8 above).

Focus group members' feedback regarding the enquiry email genre message, example (6.49) above reflected their agreement with the analysis that the email was written to '*ask'*, '*request'* or '*enquire'* if there were a class on Monday. If they were the recipients of the email, however, they would have replied to respond to the question or the request. Four members chose to comment on the email. Three members stated that the email was formal, three members did not comment and one member believed that the writer should not use '*hi Sir'* as a salutation (see Table 6.9 below).

Table 6.9: FGM's feedback on the enquiry email genre message

Question / FGMs	**Why was the email written?**	**What would be a possible replay?**	**Do you have any comments?**	**What is the communicative purpose of the email?**
FGM 1	Confirming class	Replay to confirm	Informal	To: confirm if there is class on Monday
FGM 2	To ask if there is class	Respond	Formal	To: ask about class
FGM 3	Class confirmation	Confirm whether there is class on not	Shouldn't write "hi sir"	To: enquire about class
FGM 4	Inquiry email message	Confirm if there is class or not	Informal	To: ask about class
FGM 5	Schedule of class	Confirm class	No comments	To: ask class schedule
FGM 6	Class still active	Answer request	No comments	To: request
FGM 7	Class confirmation	Answer request	No comments	To: get feedback

FGM: focus group member

Focus group members confirmed the findings regarding the communicative purposes and genre types of the emails. Even though one focus group member stated that the emails were similar actions, the remaining six members agreed that the emails were sent to accomplish different communicative purposes and goals. Focus group members also confirmed that the different communicative purposes required different reaction. Regarding informing and delivering email genre messages, they

would have either confirmed receipt or not replied at all. However, they would have provided '*feedback'*, '*suggestions'*, '*advice'* or '*response* in reaction to discussion and enquiry email genre messages. Finally, focus group members confirmed the given names of the email genre types as they either suggested the same names given by the researcher or used synonyms.

6.4 Summary

The investigation of the complete texts as sequences of discourse units and the examination of the general patterns of discourse organization across all texts in the corpus (Biber, et al., 2007) revealed that the employees used four generic structures (Hasan, 1977) or email patterns (Bhatia, 2004; Biber et al., 2007). The identified patterns vary in their communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1993, 2002, 2004; Swales, 1990), topic (Yates and Orlikowski, 1992), generic structure (Hasan, 1977) and cognitive functions (Bhatia, 2004; Biber et al, 2007), which reflects that the genre of email in the educational institution constitutes four types of email genres.

Discussion email genre was used mainly to negotiate or discuss an issue; therefore, the main content move of the email was active in relation to involvement and participation. This was reflected in the use of declarative mood sentences that encourage interpersonal involvement, the use of first, second and third person pronouns, nominals, public verbs, and private verbs. The temporality of action included remote and current events, which reflects narrative discourse (Biber, 1995). As the input was at times based on personal opinion, the writers used hedges. The generic structure of this type of email genre included a single obligatory content move that carries the main communicative intention of the email message and two

reiterational content moves that intended to link the email to previous contact and provide extra information about the discussed issue. The framing structure of this email genre was influenced by the direction of the email, on the one hand, and relational factors, on the other. Basically, the emails that were sent to external partners were more formal than the emails that were sent to fellow colleagues.

Enquiry email genre included an obligatory super move that referred to the request and the response. This exchange of emails reflected a request-reply strategy that is comparable to structured turn-taking in oral communications. The emails that were sent to request information or actions mainly included polite direct and indirect requests that reflected a desire to save the face of the addressee. The emails that carried the response, however, mainly included declarative active voice sentences that intended to give information or explain an issue. The generic structure of this email genre included an obligatory super move and two reiterational moves to link the responding email to the request and to give more information about the issue. The framing structure of enquiry email genre message was also influenced by the direction of the email message and social distance between the employees.

The delivery email genre, however, intended to deliver files or documents. Therefore, the main reference in this type of email genre was to the attached document. There was little involvement between the communicators, and the writers mainly used a formulaic expression to direct the addressee to the attached file. The generic structure of this type of email genre included four content moves and six faming moves. As this type of email genre did not require a reply, the writers used requesting confirming receipt and offering help if needed. These moves were not

used in discussion and enquiry email genres. The use of providing extra information move was an optional move in this type of email genre, whereas it was reiterational in the discussion and enquiry email genres. As in the discussion and enquiry email genres, the faming formality of the delivery email genre was influenced by the direction of the email and social distance between the employees.

Informing email genre intended to notify or advise the recipients regarding the general interest issues. The moves were passive in relation to involvement. The writers used passive voice constructs, public verbs and suasive verbs to solicit an action from the recipient. The generic structure of this type of email genre included the obligatory content move that carried the communicative purpose, an optional move that further explains the issue, two reiterational content moves that intend to express availability and a request endorsing receipt, three obligatory framing moves, one semi-obligatory and one reiterational. The framing structure of this type of email genre was influenced by neither the direction nor the relational factors. This type of email genre was mainly a one-to-many communicative mood.

The investigation on the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity revealed the interrelationships between texts (Bhatia, 2010a; Devitt, 1991) and interactions within and across genres and discourses (Bhatia, 2010a). In relation to interrelationships within and across texts, it was shown that the four types of email genre messages included instances of intertextuality. This was carried out explicitly by referring to previous texts (referential intertextuality), or implicitly by using reoccurring forms in reoccurring rhetorical situations (generic intertextuality) and the relationship between past texts and future texts by creating the need for the future texts (functional

intertextuality). In relation to interactions within and across genres and discourses, the writers appropriated the generic resources of a genre to create another. This was a result of communicating private intentions in socially recognized communicative purposes (Bhatia, 2008). In addition, the writers mixed two discourses (written and spoken including non-verbal). This mixing mainly occurred as a result of communicating private intentions, especially when writing to students; the influence of relational factors, especially in the internally sent emails; the desire to extend textual domain of a sentence to another; minimize imposition and the lack of editing or proofreading the emails before sending them.

Checking the findings against the focus group members' opinions confirmed the findings in this chapter that the email corpus belong to four types of email genres in relation to their communicative purposes and intended functions or goals (Bhatia, 1993, 2004, 2008, 2010a; Swales, 1990). The focus group also confirmed the names of the four types of email genres by suggesting the same name proposed by the researcher or synonyms.

This chapter investigated the third perspective in Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional framework for genre analysis, the socio-cognitive perspective. This revealed that the emails comprised four types of email genres. The following chapter, the socio-critical perspective, investigates the influences of the disciplinary conventions in NED on language use in these four types of email genres.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SOCIO-CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter examines language use in the email genre messages as a product of culture (Bhatia, 2010a) by examining why the discourse community use language the way they do and how to develop understanding of what they do and the way they do it (Bhatia, 2004, p. 213).As such, this chapter examines the fourth research question pertaining the influences of the disciplinary conventions in the institution on language use in the four types of email genres.

The disciplinary conventions, according to Bhatia (2004), could be implicitly or explicitly enforced in organizations. The investigation of the socio-critical perspective in this study inspects the influence of the institutional culture (section 7.1) and the institutional ideologies (section 7.2) of the educational institution on the discursive practices used in the four types of email genres. This investigation targeted the "contextualizational cues" or the "linguistic forms" that signalled "contextual presuppositions" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 131). The main purpose of conducting this analysis is disclosing the "hidden intentions and motivations" of actions in a specific professional culture (Bhatia, 2010a, p. 394).

7.1 Institutional Culture

The institutional or the organizational culture comprises the "distinctive norms, beliefs, principles and ways of behaving that combine to give each organization its distinct character" (Arnold, 2005, p. 625). That is, the institutional culture is the practices used by the discourse community to achieve their targets. In investigating

the institutional culture, Bhatia (2010a) suggested using "narratives of experience that are drawn from key practitioners within these institutional cultures" (p. 397). Given that the researcher is a member of the discourse community, the investigation of the institutional culture in this study was carried out using participant observation and formal and informal interviews. The interviews were carried out with six members of the discourse community who were the assistant academic director, two heads of department, two administrative staff and a full-time lecturer. Once asked about the institutional culture of the institution and the expected behaviour from the employees to fit in the institution, all seemed to agree on being helpful and friendly. The administrative staff and the lecturer also mentioned the controlled and hierarchal culture. Even though some researchers have argued that institutions have a single organizational culture (Meyerson and Martin, 1987; Quinn and McGrath, 1985), others believe that they have a number of cultures that might even be conflicting cultures (Deal and Kennedy, 2000; Handy, 1993; Schein, 1985, 2009). According to Handy (1995), institutional goals are better served when institutions have a number of or mixed cultures. Thus, humanistic-encouraging (supportive), affiliative (friendly) and hierarchal (controlled) institutional cultures seem the shared programming of mind (Hofstede, 1980) in the educational institution.

7.1.1 Humanistic-Encouraging Culture

One main characteristic of NED is the humanistic-encouraging culture. Humanistic-encouraging culture, according to Cooke and Szumal (1993), is a constructive value in the workplace as it inspires the employees to be supportive, constructive and share information with each other. Office layout in the institution has made this a built-in value in the character of every single employee and lecturer in the institution. Offices

in NED are arranged on the departmental level using open-office plan (cubicle farms). Some believe that this open office layout encourages oral inter-departmental communication including personal contact and information sharing among the employees (Sanders and McCormick, 1993). Work in NED is carried out on the departmental and institutional levels. If a staff member or a lecturer is not sure about an issue, he/she usually asks his fellow colleagues or the management, who would most likely help. This is a value that new staff members appreciate in the institution. According to Ms. MA, who joined the institution three years ago, the employees in her department are very helpful and supportive. She stated that "working here is also okay for me. In my department we work together. If I need something I ask one of the staff, and they do it for me. If I am not sure about something I also ask. We always work together". Recalling her early days in the institution, she added "when I first came here I didn't know a thing, I always asked other staff and they always helped me". Mr. DS, a fulltime lecturer, also seems to agree with Ms. MA that staff members in NED are supportive and share information. As I insisted, he gave me an example. "Okay", he said, "remember when I prepared MQA document, I wasn't sure about a few things, so I told Mr. VK about it. He said don't worry, that day he called me for a meeting and I found there Ms. MAR so we discussed it together". In this meeting that Mr. DS recalled, there were three employees, as he mentioned, Mr. VK, the assistant academic director, Ms. MAR, the registrar who has long experience in dealing with the MQA and Mr. DS, the lecturer who needed some clarifications.

This sense of sharing information and being a supportive and constructive employee was also evident in the four different types of email genres, but more prominently in discussion and enquiry email genres. The nature of discussion and enquiry email

genres, categorically, is based on the sense of sharing and the sensitivity to the needs of the others. The very high frequency (36 percent) of using discussion email genre messages, in which the communicators exchange ideas and opinions, and enquiry email genre messages (33 percent), which involve requests and responding to requests reflects, by itself, the humanistic-encouraging culture in the workplace. In discussion email genre chains, the writer of the initiating email presents an issue that he/she wants to discuss. In reply, the recipient of the email usually provides suggestions, explanations or clarifications. As chain 7.1 below shows, the writer of the initiating email, Mr. VK, is openly in search of '*suggestions'* regarding a '*short course'*. As a supportive employee, the respondent, Ms. BP, gave a general suggestion in the second email and a detailed suggestion in the fourth email in response to the input or clarification made by the writer of the third email.

Chain 7.1: 1. Subject: short course Hi Ms. BP, We have international students who came two month after the semester start. They cant join their classes at this time, any suggestions? VK	**2:** Subject: Re: short course Dear VK, I guess we could easily do a 7 weeks, short sem on Academic Skills. They may attend at least 8hrs per week. BP
3: Subject: Re: short course Ok good, we also need to give them orientation as well.	**4:** Subject: Re: short course OK, Week one - Orientation, getting to know Malaysia and Malaysian Culture Week 2 -week 7 Study Skills – Dr. SP or myself Computer Skills - David Academic Writing - English lecturer 2-3 days, not more than 8 hours per week. any suggestions??

Being a supportive and constructive employee in an organization also requires giving encouragement (Cooke and Szumal, 1993). This practice was noticed in the email messages as the employees strived to encourage other employees and students to accomplish their tasks and praise the ones who successfully accomplished their tasks. This was carried out by several methods such as recognizing the hard work of other employees and students as in '*Very good job done'*, showing confidence in the abilities of the others as in '…*he would send me his module assignments by courier*

from out of the country… . I'm sure that you too are very capable and will do the same' and inspiring others as in '*So now's the time to get back to your books to swot for exams, want straight As'.* As the excerpts above show, the employees were supportive in terms of noticing and praising the achievements of other employees, and motivating the students to study hard, and complete their assignments. In the excerpted material, the writers used modifiers to intensify or emphasize the adjectives '*good'* and '*capable'.* In '*very good job done'*, the adverb modifier '*very'* modified the adjective modifier '*good'* to intensify the noun '*job'* to exemplify great interest and applause for the taken action. In '*very capable'*, the modifier also intensified the adjective '*capable'* so it reflects great confidence in the abilities of the students. Generally, these emails included high involvement between the communicators as they mainly used the first and second person pronouns '*I'* and '*you'* (Biber, 1988) to reflect the personal nature of these emails. Their style was mainly informal as the writers used substitutions (i.e., 'do the same') and contractions (i.e., I'm, now's), which reflect the writing-like-speaking nature of these email messages.

7.1.2 Affiliative Culture

Affiliative culture, according to Cooke and Szumal (1993), suggests placing high priority on interpersonal relationships. The members are expected to maintain a friendly workplace environment and cooperate regarding the different issues that they face. They should also be open and sensitive in terms of organizational needs so that satisfaction is achieved (Klein et al., 1995). The affiliative culture in the institution was among the first values that grabbed my attention in the workplace. I straightaway noticed that the top management, lecturers and staff members were

friendly and welling to help. They even took the initiative to explain issues. I still remember the first conversation that I had with the director after my appointment. He congratulated me for being appointed to the institution, explained my duties and took me to my office. That same day he treated a number of lecturers and me and management staff to lunch. This good impression lasted all the way till now. Other staff members are also friendly and open in their relationships among each other and with students. They always share their food in the pantry. As I go there to prepare my coffee, I overhear them '*chitchatting'* about organizational and personal issues. Most of the '*chitchats'* that I overheard were discussions about institutional issues or activities, light gossip about students, other staff, lecturers and directors. They also share their experience of where to find delicious food, drinks and latest mega sales in the town. Their relationship with the students is not different. Students may walk into the offices to have a discussion, request a document or meet lecturers without an appointment. I never have heard a complaint form a student regarding an unfriendly attitude. Given that NED is a private educational institution, the students are customers (Tang, 2012) and need to be treated with respect.

This friendliness in interpersonal communication at the institution was also reflected in the four different types of email genres. The employees maintained the affiliative culture in their internally and externally exchanged emails, which can be observed in the intensive use of positive politeness (Ambady et al., 1996; Brown and Levinson, 1987). Positive politeness, according to Pilegaard (1997), is normally used in business communication to maintain a friendly work environment and build a cooperative business atmosphere. In the discussion email genre, as the writers debated an issue in a number of emails, they noticed and attended to the recipients by

acknowledging their previous emails and showing exaggerated interest in their actions using modifiers as in '*thank you very much for your very gracious emails'*. The use of the conversational phrase '*thank you very much'* (Simpson-Vlach and Ellis, 2010) intended to attend and notice the action of the recipient, sending the email. The exaggeration, however, was carried out using an adverb '*very'* and adjective '*gracious'* as premodifiers to intensify the noun '*email'* (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In addition, the writers of discussion genre messages attempted to '*assert common ground'* by using a "creaky voice" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 119) by including the sender and the recipient in an activity even though the recipient only is referred to as in '*OK, let's stop celebrating and focus on completing the assignments*'. In this excerpt, the use of *'let's'* implies that the writer and the recipient are included in the activity, '*completing the assignments'*. However, as this email was written by an administrative staff in the institution to a student, the use of '*let's',* therefore, functions as a "personal-centre switch' (Brawn and Levinson, 1987, p. 119) strategy to minimize the imposition and create a friendly correspondence.

> **Ex 7.1:**2.14. Pretty sure that you have your hands full :) when shall I come over for material collection?'
>
> **Ex 7.2:** 2.24. I am sorry you have had this problem

As enquiry genre messages are involved in requesting, which is a FTA (Trosborg, 1994), the writers strived to reduce the imposition and maintain a friendly atmosphere. To reduce the imposition, the writers mainly used the showing sympathy and understanding strategy. This strategy was used in the requesting emails as in '*Pretty sure that you have your hands full :) when shall I come over for material collection?',* and the responding to request emails as in *'I am sorry you have had this problem'*. In example (7.1) above, the writer shows understanding that the recipient is busy; this, however, did not stop her from making the enquiry. Given that the

emails are exchanged in an institution, ignoring a job or a task because of FTA is not accepted as this leads to unfinished business (Kankaanranta, 2005). Therefore, the showing understanding technique in '*pretty sure you have your hands full'* meant to minimize the imposition and create a pleasant atmosphere before making the request. This technique was also supported by the use of the smiling face emoticon to reflect a lively non-verbal sympathy. In example (7.2) above, which is taken from a responding to request email, however, the writer showed sympathy by making an apology.

> **Ex 7.3:** 6.57. please study hard and study smart, we want all to pass and distinction holders to buy us lunch!!!
>
> **Ex 7.4:** 3.97. Had two minutes to spare, so perhaps its better to send them off to you, so that you can work on the weekend... please find attached

Affiliative culture influence was also found in a number of delivery and informing email genres. Even though these two types of email genres do not require a reply, the writers maintained a friendly outlook of these messages by using a sense of affiliative humour. Affiliative humour, according to Romero and Curthirds (2006), helps create a positive environment in institutions and reduces stress. This type of humour in the emails was presented in shape of light practical funny expressions that intended to draw a smile on the face of the reader as in *'please study hard and study smart, we want all to pass and distinction holders to buy us lunch!!!*' (example (7.3) above and *'Had two minutes to spare, so perhaps its better to send them off to you, so that you can work on the weekend... please find attached'* (example (7.4) above. In example (7.3) above, the writer, who is administrative staff, sent this excerpt as part of an informing email genre message to give the students their final exam timetable. The use of '*distinction holders to buy us lunch!!!'* was not a serious demand from the administrative staff, but a light moment to draw a smile and ease the tension of the students. In example (7.4) above, this is delivery genre message was sent by the head

of studies to a lecturer, the writer, a close friend, and sent the marksheets so that the lecturer could key in student marks. The whole task can be accomplished in a few minutes. Building on a close relationship, the writer made use of some affiliative humour to creatively send the marksheets at an unpleasant time. As the two excerpts show, the emails that included affiliative humour were mainly informal as they included instances of conversational deletion, '*had two minutes'*, hedges, '*perhaps'*, dots ellipsis, and multiple exclamatory marks which marks excitement (Colley et al., 2004). This, in effect, explains the main purpose of using hybrid discourses in the discussion and enquiry email genre messages that were sent to students or were internally exchanged.

7.1.3 Hierarchical Culture

Hierarchical culture was also perceived as one distinguishing norm of the educational institution. Hierarchical culture, according to Cameron (2007), is a formalized and structured culture that enforces rules and places great consideration on technical issues (Denison and Spreitzer, 1991). The institutions that exercise hierarchical culture usually favour control as they desire stability and cohesion rather than adaptability and spontaneity (O'Donnell and Boyle, 2008). This is noticed as authority and decision-making is based on the position of the employee (Anderson and Anderson, 2010; De Mooij, 2011).

The hierarchical culture in the institution is not a general and absolute norm. It is needed to maintain leadership, control and institutional commitment (Dale and Fox, 2008). The employees and the lecturers in the three departments have the authority to discuss issue with students, give or receive information, and make commitments as

long as it is related to their institutional duties listed in their contract of employment. Issues that are beyond the institutional duties of an employee, however, should be directed to the authorized personnel. “This is a serious matter”, Ms. BP proclaimed. For example, annual leave applications must be submitted two weeks in advance. They have to be approved by the head of department, first, and then directed to the assistant academic director for final approval. Even if the head of the respective department approved the leave, the assistant academic director may decline it. Mr. VK, the assistant academic director, agrees that hierarchal culture is a feature in the institution; however, he explained that this culture is used as a method of controlling practices. “For leaves”, he clarified, “sometimes MQA or MOHE want to visit us, but the heads of department doesn’t know. I can’t give leave (pause) I also tell the person why I can’t give, they understand”. In regard to extensions to submit assignments, the heads of department are the only personnel authorized to approve or reject the applications. The lecturers do not have the authority to extend the due date for submitting an assignment. They need to discuss the issue with the head of the department before giving extensions. “It is complicated (laughs)”. Ms. BP, the head of studies declared, “At the beginning of every semester, we set the dates and inform our external partners and external examiners about it, you know that. So to change, we need to request their approval, we can’t just do it”. In addition, as the institution has quite a large number of international students, the registrar is the only authorized person to approve or reject students’ leave requests. Even the head of the respective departments should not approve a leave for a student without the approval of the registrar. Even though these practices slow down the progress of work in times, they, however, regulate the procedures and processes. Over a period of time in the institution, new employees and students alike get used to these practices and take

them in a positive manner as they learn who to contact regarding what issues. In addition, the orientation session at the beginning of every new semester plays a big role in educating new students about the rules and regulations and the right personnel to contact regarding their respective issues.

> **Ex 7.5:** 6.62. Regarding the extension please contact Ms. BP. I am sure Ms BP would like know, do you have any particular reason for it
>
> **Ex 7.6:** 2.24. I am forwarding your email to Xxx

The influence of this hierarchical culture was prominent in the four types of email genre messages. The practices in the email genres, in general, and enquiry email genre, in particular, reflected the formalized and structured nature of the workplace (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991). As in daily practices, the writers of the enquiry email genre directed the students to the correct employee to contact regarding their respected issues. This practice was carried out by directing the requester to the authorized person, as in example (7.5) above, or by forwarding the email to the authorized person, as in example (7.6) above. The excerpts in (7.5) and (7.6) are taken from enquiry email genre messages sent to unauthorized personnel. In reaction, the administrative staff, in example (7.5), directed the requester to the right person to contact regarding the issue, '*extensions'*. Even though she is an employee in the respected department, she did not approve, reject, or promise personally to carry the request to the head of the department. She merely advised the requester to contact the authorized person and advised him to prepare a good and valid reason to support his request, as she knows the rules and regulations. Similarly, in example (7.6) above, the administrative staff forwarded the requesting email to the authorized employee as she does not have the authority to respond to the request. To keep the requester informed, she notified him about the action. In fact, the majority of the '*request1-request2-reply-thanking'* (RRRT) pattern in enquiry email genre chains was a result

of requests received by unauthorized employees. The second request in the pattern stands for forwarding the requesting email to the authorized employee. These practices in enquiry email genre reflect the hierarchically formalized and structured practices in the institution.

Ex 7.7: 5.11. We do not offer students direct entry to the Diploma part 2

Ex 7.8: 5.55. You are required to follow the instructions…

The hierarchical culture of the institution was also reflected in rule enforcement (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991). This practice was particularly common in discussion and informing email genres. The writers of informing email genre messages intended to notify or advise a group of recipients regarding a general interest issue or update. The tone of these emails was mainly direct and formal to enforce the rule and reflect on the power of the sender as in example (7.8). This type of genre, as mentioned earlier, had a passive tone in regard to participation and negotiation. The recipients were expected to follow the instructions. This was obvious in the use of the passive voice constructs as in '*you are required'* (7.8) to enforce the proposition and reflect the "leading role" (Chin, 2011, p. 524) of the sender. Rule enforcement in informing email genre messages was also apparent in the extensive use of suasive verbs in passive voice formulaic expressions as in '*please be informed'* and *'you are informed'* and the imperative mood as in '*please note'* followed by the rule. The direct, imperative and formal tone in these constructs intended to enforce the rule and minimize the options of negotiation.

Rule enforcement in discussion email genre messages, however, had a different style. Discussion email genre messages, unlike informing genre messages, were active in terms of participation. The writers mainly used first person singular and second person pronouns to represent the self and the other and informal tone as in the use of

ellipsis, substitution, hedges and even emoticons to show lively expressions. However, in case the students wanted to discuss or negotiate a fixed rule or ask for exceptions, the employees usually used formal style to put-an-end for the discussion and enforce their decision. As example (7.7) shows, the active voice declarative statement has a formal, direct and imposing tone to enforce the rule that direct entry to '*diploma part 2'* is not possible in the institution. The writer also used the institutional exclusive first person plural pronoun '*we'* to imply that the proposition or the enforcement is not a personal stand, but rather an institutional stand that is not negotiable.

As a furtherance of the previous point, rule enforcement, O'Donnell and Boyle (2008) and Zammuto and Krakower (1991) also noted that hierarchical originations focus on and refer to the rules and regulations (policies) rather than the goals and the tasks. This point was also apparent in the emails as the writers made use of referential intertextuality to the rules and regulations as in *'in accordance with our rules and regulations'* and functional intertextuality by using the "cut-paste" technique (Devitt, 1991) to include the rules and regulations as part of the new text. The emails referred to or included excerpts from the rules, policies and regulations of exemptions, extensions and registration. Referential intertextuality assisted the employees to create an intertexts relation between the proposition in the email and the rules and regulations in the general sense. This was a practice in discussion, enquiry, informing and delivery email genres as a technique to explain the source of enforcement, on the one hand, and convince the recipient and put-an-end for lengthy email exchanges in discussion and enquiry email genres, on the other. The "cut-paste" functional intertextuality, however, was used mainly in informing email genre

messages to make a direct reference to the specific articles of the rules and regulations that govern the practice in the supposed issue. The rules and regulations were referred to as the source of enforcement, which governs the institutional practices, thus, they are not negotiable.

7.2 Organizational Ideologies

To further investigate why or for what purpose the employees of the educational institution use language the way they do, the organizational ideologies of the private higher educational institution are investigated. The organizational ideologies of NED are investigated in relation to the values and principles that are stated in the "Staff Code of Conduct" (Dainty and Anderson, 2000; Gilman, 2005). The employees (lecturers and staff members), of NED are expected to follow the 'Staff Code of Conduct', as it is named in the institution. This code of conduct, as it is described, sets the standard of behaviour that the employees **MUST** comply with as part of their employment. The code of conduct, which is placed in a number of places in the premises (reception area, administrative staff rooms, staff billboards, part-time lecturers rooms), emphasizes on four main values that are the compliance with the rules and regulations of the institution, respect, integrity and diligence. As the compliance with the rules and regulations of the institution was identified and investigated under the hierarchical institutional culture in previous section, this section examines the influence of the remaining three institutional ideologies, respect, integrity and diligence, on language use in the four types of email genres.

7.2.1 Respect

The employees of NED are advised to *'treat other employees and students with respect'*. The term respect is originated from the Latin 'respectus','re' means back and '*spectus'* means look, which literally means look back (Alexander, 1999). It is an etiquette or attitude that reflects social competence (Guffey and Loewy, 2011). Showing respect in the institution is noticed in the daily practices of the employees through the use of polite words and expressions when communicating to fellow employees or students, controlling ones emotions in case of arguments, and respecting the opinions of others even when there is disagreement. The employees also showed conformity to this institutional ideology in the four types of email genres through the use of salutation markers in front of the name or designation of the recipient[s], using a closing marker at the bottom of the email, giving deference, and minimizing the imposition.

The use of salutation markers in front of the name or the designation of the recipient[s] in email messages conveys "respect and deference" (Waldvogel, 2007, p.10). Unlike the obligatory nature of salutations in business letters, they are optional in email messages. Thus, the high frequency of occurrence of these markers in the four different types of email genre messages that are directed to fellow staff and students reflects treating others with respect. The employees used a set of conventional formal salutation markers such as '*Dear Mr. Name'* and '*Dear Sir'*, informal such as '*Hi Name'*, and unconventional markers such as '*Hi Mr. Name'* in their email genre messages. Noticeably, the use of these markers depended on power relations and social distance between the employees. For example, if the email was sent by a superior to a close colleague, the usual choice was an informal salutation; if

the email was sent by a superior to a distant colleague, the usual choice was a formal salutation. On the other hand, if the email was sent by a subordinate to a close colleague superior, the choice was mainly informal or '*Mr. Name'*; if the email was sent by a subordinate to a distant superior, the salutation was formal. The emails were sent to a group of employees or students mainly included a formal salutation marker and a designation as in '*Dear colleagues*, '*Dear Students'*, or '*Dear Lecturers*'. The emails sent to a single student, however, mainly included the '*Dear Name*" formal salutation.

Likewise, the use of closings at the bottom of the email was another strategy of signalling respect, deference and "constructing the addressee as having status" (Waldvogel, 2007, p. 14). As the use of the salutation move, closing moves are obligatory moves in business letters; however, they are optional elements in email messages. Therefore, the high frequency of using the closing moves in the four types of email genres reflects conformity to the institutional ideology of respect in the institution. Interestingly, a number of email genre messages included two closing moves that are the 'pre-closing' move, which was usually a thanking move, and the closing move. The closing moves were used as a method to express regards as in '*kind regards'*, wishes as in '*best wishes'* and showing gratitude as in '*thank you'*. These closing markers were common in the four types of email genres; however, they were prominently common in informing email genre messages. The one-to-many communicative nature of the informing email genre definitely influenced the level of politeness and respect in the emails.

> **Ex 7.9:** 2.37. Just to inform you and all concerned that Xxxx is doing Business Law, because he says he has failed systems analysis.

The conformity to the institutional ideology of respect was also noticeable in minimizing the imposition (Brawn and Levinson, 1987) in the four types of email genres. Using words or expressions that "narrowly delimits the extent of the FTA" (p.177) minimizes the imposition. As the writers sense the imposition in expressing their wants directly, which could be viewed as rude, they chose to minimize this imposition. As example (7.9) above shows, the writer, who is the head of study, informs the head of students' counselling unit about the status of a student. The use of '*just',* in the excerpt, meant to minimize the imposition of the mental process verb '*inform'* which implies giving notification (Chin, 2011). Minimizing imposition was also noticed in the overwhelming majority of delivery email genre messages. The writers of this email genre mainly signalled to the attached files using the formulaic expression '*please/kindly find attached'*. The use of politeness markers such as *'please'* or *'kindly'* in front of the imperatives, according to Nickerson (1999), is negative politeness, which is "the heart of respect behaviour" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 129).

Ex 7.10: 4.40. Appreciate all your help.

Ex 7.11: 1.60. Very very sorry, you have to e-mail and ask Ms MA…

Ex 7.12: 1.8. Every registration needs to go through us

In addition, the writers of the email genre messages also showed respect by "going on-record as incurring debt" as in example (7.10) above, "apologizing" as in example (7.11), and "stating the imposition as a general rule" as in example (7.12). All these instances in the four types of email genre messages reflect employees' conformity to the institutional ideology of 'respect' in the educational institution. The employees strived to treat other employees, students, and external partners with respect through the use of polite and politeness markers, expressions and strategies that did not hinder their face and freedom of action.

7.2.2 Integrity

"Carry your duties with honesty and integrity" is another ideology in the institution. Integrity refers to "behaviour that is honest and ethical" (Lussier and Achua, 2010 p. 39). It is "the courage of our convictions [and] the willingness to speak and act on behalf of what we know is right" (Carter, 1996, p. 7). Integrity, in NED, is both a practice and a commitment. NED, as a Malaysian private higher educational institution that works under the direct supervision of the MOHE and its accreditation body the MQA, and a member of the Malaysian Association of Private Colleges and Universities (MAPCU), commits itself to the ethical conduct of integrity (MAPCU, 2012; MQA, 2012). This commitment is implicit as an accredited institution in Malaysia and explicit, appearing in the staff code of conduct adopted by the institution.

The employees, academic and administrative staff, in the institution act with integrity. Given that the context is an academic institution, the institutional ideology of integrity reflects the responsibility of the employees to maintain and safeguard the academic and administrative ethical standards of the institution. In relation to the academic standard, lecturers need to make sure that students do not cheat or plagiarize their work and assignments by scanning them using a plagiarism detector. To maintain marking standard, they also need to mark the exams and assignments in relationship to an already set marking scheme. In addition, the academics need to make sure that all students have a fair chance, so extensions, for example, are not given to students on personal basis but as part of a well-defined policy. On the administrative side, management, administrative, and sometimes academic employees need to act with integrity and honesty in regard to maintaining admission

and exemption standards. I know that the lecturers and staff members have come across a number of attempts to compromise these standards, but, to the best of my knowledge, they have rejected these attempts.

> **Ex 7.13:** 7.17. I received the hardcopy of your assignment, thank you. As I need to scan the assignment before giving a mark, kindly email me the softcopy.
>
> **Ex 7.14:** 1.4. Thank you for your email. Please allow me to explain the situation. As I am still waiting for the payment to come through for the 2 new ICCS students (XXXXXXXXXX and 1 new IDCS student (XXXXXXXX) which still hasn't arrived to date, I will not be able to enroll them until this payment is received.
>
> **Ex 7.15:** 5.11. We do not offer students direct entry to the Diploma part 2; our systems do not even allow this.
>
> **Ex 7.16:** 6.45. After a deep and serious discussion on the matter of extensions of assignments with the Moderator, which has also been taken up at the previous examination board has had the following outcome:
> All students are to be informed that extensions are only permitted for extenuating circumstances, under this clause; assignment submissions can be extended in serious conditions such as unforeseen circumstances, bereavement in the family or a hospitalization.

The conformity to the institutional ideologies of integrity was also present in the four types of email genres. The employees used the power of their positions to impose the internal standards that the institution set as benchmarks and external standards that are expected from the governmental accredited authorities and non-governmental partners. As all students are required to submit a softcopy of their assignments so that the institution checks the originality of their work, the lecturers followed this standard as in example (7.13) above. Obviously, the student did not submit the assignment personally to the lecturer. Thus, the lecturer explained the obligation and requested the softcopy of the assignment so that he could scan it using a plagiarism detector. As representatives of the owners, the administrative staff also followed the procedures of enrolment and payments as in example (7.14) above. As the institution is bound with agreements with external partners and MQA regarding credit transfer and exemptions, the assistant academic director also acted upon these rules so that the image of the institution will not be diminished, as in example (7.15) above. In

order to give a fair chance to all students, the heads of department also used their power to unify the standards as in example (7.16) above. Acting with integrity in the email genre messages is also noticed in the "consistencies" in carrying out the same task in a number of email genre messages that were sent to different recipients at different times. Even though the employees were asked to compromise the standards either implicitly, by ignoring a requirement, or explicitly by requesting a compromise or trying to use an insider as in '*You just tell her that we just received our assignment last 2 weeks which we need more time to complete the assignment'*, the employees, however, acted with integrity. They requested the missing parts, as in example (7.13) above, and affirmed that institutional processes needed to be carried out in an ethical manner so that all students had a fair chance, on the one hand, and the institution maintained its good name, which would benefit the students, the graduates and the employees, on the other.

Carrying out this institutional ideology required the use of formal linguistic features to reflect the uncompromising stand of the employees regarding these ethical issues. In respect to enquiry email genre messages, the writers used polite imperatives and wh-questions to solicit an action form the recipient. They also used semi modals, as '*need to',* to reflect on the obligation. In responding to [compromising] requests, the writers used lengthy formal and direct sentences to explain the ethical obligation. In discussion email genre messages, the use of the exclusive first person plural pronoun '*we'* was common to reflect the institutional obligation on the issue. The writers of discussion genre emails mainly used the first person singular pronoun '*I'* to represent the self; however, to reflect on the ethical obligation and to imply that the issue is a corporate issue, they used the exclusive '*we'*. As in responding to [compromising]

requests, the writers of discussion email genre messages also used lengthy formal, firm and direct active voice declarative sentences to elaborate and fully explain the issue. In informing email genre messages, the employees mainly used passive voice agentless constructs, which reflect abstract style (Biber, 1995) and formulaic expressions such as '*please be informed'* and '*all students to be informed that*' as markers to reflect on giving formal information (Chin, 2011). The use of public verbs was also noticeable in this type of email genre as a method to clearly convey the speech acts (Quirk, et al., 1985). Overall, the use of nouns was noticeable in these emails (i.e., assignment, payment, extension, submission, examination, regulation, policy). The use of nouns, which are referential devices, according to Biber (1995), intended to emphasis the ethical obligations of the employees in relation to existing policies and procedures. Noticeably, to reflect on the ethical obligation, the employees followed an "indirect sequence" (Chang and Hsu, 1998) by explaining the obligation first, and then presenting the request for information or files or their final decision regarding the given issue.

7.2.3 Diligence

The employees of NED are also advised to show diligence or careful and persistent hard work or effort in carrying out the institutional tasks (Simpson, 2009). The employees are disciplined as they usually attend their offices and carry their responsibilities in an efficient and competent manner. The reception, for example, is attended throughout the working day, even in the lunch hour. The administrative staff carry out their duties promptly. The lecturers set at least three official office or consultation hours per week to meet the students. The students may also walk into lecturers or administrative staff offices without an appointment.

This diligence is also reflected in the email exchanges. The assistant academic director, heads of department, lecturers and administrative staff attend their official email account throughout the working day. They discussed academic and organizational issues among themselves or with governmental authorities, external partners and students. They explicated and elaborated on these issues in a conscientious manner. This practice was carried out with patience as some issues were discussed in a number of out-going and in-coming emails that created chains of up to nine email messages. In case they were unsure about an issue, the employees requested clarifications from fellow employees, students, agents, and external partners so that they carry out their institutional tasks in a professional and responsible manner. They also promptly responded to the requests they received so that they did not waste time of other employees or students. Additionally, the employees of NED took the initiative in carrying out tasks such as delivering timetables, exam results, assignments, marksheets, and mark schemes to fellow employees and students on time. Finally, the employees, the heads of department especially, made sure that fellow employees, students, and external partners were well-informed about the latest changes, developments and updates regarding the academic and organizational issues in the institution. The four different types of email genres in the institution, in fact, was the result of diligence.

In carrying out these tasks in the four different types of email genres, the writers used different communicative and linguistic strategies to suit the communicative purpose of the message, on the one hand, and the nature, the situation and the participants, on the other. In discussion email genre messages, the employees were involved in giving

permissions, expressing obligations, giving opinions, requesting more information, and granting approvals. This was reflected in extensive use of active voice, declarative sentences, modal verbs and private factual, private mental and mental state cognitive verbs (Biber, 1995; Quirk, et al., 1985). This type of email genre was, naturally, self-centred as the employees mainly used the first person singular pronoun '*I'* to reflect personal opinions, suggestions, and understanding regarding the issue.

In enquiry email genre, the employees, in the requesting sub-type, used polite imperative and interrogative sentences to present their requests; private mental cognitive verbs to show the unfulfilled aspiration of the writer; and volitive modality to show writers' wish or hope regarding certain proposition. In the response sub-type, however, the writers mainly used declarative active voice sentences to present the requested information; commissive modalities to express writers' commitment to fulfil the requested proposition; and private factual cognitive verbs to present the fact as perceived by the writer. These two sub-types of enquiry genre are interlinked in an inseparable cause-result relationship, as the initiation of the request is the main purpose of the response.

In delivery email genre, however, the attached file[s] or documents took the centre stage. The content of the email message mainly included formulaic expressions such as '*please find attached'* and *'enclosed please find'* to divert the attention of the recipient to the attached file. The use of public verbs was common in this type of genre to reflect on the direct speech acts carried in the email (i.e., attach, check, enclose, deliver) (Quirk, et al., 1985). The use of pronouns, private verbs and modal

verbs, however, was not common, which reflects the passive construct of this type of email genre that does not encourage participation.

In informing email genre, the employees, especially the heads of department, were involved in notifying, updating, and advising fellow employees and students regarding general interest issues such as the rules and regulation, policies, procedures, practices, exam timetables, due dates to submit assignments, class cancelation, and replacement classes. This type of genre was carried out in formal and direct language. The writers used clearly informative identifying topic moves, mainly formal salutations and closings, nouns as referential devices, agentless passive voice constructs, direct and lengthy declarative active voice sentences, private verbs, factual cognitive verbs and commissive modality. The overwhelming majority of the internally and externally exchanged informing email genre messages were signed off using auto signature that clearly stated the full name, position, name of organization, address, and contact details of the sender to sustain credibility and show eligibility to carry out the actions presented in the email.

7.3 Summary

Through the investigation of the institutional cultures and the institutional ideologies of NED, the socio-critical perspective investigated why the employees use language the way they do. The employees were bound by personal and professional code of conducts to follow so to be accepted as fit members of the discourse community. This bound shaped the communicative and linguistic practices (Chin, 2011) of the employees in the four different types of email genres.

The employees were bound to be supportive, friendly and respectful with fellow employees, external partners and students, which was reflected in discussion, requesting and responding to request email genre messages through the use of proper opening and closing markers, positive and negative politeness and informal and in times conversational language to reflect friendliness and emotional support. This was also reflected in the lengthy exchanges of discussion email genre messages, in which the employees patiently strived to reach agreement regarding the discussed issues, and the promptly response to requests so that to keep the flow of work unaffected.

These practices, however, did not include compromising the professional and ethical obligations of the employees. The employees acted with integrity within the power consigned in their positions to keep and safeguard the ethical and professional standards of the institution. This was carried out using referential and functional intertextuality to emphasis the rules and regulations in times, and the use of formal, direct and sometimes imposing language, in others. This was the practice in the majority of informing email genre messages and a number of discussion and enquiry email genre messages.

Finally, the employees reflected conformity to diligence in the four types of email genre messages, in general, and in delivery and informing email genre messages, in particular. This was the case as the employees took the initiative to carry out the institutional tasks without prior enforcement or request from a superior. They also requested, responded to requests and discussed academic and institutional issues faithfully, impartially and open-mindedly using formal, informal and even conversational language so to achieve better results for the institution, on the one

hand, and to maintain the professional and ethical obligations vested in them, on the other.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated language use as an institutional practice in one private higher educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. This view of language use has "never been taken seriously enough" (Bhatia, 2008, p. 161). It not only counts on regularities and reoccurrences (Miller, 1994) in terms of register (Biber, 1995; Halliday, 1984) and rhetorical structures (Swales, 1990), it also counts on the influences of the text-external elements on language use (Bhatia, 2008). This investigation "bridges the gap" between linguistic analysis, on the one hand, and the institutional and professional practices, on the other (Bhatia, 2008, p. 162).

The main purpose of conducting this study was examining the genre of email communications in the institution as a resource or a product of institutionalized and conventionalized practices and procedures (Bhatia, 2004). Therefore, Bhatia's (2004) multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework for genre analysis was adopted to examine critically the genre of email communications in their institutional context from four perspectives that are the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. To count for the texts from a semantic-functional, rather than structural (Swales, 1990), perspective, Biber's (1988, 1995) register variation and Biber's et al., (2007), BCU multi-dimensional approaches were employed. This study was motivated by the recent developments in critical genre analysis that does not only investigate the genre as a model, but also as a resource and a product (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2010a). It was also motivated by the already high and increasing

regularity of using email for workplace communication in Malaysia (Ean, 2011; Habil, 2010) and abroad (Pee and Woon, 2008; Surjan, 2008).

This chapter presents the concluding summary of the research findings, which answer the three main research questions, the discussion, the theoretical and pedagogical implications and the implications for the discourse community, the future research directions and the conclusion.

8.1 Concluding Summary of Research Findings

This study analysed the genre of email communication in the private higher educational institution from four perspectives. The main intention of carrying out the analysis was examining language use as a text, language use as a genre, language use as a professional practice and language use as a product of a professional culture (Bhatia, 2010a). In examining language use as a text (textual perspective), the focus was on the rhetorical moves and the lexico-grammatical features used in the email messages. Using Biber's et al. (2007) multi-dimensional corpus based analysis of discourse organization, the rhetorical moves in the corpus of email messages were analysed. This was followed by examining register variation in the rhetorical moves using Biber's (1988, 1995) register variation approach. Language use as a genre (socio-cognitive perspective), however, was examined by identifying the patterns of generic integrity, on the one hand, and the interrelationships within and across texts and interactions within and across genres, on the other. The investigation on the influences of the institutional context on language use was carried out, in line with Bhatia (2010a), in two sections that are language use as a professional practice (Ethnographic perspective) and language use as a product of a culture (socio-critical

perspective). Language use as a professional practice (ethnographic perspective) examined the influences of the institutional practices on language use in the institution. This was carried out by examining the front-stage and back-stage interactions in the discourse community and language use in the genre system used in the institution. Language use as a product of professional culture (socio-critical perspective) examined the influence of the disciplinary conventions on language use. This was carried out by examining the contextualizational cues that provide inferences about language use as a product of a culture. The following sections discuss the findings on the four perspectives.

8.1.1 Ethnographic Perspective: Language use as an Institutional Practice

The analysis on the ethnographic perspective examined language use as a institutional practice. It targeted the first research question: What are the influences of the institutional practices in the private higher educational institution subject of the study on the nature and the construction of the genre?

The employees of NED use a "genre system" (Bhatia, 2004, p.55) that includes verbal (i.e., business meeting, face-to-face, telephone discussions and conversations), written (i.e., letters, memorandums, faxes, document), and computer medicated (i.e., email) genres. They also use the notice board to notify students about special dates or events. This "genre system" is used for the inter-organizational and intra-organizational intra-departmental and inter-departmental communications to achieve the communicative "tasks" (Yates and Orlikowski, 1992) and "intentions" (Bhatia, 2004) of the discourse community.

Language use as an institutional practice was reflected in the "activation of the disciplinary knowledge" to act effectively in these genres (Bhatia, 2004, p. 55). This depended on the task of the communication, on the one hand, and the direction of the communication, on the other. The letter genre was used mainly for inter-organizational communications to interact with governmental authorities. It was also used to send special requests to the CEO of the institution. The framing structure of the letters, in general, included the 'date', 'address', 'salutation', 'reference', 'closing', 'signature' and 'enclosures' moves. These moves were formal as the 'salutation' always included a salutation marker and the 'title' of the addressee. Similarly, the closing move was always formal as in '*Yours Sincerely'*. The 'signature' move in the externally sent letters included the full name, organizational position, name of organization, and the contact details of the sender, whereas the 'signature' of the internal letters directed to the CEO merely included the full name of the sender. The content of the letter also varied according to the direction and task. The letters sent to the governmental bodies, MOHE and MQA, mainly included formal features and "abstract" and "informational" styles. The letters sent to the CEO, however, mainly included "involved" style to explain the issue in personal terms. The fax genre was also used for inter-organizational communications mainly to deliver files and documents. The construction of faxes included a number of framing moves that stated the name of the sender, the name of the recipient, the date, the subject of the fax, the number of pages, a salutation, an opening, a closing and a signature moves. The construction of the salutation and closing moves was more flexible than in the letters. The content of the faxes was also flexible as it was written in an "involved" style. The memo genre, however, was used as an intra-organizational intra-departmental and inter-departmental communicational method.

The framing structure of memorandums included the ‘from’, ‘to’, ‘subject’, ‘date’, ‘CC’, ‘closing’, and ‘signature’ moves, which seem comparable to the framing structure of faxes in the institution. The register of the memorandums was mainly “informational” as they targeted a number of recipients at the same time regarding a general interest issue. The employees also used the notice board to place notes that are directed to a group of students. These notes mainly included informal and “involved” features to connect with the students regarding the attributed issue. In addition, the employees used email genre for external and internal intra-departmental and inter-departmental communications.

The use of email genre in the institution is driven by four main intentions that are keeping a record of the communication, delivering a softcopy of the files or documents, saving time in carrying out different tasks and reaching out to a relatively large number of recipients at the same time. Therefore, the use of email genre in the institution overlapped with and, in times, overtaken the use of other verbal and written genres and practices. To keep a record of the communication, the main informants preferred email genre to discuss or enquire about an issue with fellow colleagues. Even though these practices could have been carried out using face-to-face and telephone conversations genres (Biber, 1988, 1995), the main informants exchanged intra-departmental emails with employees with whom they share the physical context or the office to maintain a record of the communication. To obtain a softcopy of the files or documents, the main informants used email genre to deliver the files and documents to internal and external contacts. Obtaining a softcopy of the files is significant as some files need to be circulated to internal contacts, external partners or even governmental bodies. This practice minimized the use of fax in the

institution. To save time, the use of email genre overtaken the use of letter genre, especially in the communications with governmental bodies. The institution initially establishes contact with MOHE and MQA regarding an issue using a letter. As MOHE and MQA respond, the main informants, especially the assistant academic director and the heads of program, contacts the officer in charge of the issue, who signed the reply letter, using email. This practice saved time as sending letters by post takes long time. Similarly, the use of email is the preferred channel of communication with external partners, who are basically based in the United Kingdom. Informing, discussing, requesting, responding to requests and delivering files to the external partners were tasks that were mainly carried out using letters and faxes earlier. These days, all these tasks are carried out using email genre to save time and money. Finally, the use of email genre in the institution overlapped with and, in times, overtook, the use of internal intra-departmental and inter-departmental memorandums and departmental notice boards to fully inform the intended audience about a general interest issue. As the institution has part-time employees, who do not attend the institution on a daily bases, and students, who may not read the notice boards on regular bases, the main informants, especially the assistant academic director and the heads of department, sent emails to a number of recipients at the same time regarding several institutional and academic issues.

As the use of emails in the institution overlapped with the use of verbal and written communicational genres, their mode of construction and communication invaded the generic integrity of these genres (Bhatia, 2004). This was noticeable in the framing structure of the emails, on the one hand, and the nature of the communication, on the other. In relation to the framing structure, the construction of the emails included the

framing moves that are usually used in letter, memo, and fax genres. In relation to the nature of the communication, the communicative intention, the task or the discursive practices of the emails was carried out in a single email or a chain of email messages. The tasks that were communicated in a single email message seemed comparable to memo, fax and letter genres. The framing structure of these emails seemed comparable to the written genres and the content seemed formal that did not encourage participation. The tasks that were carried out in chains, however, seemed comparable to face-to-face, telephone, and business meeting genres. These emails seemed active in relation to involvement and encouraging participation. The exchange of emails in these tasks seemed 'context-dependent' as comprehending the communicative intention of any particular email requires viewing the previously exchanged emails in the chain. Examining any particular email of the chain (embedded email) in isolation would not provide a fuller view about its communicative intention.

To sum up this section, the institutional and professional practices in NED influenced the nature and the construction of email genre in several ways. The use of email in NED was a method of keeping a record, obtaining a softcopy of files, saving time and reaching out to a number of recipients. The employees used their disciplinary knowledge to construct the genre. The tasks that were carried out in a single email were constructed using the conventions of letter, memo and fax genre, the tasks that required participation and involvement, however, created dialogue-like chains of out-going and in-coming emails that are comparable to turn-taking in verbal communication.

8.1.2 Textual Perspective: Language Use as a Text

The investigation on the textual perspective examined language use as a text. This part of the analysis targeted the second research question: What are the textual features of the email messages exchanged in the institution that is the subject of the study? The investigation of the textual perspective examined the rhetorical moves and the lexico-grammatical features used in the email messages.

The investigation on the rhetorical moves (Swales, 1990) or the discourse units (Biber et al., 2007) was carried out in relation to their semantic-functional meanings. Fourteen rhetorical moves were identified in the corpus of emails. These moves were six framing, one intertextual, four main, one supporting and two follow-up moves. The framing moves had three main intentions that were identifying the subject of the email messages, the 'identifying topic' move; the expressing politeness and giving deference, 'salutation', 'opening', 'pre-closing' and 'closing' moves; and the creating credibility and trustworthiness, 'signature' move. The use of these moves, especially the 'identifying topic', 'salutation', 'closing' and 'signature' moves, was a common practice in the corpus of email messages, which reflects a high level of formality and politeness (Waldvogel, 2007). Even though these moves are intrinsic moves in business letters genre; they appeared to be optional in the email genre messages.

The use of the framing moves in the corpus of email messages reflected variation and flexibility. This variation was recorded in the informing ability of the 'identifying topic' move, the formality and informality of the greeting and closing moves, and the information used in the 'signature' moves. The 'identifying topic' move is an

informative strategy that intends to state the '*subject'* of the email message. The use of this move is comparable to the '*subject'* move in memo and fax genres and the '*reference'* move in the letter genre. The informative ability of the 'identifying topic' move in the corpus of email messages was divided into three clusters in relation to their informing abilities; these are the 'clearly informative', 'broadly informative' and 'uninformative' 'identifying topic' moves. This categorization reflects the degree to which the 'identifying topic' move reflects the content of the email. Similarly, the salutations and closings used in the email messages were formal, informal, unconventional and conversational. These depended on the direction of the email as inter-organizational emails included more formal salutations and closings than the intra-organizational. The 'signature' move included the signing off using the first name of the sender or using an auto signature that included the full name of the sender, his/her position, name of institution, address and contact details. The 'opening' move included a number of conversational greetings to establish a rapport, whereas the 'pre-closing' move mainly intended to '*thank'* the recipient in advance using conventional expressions.

The content moves as mentioned earlier included an intertextual move, four main content moves, a supporting move, and two follow-up moves. The intertextual move mainly intended to link the email to a previous point of contact. The four main content moves intended to elaborate or negotiate an issue, 'discussing issues' move, which is a chain-type practice that was carried out in a number of out-going and in-coming email messages; 'request-respond to request', which is also a chain-type practice; 'indicting enclosure', which intends to divert the attention of the addressee to the attached file[s]; and 'informing about issues', which intends to notify or

updates the recipient[s] about a general interest issue. The supporting move 'providing extra information' mainly intended to elaborate or further explain the main move of the email message. The two follow up moves mainly intended express the availability of the addresser, 'offering help if needed', or endorse the receipt of the email, ' requesting conforming receipt'.

Examining the lexico-grammatical features used in the rhetorical moves revealed that email writers used formulaic constructs in four content moves to carry out the communicative intentions. The communicative intention of the intertextual move, 'referring to previous contact', was expressed mainly using adverbial subordinates as in '*with reference to'* and compound preposition as in '*as per your email message'*. The use of these constructs intended to link the email message to a previous point of contact. In addition, the writers of this move also used the prepositional phrase '*in accordance with'* to link the information or the required actions to a policy or the rules and regulations. In the follow-up move 'offering help if needed', email writers mainly used the 'if clause' formulaic construct '*if you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me'* and the conditional inversion *'should you have any quires, please contact me'* to express availability. The use of these constructs reflected the conditional nature of the offer. In the 'requesting confirming receipt' move, however, the writers mainly used polite imperative constructs as in '*kindly acknowledge receipt'* or the conversational '*appreciate confirming receipt'*. The use of these construct intended to solicit an action from the addressee. In addition, to 'indicate enclosure', the writers mainly used the formulaic constructs '*please find attached*' and *'enclosed please find'* to divert the attention of the addressee to the attached files. The former was common mainly in the emails that did not include any

reference to the name or the attached files except in the 'identifying topic' move of the emails; the latter, however, was usually followed by a brief description about the attached files. The use of these constructs was also common in the 'responding to request' rhetorical moves that included attached files.

To investigate the lexico-grammatical features and register variation in the four main content moves and the supporting move, eleven major linguistic features were investigated. This included the use of the grammatical mood (declarative, interrogative and imperative), tenses (simple past, simple present, present perfect, present continuous and simple future), passive voice (agentless passive and 'by' passive), pronouns (first, second and third person singular and plural subjective and objective pronouns), demonstrative pronouns, public verbs, suasive verbs, private verbs (cognitive verbs), modal verbs, hedges and place and time adverbials. These linguistic features were selected because of their relatively high frequency of occurrence in the corpus of email messages, on the one hand, and their functional significance in determining the register of the rhetorical moves, on the other. This investigation revealed that the corpus of email messages included features of the seven basic dimensions of register variation in English (Biber, 1988, 1995) (see table 8.1 below).

Table 8.1: Lexico-grammatical features in the main content moves

Linguistic features / Move	**Grammatical mood**	**Tenses**	**Passive voice**	**Public verbs**	**Suasive verbs**	**Cognitive verbs (private verbs)**	**Pronouns**	**Demonstrative pronouns**	**Modal verbs**	**Hedges**	**Place and time adverbials**
Discussing issues	Declarative	S. Present S. Past P. Perfect S. Future	Agentless passive (not very common)	Common	Common	Private factual, private mental & mental state verb	1st person singular, 2nd person, 3rd person Mainly singular	Common (text-internal, text-external & abstract concept)	Possibility Permission Obligations	Reader-oriented Content-oriented	Both common
Requesting	Interrogative Imperative	S. Present S. Past	Not common	Not very common	Not very common	Unfulfilled desire	1st person 2nd person	Common (text internal & text-external)	Volitive	Not common	Both common
Responding to requests	Declarative	S. Present S. Past P. Perfect	Not common	Common	Common	Present a fact	1st person 2nd person	Common (text internal, text-external & abstract concept)	Commissive	Reader-oriented Content-oriented	Both common
Indicating enclosure	Imperative Declarative	S. Present	Not common	Common	Not common	Common (mainly find)	1st person (not very common)	Not common	Obligations	Not common	Mainly Place adverbial
Informing about issues	Declarative	S. Present S. Past P. Perfect	Agentless passive 'by' passive	Common	Common	Factual cognitive verbs	1st person (mainly plural)	Not common	Commissive	Writer-oriented	Mainly Place adverbial
Providing extra information	Declarative	S. Present S. Past P. Perfect	Agentless passive 'by' passive	Not very common	Not very common	Not very common	1st person 2nd person 3rd person (singular and plural	Common (text internal & text-external)	Possibility Permission obligations	Reader-oriented Content-oriented	Both common

S. Simple; P. Present

The linguistic features in the ‘discussing issues’ move included the use of the declarative mood, which reflects giving and exchanging information. It also included the use of first and second person pronouns, private (cognitive) verbs, hedges, possibility modals, simple present tense and demonstrative pronouns, which reflect “involved” production. The use of simple past and present perfect tense and public verb reflects “narrative” discourse. The frequent use of time and place adverbials reflects “situation-dependent” reference. The use of suasive verbs reflects an “overt expression of argumentation”. Finally, the occurrence of demonstrative pronouns in ‘discussing issues’ move reflects “on-line informational” elaboration.

The ‘requesting’ move mainly included first and second person pronouns, simple present tense, ‘wh’ questions, demonstrative pronouns and cognitive verbs, which reflects “involved production. The use of demonstrative pronouns also reflects “on-line information” elaboration. The use of place and time adverbials, however, reflects situation-dependent reference. The ‘responding to request’ move, however, mainly included declarative mood, which reflects providing information. The use of the first and second person pronouns, hedges, modal verbs, private verbs, simple present tense and demonstrative pronouns also reflects “involved” production. The use of simple past tense, present perfect tense and public verbs reflects “narrative” discourse, whereas the use of suasive verbs reflects “overtly argumentative expression”. As ‘discussing issues’ move, the ‘responding to request’ move also included “situation-dependent” reference.

The use of pronouns, cognitive verbs, and modal verbs in ‘indicating enclosure’ move, however, were not common practices. The sentences were mainly direct but

polite directing the addressee to the enclosed file. The frequency of using pronouns was less than the actual number of messages, as the enclosed document took the centre stage of this type. This reflects that 'indicating enclosure' move was enclosure-oriented that did not include a lot of involvement between the communicators. The use of the simple present tense and place adverbials reflects "non-narrative" discourse and "informational" production in this move.

The 'informing about issues' move, however, mainly included declarative mood sentences, which reflects giving information. The use of the agentless passive, 'by' passive and place adverbials reflect "abstract" style and "informational" production. The use of simple past, present perfect and public verbs also reflects "narrative" discourse in this move, whereas the use of suasive verbs reflects overtly argumentative expression. The use of the factual cognitive verbs was used to present the facts, and commissive modality to express the obligations on the addressee.

The use of the lexico-grammatical features in the supporting move, 'providing extra information', however, reflects "involved" production as the writers used first and second person pronouns, simple present tense, hedges, private verbs, demonstrative pronouns and possibility modals. The use of third person pronouns, simple past and present perfect tenses and public verbs reflects "narrative" discourse. The use of place and time adverbials reflects "situation-dependent" reference, whereas the use of demonstrative pronouns reflects "on-line informational" elaboration.

The occurrence of four main content moves in the body of the email messages and the huge variation in the linguistic features suggested that the corpus of email

messages belong to more than a single genre. This point was further investigated in the socio-cognitive perspective analysis.

8.1.3 Socio-Cognitive Perspective: Language Use as a Genre

The investigation on the socio-cognitive perspective examined language use as a genre. This investigation targeted the third research question of the study: How is the genre of email communication constructed and exploited by the employees of the institution that is the subject of the study? To answer this question, the patterns of generic integrity and the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity were investigated.

Examining the texts as sequences of discourse units (Biber, et al., 2007) revealed that the four main content moves mainly occurred in separate email messages. They were obligatory elements of four general patterns (Biber et al., 2007) or generic structures (Hasan, 1977) that included a number of obligatory, optional or reiterational (Hasan, 1977) framing and content moves. The writers of these four patterns mainly maintained the communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990), the topics (Yates and Orlikowski, 1992) and generic integrity (Bhatia, 2004), which reveals that the corpus of email messages included four types of email genres. The genre type that included the 'discussing issues' obligatory move was named 'Discussion Genre'; the genre type that included the 'requesting-responding to request' obligatory super move was named 'Enquiry Genre'; the genre type that included the 'indicating enclosure' obligatory move was named 'Delivery Genre'; while the genre type that included the 'informing about issues' obligatory move was named 'Informing

Genre'. These four types of email genres mainly maintained their generic integrity, communicative purpose and topic.

Table 8.2: Features used in the four types of email genres

Email genres / Features	Discussion email genre	Enquiry email genre	Delivery email genre	Informing email genre
Framing Moves:				
Identifying topic	Clear informative Broadly informative Uninformative	Clear informative Broadly informative Uninformative	Clearly informative	Clearly informative
Salutation & Opening	Formal Informal Unconventional Conversational	Formal Informal Unconventional Conversational	Mainly Formal	Formal
Pre-closing & Closing	Formal 'Regards' Informal 'cheers!' Minimization 'Rgds'	Regards Thank you 'Rgds'	Formal	Formal
Signature	First name (internal) Auto signature (external)	First name (internal) Auto signature (external)	First name (internal) Auto signature (external)	Auto signature
Content Moves				
Grammatical mood	Declarative	Declarative Interrogative Imperative	Imperative Declarative	Declarative
Tense	Simple Present Simple Past Present perfect Simple future	Simple Present Simple Past Present Perfect	Simple Present	Simple Present Simple Past Present Perfect
Passive voice	Not common	Not common	Not common	Agentless passive 'by' passive
Public verbs	Common	Common	Mainly 'attach' & 'submit'	Common
Suasive verbs	Common	Common	Not common	Common
Private verbs	Private factual, private mental & mental state verb	Private factual Unfulfilled desire	Mainly 'find'	Factual cognitive verbs
Pronouns	1st person 2nd person 3rd person	1st person 2nd person	Not very common (mainly 1st person)	Mainly 1st person plural 'we'
Demonstrative pronouns	Common (text-internal, text-external & abstract concept)	Common (text-internal, text-external & abstract concept)	Not common	Not common
Modal verbs	Possibility Permission Obligation	Volitive Commissive	Obligation	Commissive
Hedges	Reader-oriented Content-oriented	Reader-oriented Content-oriented	Not common	Writer oriented
Time and place adverbials	Both common	Both common	Mainly place adverbial	Mainly place adverbials

Discussion email genre was used to debate or negotiate an issue. The writers used this email genre to discuss issues related to granting exemptions, extending assignments submission, establishing a new course, selecting the content of a module, submitting marksheets, setting up a marking scheme or new semester and examination timetables. The generic structure of this type of email genre included nine moves that were three content and six framing moves. The content moves included the obligatory 'discussing issues' and two reiterational moves that are 'referring to previous contact' and 'providing extra information'. The framing structure of this type of email genre included the use of one obligatory, 'identifying topic', three optional, 'salutation', 'closing' and 'signature', and two reiterational, 'opening' and 'pre-closing' moves. The framing structure of discussion email genre was influenced by the direction of the message, the relational factors between the interlocutors, and the position of the message in the chain. The emails that were exchanged internally within the institution mainly included clearly and broadly informative and uninformative identifying topic moves, signed off using the first name of the sender and included formal and informal salutation and closing markers depending on the relationship between the communicators. The emails that were sent to external partners and students mainly included clearly informative moves, signed off using an auto signature, and included formal salutations and closings especially in the first few emails of the chain. The variation in the use of salutation and closing markers, however, mainly occurred in the latter emails of the chains as the writers used informal, conversational or even no salutation at all in the internally and externally exchanged emails.

Register variation in this type of genre mainly included “involved” production, “narrative and non-narrative” discourse, “situation-dependent reference”, “on-line informational” elaboration and “overt expression of argumentation”. The writers of this type of email genre were personally “involved” in the ‘discussion’, which is reflected in the use of first and second person pronouns. They presented their ideas, opinions, or information using declarative mood sentences. The given information was either based on the rules and regulations, which is reflected in the use of conjuncts, ‘*in accordance with’*, to create referential intertextuality (Devitt, 1991) or on personal opinion, which is reflected in the use of accuracy-oriented reliability hedges such as ‘*I guess’* to indicate the level of certainty or uncertainty of the writer about the attributed proposition (Hyland, 1998). This latter point is also reflected in the use possibility modals and private factual verbs (i.e., think, feel) to express personal opinion regarding an issue (Quirk et al., 1985). The temporality of actions in discussion email genre reveals that the writers were involved in “non-narrative” discourse as they used the simple present tense to reflect on immediate circumstances, and “narrative” discourse as they used the simple past tense to refer to remote actions and the present perfect tense to refer to past events that have immediate relevance. The “narrative” discourse is also reflected in the use of public verbs to report an indirect or reported statement (Biber, 1988, 1995; Quirk et al., 1985), and the relatively high occurrence of third person pronouns which reflects discussing issues related to an absent other (Biber, 1988, 1995). The use of demonstrative pronouns was a common practice in this type of email genre. These demonstrative pronouns referred to text-internal (endophoric), text-external, (exophoric), and abstract concepts, which reflect “on-line informational” elaboration.

Finally, the discussions in this type of email genre seemed mainly "situation-dependent", which is reflected in the excessive use of time and place adverbials.

Enquiry email genre was used for requesting and responding to request. This type of email genre was used mainly to request information, such as the due dates for submitting examination papers, assignments and marking sheets, and actions such as sending a document to an employee, registering a student or paying the fees. The replies to these requests mainly presented the information or confirmed carrying out the actions. The main purpose of joining the 'requesting' and the 'responding' moves into a super move in a type of email genre is the formulaic method of carrying out these two communicative purposes in the corpus of email messages. The requesting email almost always created a reply. The two emails were short and precise unless some explanations were required, which was carried out in the 'providing extra information' move. The communicative purpose of the 'responding to request' move was hard to identify if it was taken in isolation of the chain. The requesting and responding to requests occurred in two patterns that were comparable to turn-taken in conversations that are '*request-reply-thanking'* (RRT) or '*request-request-reply-thanking'* (RRRT). The second request in the second patterns occurred as a result of forwarding the initial request to the employee in charge of the issue.

The generic structure of enquiry email genre included nine moves that were three content and six framing moves. The content moves included the 'requesting-responding to request' obligatory super move, and two reiterational content moves that are the 'referring to previous contact' and 'providing extra information'. The framing moves included the use of the semi-obligatory 'identifying topic', three

optional, ‘salutation’, ‘closing’ and ‘signature’, and the reiterational, ‘opening’ and ‘pre-closing’ moves. The use of framing moves in enquiry email genre was influenced by the direction of the message and related factors. The externally sent enquiry email messages mainly included clearly informative identifying topic move, formal salutation and closing markers, and auto signature that stated the name, position, name of organization, address and contact detail of the sender. The internally exchanged emails, however, included formal, informal, conversational or even no salutations or closings and were signed off using the first name of the sender only. A number of the internally exchanged enquiry email messages also included minimized closings such as ‘*Rgds’*.

The requesting move included more direct than indirect requests. The direct requests were mainly constructed using imperative constructs and ‘wh’ questions to solicit an action from the addressee. However, almost all imperative requests were preceded by a mitigation device such as ‘*please’*, ‘*kindly’* and ‘*please kindly’* to soften the imposition. Even though these polite imperative requests are, theoretically, categorized as direct requests, their actual use reflects indirectness by “minimizing the imposition”, which is considered a negative politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The indirect requests were mainly constructed using modal initials, conditionals, desire and need statements and passive voice constructs, which intended to minimize the imposition of requests, which are considered a FTA.

Register variation in this type of email genre reflected “involved” production, “narrative and non-narrative” discourse, “overt expression of argumentation” and “situation-dependent” reference. The involved production in this type of email genre

was reflected in the use of first and second person pronouns in the requesting and responding to requests moves, which also reflected the personal nature of carrying out these requests. This was also reflected in the frequent occurrence of reader-oriented hedges, which suggest alternative possibility and personal attribution. The use of 'wh' questions was also common in the requesting move to solicit information from the addressee. Similarly, the writers also used the private mental verbs of unfulfilled desire (Souter and Atwell, 1993) in the requesting move to solicit a response from the addressee and the private factual verbs to present the information from a personal view (Quirk et al., 1985). The "narrative" discourse in this type of email genre was reflected in the use of public verbs especially in the polite imperative requesting constructs to solicit an action from the addressee, the use of simple past and present perfect tenses in the 'responding to request' move to denote remote actions and past events with current relevance. The "non-narrative" discourse, however, was reflected in the use of simple present tense to denote immediate actions. As in discussing email genre, the "situation-dependent" reference and "overt expression of argumentation" were reflected in the excessive use of place adverbials to denote position and direction and time adverbials to relate to the duration, frequency and relationship between two actions in two different times (Quirk et al., 1985) and suasive verbs that reflected a desire to change (Biber, 1988).

The delivery email genre, however, was used mainly to supply a document or file. The generic structure of this type of email genre included ten moves that are four content and six framing moves. The content moves included the use of the obligatory 'indicating enclosure', the optional 'providing extra information' and two reiterational, 'requesting confirming receipt' and 'offering help if needed' moves.

The framing structure included the obligatory 'identifying topic', three optional, 'salutation', 'closing', and 'signature', and two reiterational, 'opening' and 'pre-closing' moves. The generic structure of this type of email genre reflects a more frequent use of the supporting move 'providing extra information' than in the discussion and enquiry email genres. This is the case as delivery email genre is a solitary-type genre that does not usually require a reply. As such, the writers make sure that the addressee is fully informed about the issue. Similarly, the writers of this type of email genre also used two follow-up moves to express availability and request endorsing the taken action. These moves were not used in the discussion and enquiry genres because responding to the emails was an expected practice in these types of email genres.

The main content move of this type of email genre was closely linked to the 'identifying topic' move. This is the case as the main content move mainly included the formulaic constructs '*please find attached'* or the use of the nominal as subject as in '*enclosed please find'*. The former constructs were used mainly as the only content moves in the body of the email. They did not include any description about the nature of the file except in the identifying topic move, which was a clearly informative move. The use of '*enclosed please find'* or '*attached please find'* constructs, however, were usually followed by a brief description about the attached files. The use of these constructs created horizontal intertextuality (Johnstone, 2008) that linked the move in the body of the email to the attached file.

Register variation in this type of email genre reflected "informational" production and "non-narrative" discourse. This was recorded in the use of the place adverbials

'*hereby'* and '*herewith'* to give an official status to the act of delivering the files. The writers of this email genre mainly used the simple present tense to reflect the immediate circumstances of the taken actions. In relation to public verbs, the writers mainly used the public verbs '*attach'* and '*submit'* to reflect on the taken action. The use of pronouns, hedges, modal verbs, demonstrative pronouns and time adverbials was not a common practice in this email genre. The main pronoun in this type of email genre was the hidden second person '*you'*.

The informing email genre, however, was used mainly to update, notify or advise the recipients about general interest issues. The generic structure of this type of email genre included nine moves that are four content and five framing moves. The content moves included the obligatory 'informing about issues', the optional 'providing extra information', and the two reiterational 'requesting confirming receipt' and 'offering help if needed'. The framing moves included the use of two obligatory, 'identifying topic' and 'salutation'; one semi-obligatory, 'signature'; one optional, 'closing'; and one reiterational 'pre-closing'. This reflects the very high framing formality of this type of email genre, which is comparable to business letters. This type of email genre was the only type that was directed to a number of recipients at the same time. This practice minimized the effect of relational factors that influenced the framing formality of the other types of email genres. This type of email genre mainly intended to notify or update the recipients about important due dates, the rules and regulations, change in the exam venue and new intake and examination timetables.

Register variations of this type of email genre included the use of 'abstract' style, 'informational' production, and 'narrative' discourse. The use of the abstract style

was recorded mainly in the use of agentless and the 'by' passive. The writers used the agentless passive to demote any animate reference. This is the case as this type of email genre mainly included direct, firm and imposing language that directed the addressee to take a certain action. The use of 'by' passive, however, was less frequent and mainly occurred in the emails in which the agent had a role to play. The use of the "abstract" style was also apparent in the use of conjuncts as in '*in accordance with'* to place the information or directions in their institutional context. These features and the use of place adverbials that intended to state the position and direction (Quirk et al., 1985) of the stated actions also reflected the "informational" production of this type of email genre. The "narrative" discourse, however, was reflected in the use of simple past tense to refer to remote actions and the present perfect tense that referred to past events with current relevance. This style was also reflected in the excessive use of public verbs to report an indirect or reported statement.

The construction of the four types of email genres included instances of several kinds of intertextuality, which reflects interrelationships within and across texts (Bhatia, 2010a). Referential intertextuality, for example, occurred in the four types of email genres, however, for different purposes. In discussion and inquiry email genres, this kind of intertextuality was used mainly to refer to a previous point of contact between the communicators. This mainly occurred in 'referring to previous contact' move, in which email writers referred to previous emails, letters, faxes, conversations, and telephone calls. This was carried mainly out using compound prepositions '*as per'* and adverbial subordinates '*with reference to'*. Referential intertextuality in informing email genre, however, mainly occurred in the main

content move to tie the given information to the rules and regulations in general or a given policy in particular. This was carried out using conjuncts as in '*in accordance with'*. This strategy was also used in discussion email genre to put an end for a lengthy discussion. In delivery genre, however, referential intertextuality occurred as a strategy to denote an attached document. This referential or "horizontal" intertextuality was marked mainly using formulaic expressions such as '*please find attached'* or '*enclosed please find'*.

Functional intertextuality was also common in the four types of email genres. This was recorded in two strategies that are the influence of previous texts on a new text by creating the need of the new text and the use of the "cut-paste" technique. The former strategy was recorded explicitly in discussion and enquiry email genres and was marked by the '*RE'* and '*FW'* initials in front of the 'identifying topic' move of the '*replied'* and '*forwarded'* email messages, and implicitly in the four types of email genres. The use of the explicit functional intertextuality mainly created chains of in-coming and out-going email messages that debated an issue, brought the issue to the attention of a director or head of a department or respond to a request. The implicit functional intertextuality, however, was not marked by a sign. It took complex forms that reflected the sequence of texts in the educational institution. As the corpus was collected over 45 days of day-in-day-out communications, examining the sequence of texts revealed that a discussion chain regarding extensions to submit assignments might result into an informing email genre message to all students 'informing' them about the rules and regulations of extensions. Similarly, a delivery email genre message may result in an enquiry in another email message, an informing email genre message may create a chain of discussion email genre

messages, and an enquiry genre message may result into a delivery or an informing email genre message. The "cut-paste" strategy, however, was used mainly in informing email genre as the writers used their "professional knowledge" (Devitt, 1991) in the field to carry out certain practices. This was reflected in '*pasting'* whole segments of texts, mainly from the rules and regulations, into the body of the informing email genre messages to state the obligation of certain practice or procedure.

Generic intertextuality, however, occurred as a result of using reoccurring forms in reoccurring rhetorical situations. This was recorded in the use of the framing moves, which are intrinsic moves in business communications genres, and a number of content moves. The use of reoccurring forms was recorded in the use of adverbial coordinates '*with reference with'* and compound prepositions '*as per our conversation*' in 'referring to previous contact' move in discussion and enquiry email genres to link the email to its communicative context. It was also recorded in the use of '*please find attached'* and '*enclosed please find'* formulaic constructs in the delivery and enquiry email genres to divert the attention of the recipient to the attached files. The use of reoccurring forms was also recorded in 'requesting confirming receipt', '*kindly acknowledge receipt'*, and 'offering help if needed'*, 'if you have any quires please do not hesitate to contact me'*, moves in delivery and informing email genres. Similarly, the formulaic constructs were also used in the informing email genre as the writers used the passive voice constructs '*please be informed'*, '*you are required'* and '*you are informed'* to prepare the addressee for the following information. This practice reflects the reoccurring rhetorical needs of the

discourse community, on the one hand, and referring to previous knowledge of carrying out tasks within the community, on the other (Devitt, 1991).

Primarily, the four types of email genres maintained their generic integrity; however, there were instances of appropriating the generic resources of genre to create another (Bhatia, 2004). There were also instances of hybrid discourse. Appropriating the generic resources of a genre to create another was a result of communicating private intentions in the socially recognized communicative purposes (Bhatia, 2010a). This occurred as a number of the emails included two complementary or conflicting communicative intentions. This practice mainly occurred in discussion and enquiry email genres. The writers mainly mixed a discussion with an enquiry email genre messages, which created a 'discussion-enquiry' email genre, or a discussion and informing email genre messages, which created a 'discussion-informing' email genre message. These "hybrid genres' or imbedded genres" occurred in 30 email messages, which is 8 percent of the corpus of email messages. This reflects that 92 percent of the emails maintained their generic integrity. The main purpose of creating the 'hybrid genres' (Bhatia, 2012) is the writers' intentions to save time and effort, especially in the chain-type messages that were exchanged in a number of email messages over a period of time.

Hybrid discourse also occurred in discussion and enquiry email genres that were exchanged internally or sent to students. The informants in these emails mixed written and spoken discourses including non-verbal cues. The writers of the internally exchanged discussion and enquiry email genre messages mainly used formal written features including salutation and closing markers in the first a few

email message of the chain. As the chains grew longer, the formality of these emails declined as they included spoken features such as ellipses, substitution and contractions. Some emails also included minimizations and non-verbal cues to add lively facial expressions to the correspondence. The occurrence of these features was mainly a result of the writers' intention to minimize the imposition by using emoticons, extending the textual domain of a sentence to another by using substitution, writers' reluctance to elaborate on certain issues by using dots ellipsis, and finally writing-like-speaking style, which was reflected in the use of contractions and minimizations. As these features mainly occurred in the internally exchanged discussion and enquiry email genre messages only, this reflects the influence of relating factors on language use, especially that these features occurred in the emails that were sent to close colleagues. These features, however, did not occur in the externally sent discussion and enquiry email genre messages, which reflects writers' awareness of the informal nature of these features. The occurrence of these features was not common in delivery email genre and did not occur in informing email genre, which mainly included 'written discourse' features. The occurrence of 'mixed discourse' in the emails that were sent to students, however, mainly intended to connect with the students on the personal level.

Checking the findings against the opinion of a focus group that included seven professionals in the educational industry at two university colleges in Kuala Lumpur confirmed that the emails belonged to four types of email genres. The focus group suggested names for the four email genres that either matched the given names by the researcher or were synonyms.

8.1.4 Socio-Critical Perspective: Language Use as a Product of a Culture

The investigation on the socio-critical perspective examined language use as a product of a professional culture. This investigation targeted the fourth research question: What are the influences of the disciplinary conventions in the private higher educational institution subject of the study on language use in the email messages?

The investigation on the influences of the disciplinary conventions of the educational institution on language use examined the implicitly enforced organizational culture and the explicitly enforced organizational ideologies (Bhatia, 2004). The interviews with the main informants revealed that the institution has three main organizational cultures that are the humanistic-encouraging, affiliative and hieratical cultures. The influence of the humanistic-encouraging culture was noticed in giving support, suggestions, explanations, clarifications, constructive feedback, noticing the achievements of others and motivating the students. These features were mainly noticed in discussion and enquiry email genres. The influence of this organizational culture on language use was noticed in the excessive use of first and second person pronouns to directly connect with the addressee. The employees also used adjectives and modifiers to notice and attend to the recipient. Additionally, the employees mainly used informal writing-like-speaking style to motivate the students. This included the use of contractions, substitution and ellipsis. The employees used these features to communicate with the students as one of them, not as an employee in the educational institution that gives orders and directions.

The influence of the affiliative culture, which suggests a friendly workplace environment, on language use was reflected in the excessive use of positive politeness (Ambady et al., 1996). The writers of discussion email genre messages noticed the recipients using the conversational '*thank you very much'* (Simpson-Vlach and Ellis, 2010). They also exaggerated interest in the action of the addresser as in '*your very gracious email*' using an adverb and adjective premodifiers to intensify the noun. Additionally, the writers of this type of email genre also used the "personal-centre switch" technique using the inclusive '*we'* and '*lets'* to 'assert common ground' where the addressee alone is denoted (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In enquiry email genre messages, however, the writers showed sympathy to the addressee by making apologies as in '*I am sorry you have this problem'* and using emoticons. The affiliative culture in the delivery email genre, however, was reflected in the use of "affiliative humour" (Romero and Curthirds, 2006) to create a positive workplace environment and minimize the impact of carrying out some unpleasant tasks. The use of these strategies intended carrying out the institutional tasks in a friendly manner. This practice, as such, explains the purpose of using some informal and even conversational features in the email messages.

The hierarchical culture in the workplace is reflected in the formalized and structured nature of the workplace and rule enforcement (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991). These two features were reflected in the four types of email genre messages. In relation to the formalized and structured nature, the execution of the organizational tasks in the educational institution was carried out in relation to the organizational position of the employees. If an employee received an enquiry that does not relate to his/her duties, he/she forwarded it to the person in charge. This was clearly reflected

in the (1st requester-2nd requester-reply-thanking) (RRRT) pattern in enquiry email genre messages. The second requester in the pattern is mainly an employee who does not have the authority to respond to the request, so he/she forwarded it to the person in charge. Role enforcement, however, was reflected in the use of conjuncts '*in accordance with the rules and regulations'* and adverbial subordinates '*with reference to'* that intended to create a "referential intertextuality" (Devitt, 1991) with the rules and regulations or a specific policy. In addition, the writers of informing email genre mainly used passive voice constructs '*you are required'* and *'you are informed*' and formulaic expressions such as '*please be informed'* and '*please note'* followed by a '*that'* clause as signposts to deliver information and enforce a role or a policy. Additionally, the writers of discussion and informing email genre mainly used the corporate or the exclusive '*we'* and '*our'* that did not include the addressee to enforce a role. The use of the corporate '*we'* was a regular practice in informing email genres. In discussion email genre, however, the communicators mainly used the first and second personal pronouns '*I'* and '*you'* to discuss an issue, which reflects involvement. However, if the issue was related to a policy or clearly stated as a rule, the employee mainly used the exclusive '*we'* to put an end for the lengthy discussion and enforce the rule. The enforcement of rules in the email messages was also reflected in the use of cut-paste functional intertextuality. The writers of informing email genre mainly '*pasted'* whole segments of the rules and regulations in the body of the email to enforce the rules.

In relational to the explicitly enforced organizational ideologies, the educational institution has a "Staff Code of Conduct" (Dainty and Anderson, 2000; Gilman, 2005) that enforces four ideologues or values that are compliance with the rules and

regulations, respect, integrity and diligence. The influence of the ideology of '*respect'* on language use was reflected in the use of negative politeness strategies in the four types of email genre messages. The writers 'minimized the imposition' by using words that delimits the FTA as in '*you just tell her'.* Minimizing the imposition in delivery and enquiry emails genres was reflected in the use of mitigation devices in front of the imperative as in '*please find attached*' and '*please forward me the marksheets'*. This is also reflected in the use of indirect requests in enquiry email genre. The writers of the email messages also used the "going on-record as incurring debt" as in '*appreciate all your help'* and apologized for mistakes as in '*very very sorry'.*

The conformity to the ideology of 'integrity' in the email messages was reflected in imposing the internal and external standards of the educational institution using a direct and firm language. The employees used the power of their positions as they discussed an issue, informed about an issue or requested information or actions (Chin, 2011). In the discussion email genre, the writers used the 'shift-in-focus' technique between the personal '*I'* and the institutional '*we'* to impose a specific standard. As long as the discussion was within the rules and regulations, the exchange of ideas was carried out on the personal level using the first person pronoun '*I'*, however, if the student asked or implied that he/she wanted an exception or a compromise, the employees switched the focus of the communication from the personal represented *'I'* into the institutional represented '*we'*. Imposing the standards using the power of positions was also reflects in the use of direct and imperative passive voice constructs *'you are required*', '*you are requested'* and '*you are instructed'* to impose a rule or a standard. In enquiry email genre, however, the

employees also used the plural '*we'* and '*our'* to deal with compromising requests and the semi-modal '*need to'* to state an obligation.

Finally, the conformity to the ideology of 'diligence' or hard work was mainly reflected in the four types of email genres. The writers of the email messages patiently disused issued with other employees in a number of out-going and in-coming email messages to reach to an agreement regarding the attributed issue, which reflect persistent effort in carrying out the institutional tasks. Diligence is also reflected in enquiry email genre as the employees requested and promptly responded to the requests of fellow employees or external partners and students. In delivery email genre, the employee took the initiative to carry out their duties. They delivered the examination marks, assignments, marking schemes, marking sheets and qualifications to fellow employees and external partners so that the progress of work in the institution is not affected or delayed. In the informing email genre, the employees took their work seriously enough to inform fellow employees, students and external partners about latest changes and updates. They also used the power vested in their positions to enforce the rules and regulation and the standards of the institution. The amount of work that was carried out in the 378 email messages, which were sent in 45 day-in-day-out email communications also conforms to the ideology of diligence.

8.2 Discussion

The investigation on the email messages as a resource of institutionalized and conventionalized practices and procedures (Bhatia, 2004) in the educational institution revealed that the email corpus belongs to four types of email genres:

discussion genre, enquiry genre, delivery genre and informing genre. These four types of mail genres are the product of different levels of relationships among text, context and practices in the educational institution (Bhatia, 2010a; Hanford, 2010). The textual realizations of the genres are an integral part of the discursive practices, and the discursive practices are an integral part of the institutional and professional practices (Bhatia, 2010a, Hanford, 2010). As such, the institutional and professional practices of the employees influenced their discursive practices and the textual artefacts used in the text genre.

The employees appeared to be involved in four main institutional and professional practices that are 'attaining and maintain accreditation', which requires communicating with MQA and MOHE, 'collaborating regarding the external programs', which requires communicating with external partners, 'managing students-related issues', which requires communication with students and fellow staff members and finally 'managing internal issues', which requires communicating with fellow staff members. The discursive practices of the employees were carried out in a "genre system" that the employees regularly used. Even though the employees used verbal, written and computer-mediated genres, they preferred email genre to achieve the four institutional tasks of communication. They use the letter genre to 'notify, clarify and enquire about issues', but they opt to email for faster correspondence. They use fax genre to 'deliver documents' to the MOHE, MQA and external partners, but they switched to email to deliver a softcopy. They use the memo genre to 'notify the employees' and the notice boards to 'notify students about general interest issues', but they carry out these tasks using email to reach out for all staff members and students and have proof of carrying out the task. They use face-to-

face and telephone conversation genres to ‘discuss an issue’ with fellow colleagues, students or external partners, but they use email to keep a record of the communication (i.e., e-filling purposes). Therefore, the email messages appeared to have four communicative intentions, purposes, goals and tasks that they strive to accomplish. They intended to ‘notify a number of recipients regarding a general interest issue’, which is a discursive practice that was carried out using letter genre externally and memo genre and the notice boards internally; ‘deliver a file or document’, which is a discursive practice that was carried out using fax genre; ‘discuss an issue’; and ‘request-respond to requests’ in a number of exchanges, which are discursive practices that were carried out using face-to-face and telephone communications genres.

The employees of the educational institution used their “disciplinary knowledge” to “construct and communicate” the four types of email genre messages (Bhatia, 2004), p. 55). The corpus of emails included fourteen rhetorical moves, four of which are ‘genre-specific’ moves that carried the discursive practices of the four types of email genres: ‘discussing issues’ move occurred in discussion email genre, ‘requesting-responding to request’ super move occurred in enquiry email genre, ‘indicating enclosure’ occurred in delivery email genre and ‘informing about issues’ occurred in informing email genre. The remaining ten moves were obligatory, optional or reiterational moves or elements that cross occurred in the four types of email genres. The occurrence and the frequency of occurrence of these moves depended on the communicative intention, the rhetorical action and the topic of the email genre (Bhatia, 2004; Miller, 1994; Yates and Orlikowski, 1992). The ‘providing extra information’ move occurred in the four types of email genres, to further explain the

main content move. It was a reiterational element in discussion and enquiry email genres, but optional in the delivery and informing email genres. This is the practice as replying to the email was a common practice in discussion and enquiry email genres; therefore, the employees expected the addressee to request further clarifications or information, if needed. The act of responding in delivery and informing email genres, however, was not an expected practice. Therefore, the employees strive to fully explain the issue by 'providing extra information' in the 'initiating' email, which also was the 'concluding' email.

The construction of the four types of email genre messages also included two follow-up moves and an intertextual move. The intertextual move occurred in the discussion and enquiry email genres alone. The use of this move was a strategy to link the email message to a previous point of contact, mainly a previous email message to place the email in its communicative context. Delivery and informing email genres, however, did not embrace this move as they were usually an 'initiative'. Alternatively, they included two follow-up moves that did not occur in discussion and enquiry email genres. The two follow-up moves, 'requesting confirming receipt' and 'offering help if needed', intended to endorse the taken action and express availability. The main purpose of using these moves in the delivery and informing email genres is soliciting an action from the addressee and providing future contact directions; especially that responding was not a common practice in these types of email genres. Given that the actions were carried out in these two types of email genres were formal and official as they intended to submit a file or a document or inform about a general interest issue, the employees requested the endorsement to hold the recipients responsible for the next course of action and expressed availability to further explain the issue, if

needed. These two moves did not occur in discussion and enquiry email genre messages, as the response was a common practice.

The investigation on the textual realizations of the four types of email genres revealed that the employees used different types of registers to achieve their communicative intention. Basically, the discussion and enquiry email genres included "involved" production, "on-line informational" elaboration, "Overt expression of argumentation", and "narrative and non-narrative" discourse, which reflects active and participation-encouraging discourse. The informing email genre included "abstract" style and "informational" production, which reflects passive style that does not encourage participations. The delivery email genre included "non-narrative" discourse, which reflects reporting events (Biber, 1995). The four types of email genres included "situation-dependent" reference, which requires the addressee to "construct a mental map of the situation" (Biber, 1991, p. 147). The main discursive practice in the delivery email genre was carried out using formulaic expressions such as the use of the polite imperative '*please find attached'* and the nominal as subject '*enclosed please find'* to divert the attention of the addressee to the attached file. Similarly, the writers of informing email genre messages used formulaic constructs such as conjuncts to relate the given information to the rules and regulations as in '*in accordance with',* passive voice signposting constructs followed by *'that'* clause such as '*please be informed that'* and '*please note that'* to prepare the recipient for the following information and passive voice constructs that intended to solicit action from the addressee as in '*you are required to'* and '*you are instructed to'*. This reflects that the writers of delivery and informing email genre

messages were equally concerned about the "creation of the genre" (Hanford, 2010) and the goal of the communication.

The writers of discussion and enquiry email genres, however, appeared to be more concerned about the goal of the communication than the "creation of the genre" (Hanford, 2010). This was reflected in the dynamic and novel aspects of communication in these two types of email genres. In the externally exchanged discussion email genre messages, the writers used several negotiating and debating strategies to achieve success. This included formal features to communicate the possibilities and explain the consequences, and informal features such as informal salutations, conversational openings, and rapport inspiring topics to connect with the addressee on the personal level. In discussing an issue with students, the employees used the "personal-centre switch" and the "asserting common ground" strategies to motivate and encourage the students to study hard and achieve their goals. The writers in these messages were personally "involved", which reflected the affiliative and humanistic–encouraging values and norms in the institution. However, if the student requested compromises, the employees acted with integrity and enforced the rules and regulations. The latter point involved the use of formal features and "functional" and "referential" intertextuality to enforce a rule or a policy. In the internally exchanged discussion and enquiry email genre messages, however, the employees seemed to have a conflict between carrying out the professional tasks, on the one hand, and the desire of not being viewed as assertive, on the other. The employees in these email messages used different strategies such as affiliative humour to minimize the imposition, emoticons to communicate lively facial expressions, dots ellipsis to show reluctance to elaborate on an issue, multiple

exclamatory marks to show excitement, showing sympathy to reflect understating and apologizing to express respect and consideration. They also used informal, unconventional and conversational salutation and closing markers to build on personal relationship with the addressees.

The use of these features in discussion and enquiry email genre messages created "hybrid discourse". The employees used written and spoken discourse in these two types of email genre messages including non-verbal cues. The main intention was achieving the communicative goals such as enforcing a rule, achieving success in the negotiation or constructing the face threatening act with little assertion. The close involvement between the communicators and the frequent exchange of emails regarding a single issue played a significant role in these practices as the use of these features mainly occurred in the latter emails of the communicative chain. These features were also the resultant of communicating "private intentions", especially in the emails that were sent to students, and relational factors, especially in the internally exchanged emails. These two email genres mainly maintained their generic integrity; however, their active nature encouraged the employees to appropriate their generic resources to create a "hybrid genre". These "hybrid genres" occurred in 30 (less than 8 percent of the corpus) email messages that mainly included 'discussing issues' and 'responding to request' as the main communicative intentions. Even though the textual realizations were dynamic and novel, the goal or the communicative intention of the communication in these two types of email genres remained clear. After all, the genres in the "real world [are] not only complex but dynamic too" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 7). They are also unpredictable (Hanford, 2010) and developing (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995) as the members of the discourse

community “employ genres to realize communicatively the goals of their communities” (Swales, 1990, p. 52).

This investigation on genre analysis, as such, has provided a fuller view about the genre of email messages, on the one hand, and the influences of the institutional context on language use on the other. Previous research on email genre has mainly focused on the textual features of the emails to identify the syntactical features (see Crystal, 2001; Ng, 2003; Skovholt and Svennevig, 2006), used a small number of email massages (see Mulholland, 1999; Alatalo, 2002; and Nickerson, 2000), collected unrepresentative sample of emails (see Ng, 2003; Nickerson, 2000; 1999; 1998) and focused on native speakers of English (see Mulholland, 1999; Markus, 1994; Waldvogel, 2005/ 2007). They described email genre as hybrid as it has spoken and written features (see Clement et al., 2003; Gimenez, 2000; Gruber, 2001) but did not explain the purposes of this hybridity. They mainly examined the textual features or how the emails are written. Using 378 authentic email messages that were written by six Malaysian employees and a Jordanian in 45 day-in-day-out email communications, this study examined how the emails are written and why they are written the way they are. This included examining the text-internal and text-external elements or how the context affects the text. This study revealed that if we look at email genre as a single genre, it would be hybrid as it includes spoken and written features. However, if we examine the communicative purposes of the emails and the institutional practices of the discourse community, it would be clear that email genre belongs to four different types of email genres. These types have different communicative purposes, communicational tasks, patterns of generic integrity and

belong to different registers. They also originate from different communicative mediums and channels.

8.3 Implications of the Study

This section discusses the implications of this study. This includes the theoretical implications, pedagogical implications and the implications for the discourse community under investigation.

8.3.1 Theoretical Implications

This study examined the genre of email messages as a resource of institutionalized and conventionalized practices and procedures. It investigated the genre of emails from four perspectives: the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. Bhatia's (2004) framework for conducting [critical] genre analysis was the dominant approach, this study, however, was also informed by the remaining three main approaches to genre analysis namely: SFL, ESP and New rhetoric.

On the ethnographic perspective, this study was informed by the ethnographic methodology of new rhetoricians and Swales's (1998) textography of discursive practices. This study examined the critical site of engagements and moments of interaction by conducting participant observation, formal and informal interviews and participating in the daily activities of the discourse community (Bazerman, 1994; Devitt, 1991; Miller, 1994). The text and text life in the educational institution, however, was carried out using Swale's (1998) textography.

On the textual perspective, this study made use of Biber's et al. (2007) multi-dimensional corpus based analysis of discourse units and Biber's (1988, 1995) register variation approach. These approaches assisted identifying the discourse units focusing on their semantic-functional meaning. Similarly, the use of Biber's (1988, 1991, 1995) seven basic dimensions of register variation assisted examining the functional use of the lexico-grammatical features used in the email messages.

On the socio-cognitive perspective, this study examined the texts of emails as sequences of discourse units (Biber et al., 2007). This identified the patterns of generic integrity that are used in the email messages. Hasan's (1977) potential generic structure, which is based on the SFL approach, had a critical part to play in identifying the "generic structure" as the moves appeared to be obligatory, optional and reiterational elements in the four types of email genres. Similarly, Hasan's (1977) potential generic structure was also relevant in examining interdiscursivity or the use of "hybrid genres" in the corpus of emails. Intertextuality, however, was examined in relation to Devitt's (1991) three kinds of intertextuality: referential, functional and generic intertextuality.

On the socio-critical perspective, however, this study examined the inferences that reflect the conformity of the employees to the implicitly enforced organizational cultures and explicitly enforced organizational ideologies. These inferences were examined in relation to functional description of the textual artefacts (Bhatia, 2004). However, it extended the textual analysis into the side of the "tactical space" (language use as genre) and "social space" that examined the "professional relationships the genres are likely to maintain or change" (Bhatia, 2004, p. 20).

The integration of these approaches analysed how the emails are constructed, interpreted and exploited. It also analysed why they are written the way they are in their institutional context. This integration examined the text-internal and text-external elements that influence language use as an institutional practice. It might be used in other genre studies, as recent developments in [critical] genre analysis emphasize examining the influences of the context and practices on the genre texts.

8.3.2 Institutional Practice Implications

In NED, the use of email overlapped and has even overtaken the use of traditional written (i.e., letter, memo, fax) and oral (i.e., face-to-face conversations, telephone calls) methods of communications. The writers used four types of email genres to accomplish four discursive practices. They appropriated the generic resources of these genres to suit the communicative purpose, intention and goal of communication. These email genres are the product of different levels of relationships between text, context and practices. It is revealed that the institutional practices play a vital rule in the discursive practices of the community and the discursive practices plays an important role in textual features used in the correspondence. Therefore, writing an accepted correspondence in this context requires gaining "knowledge producing" and "knowledge disseminating" in the institution (Bhatia, 2008, p. 162). This is the case as the "professional knowledge" (Devitt, 1991, P. 350) influences the discursive and the textual practices of the community in practice.

As this study demonstrated, email communication, as a goal-oriented communication, is governed by several professional, institutional and relational factors that set the guidelines to how and why to communicate using email. Interestingly, some textbooks presented tips to communicate by email as in "formality does not read well in email. Replace the formal salutations like 'Dear David' with informal 'Hello David' or even just 'David'" (Taylor, 1999, p. 108). It is perceived hat these tips might be more harmful than beneficial to novice practitioners as it portrays email as a monotype that is always informal regardless of the communicative intention, the partakers and their positions, which proved to have a key role in every single move of the email.

This study showed that the appropriateness or the inappropriateness of the professional practices depends on the discursive practice, on the one hand, and who communicates to whom and why, on the other. Therefore, preparing novice practitioners to enter the cyber world of business not only should focus on listing the merits and demerits of using email and giving some general tips (see Adler and Elmhorst, 2004; Blundel, 2004; Dwyer, 2003; Taylor, 1999), but should provide detailed guidelines that illustrate how to write goal-oriented emails. These guidelines should include clear illustrations on how to construct the framing and content moves in relation to the context of situation, on the one hand and the task of the correspondence on the other.

8.3.3 Implications for the Discourse Community

Although email correspondence in NED seemed a smooth exchange of goal-oriented communication that did not create unease among the interlocutors, no harm exists in

highlighting issues that seemed a little bit problematic, especially if they were viewed from the recipients' perspective. Firstly, the use of personal pronouns was problematic, especially the use of the first person singular pronouns '*I'* and '*me'* to present the organizational stand regarding issues. As these pronouns are personal in nature and are usually used to represent the '*self'*, their use in the emails to represent the institutional stand regarding issues led into consuming longer time to accomplish the institutional tasks. The addressees took the use of '*I'* and '*me'* as a personal stand that was negotiable. They continued discussing and negotiating the issue until the employee used the corporate '*we'* to end the lengthy discussions. Thus, to have professional-looking correspondence and avoid confusion on the recipients' side, either the name of the organization or the inclusive '*we'* should be used to present the organizational stand regarding the attributed issues.

Secondly, even though the overwhelming majority of the 'identifying topic' moves were either clearly or broadly informative, there were instances of using the uninformative 'identifying topic' moves. This occurred as a result of forwarding a previous email that was sent to (or received from) the addressee without changing the identifying topic move. As a result, the identifying topic move of the new email did not relate to the content. It was uninformative or even confusing. Identifying topic moves are significantly important as they state the '*subject'* of the correspondence, which is comparable to the '*reference'* move in business letters. They explicitly reflect the "discursive practice" that is carried out in the email message (Hanford, 2010). Because of this, employees are advised to pay more attention to naming or stating the '*subject'* of the email messages to better reflect the content of these messages.

Thirdly, because email is an asynchronous method of communication, the writer has no control over the time of its reading by the recipient. Because of this, using conversational salutations and pre-closings such as *'good morning'* or *'have a wonderful evening'* is inapplicable in email communication. This point becomes more relevant when sending emails to contacts that are in different countries and time zones. Writing these conversational framing moves in the emails, even if they are meant to show closeness in the relationship, may influence the professional image of the writer. Employees should use written-type salutation, opening, pre-closing and closing markers as sending an email at a given time does not necessarily mean that the recipient will read it immediately.

8.4 Strengths of the Study

This study has three main strengths. Firstly, this study is among the very first studies in Malaysia and the world that examined the genre as a product of institutionalized and conventionalized practices and procedures in a community of practice. It is a full-scale critical genre analysis that examined the genre as a resource from the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. Additionally, as part of the socio-cognitive perspective analysis, this study was also among the first studies that examined the socio-pragmatic resources of the genre by investigating the patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

The second strength of this study lies in its integrative research approach to critically investigate the genre. As Bhatia (2004, 2010a, 2010b, 2012) presented a multi-dimensional framework to investigate the genre and suggested a number of focuses

to examine the genre on the four main perspectives, he did not provide a fuller methodological approach to conduct the analysis. As such, this study made use of several approaches to investigate the genre. On the ethnographic perspective, this study made use of the ethnographic methodology presented by the new rhetoricians to examine the daily life of the community in practice, situatedness (Devitt, 1991; Miller, 1994) and Swales's (1998) textography to investigate the mode of genre construction in the institution. On the textual perspective, this study made use of Biber's (1988, 1995) and Conrad and Biber's (2001) multi-dimensional framework to investigate register variation and Biber's et al (2007) semantic-functional framework to investigate the moves. On the socio-cognitive perspective, this study made use of Biber's (2007) multi-dimensional framework to investigate the patterns of generic integrity and Hasan's (1977) preferred generic structure framework to identify the obligatory, optional and reiterational elements in the genres. On the socio-pragmatic space this study made use of Devitt's (1991) kinds of intertextuality to examine the relationships between the texts which reflect the professional knowledge of the discourse community in constructing their texts. Finally, on the socio-critical perspectives, this study examined form-function colorations (Bhatia, 2004) and the contextualizational cues, inferences and strategies (Van Dijk, 2001) that reflect conformity to the disciplinary conventions of the discourse community. This integration appears to be beneficial in identifying the genre of email in their institutional context.

Thirdly, this study presented to academia four new types of email genres. These types of email genres are the product of institutionalized practices in the community of practice. These genres appear to vary in their communicative purposes (Swales,

1990), the task they intend to achieve (Yates and Orlikowski, 1992), register (Biber, 1988, 1991), generic structure (Hasan, 1977) and generic integrity (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a). In the construction of discussion and enquiry email genres, the discourse community appeared to be more concerned about the goal of the communication than the construction of the genre, which is reflected in the hybrid, dynamic and novel features. In delivery and informing email genres, however, the discourse community appeared to be equally concerned about the construction of the genre and the goal of the communication, which was reflected in the fully-structured correspondence and the use of formulaic expressions to present the discursive practices. The hybrid discourse in email communication which was reported in previous research (Baron, 1998; Collot and Bellmore, 1996; Sims, 1996; Yates, 1996), then, is the resultant of using different types of email genres. Examining the genre of email focusing on the content, register, and format would not have possibly identified these different types of genres, and the genre of email would have always remained a single genre that is hybrid in nature.

8.5 Limitations of the Study

This study is a case study, which highlights "a single example of a class of phenomena" (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner, 1984, p. 34) and questions may be raised about the extent to which the findings can be generalized more broadly. However, as the corpus of emails was produced by employees who represent different organizational positions in the institution ranging from the assistant academic director to administrative staff, and represent the three main ethnic backgrounds in Malaysia, it seems likely that email communication of this type also

occurs in other educational institutions, specifically, private higher educational institutions in Malaysia.

The lexico-grammatical analysis in this study examined 12 main linguistic categories that communicate to 21 linguistic features listed by Biber (1995). The main purpose of investigating these specific features is there frequent occurrence in the corpus of email messages. This helped identifying the register of the four types of email genres. However, examining the full list of the linguistic features provided by Biber (1995) would have given a more holistic view about the register of the email genre messages.

As this study investigates a Malaysian workplace, the researcher is an insider and an outsider at the same time. Having worked in the workplace for the last seven years, the researcher is definitely a member of the discourse community; however, as I am Jordanian, I am an outsider, foreigner, to the Malaysian community and culture. Being a member of the discourse community is an advantage as I can observe the institutional practices in the institution. Being an outsider to the Malaysian community, however, should not be regarded as a handicap, as I have lived and worked in Malaysia for the past seven years. So the experience, that I have, gives me much the same advantage as that of an insider (Merton, 1972).

8.6 Future Research Directions

This study examined the genre of emails at a private higher educational institution as a resource. It revealed that the employees use four types of email genres to achieve their communicative intentions or goals of communications. Future research may

examine the genre of emails in other educational or corporate institutions in Malaysia or abroad. This would provide the chance to compare and contrast the influence of the institutional practices on language use. It would also provide more empirical studies that examine the genre of email as a resource of institutionalized practices (Bhatia, 2004).

This study mainly used qualitative methods to examine the use of the lexico-grammatical features used in the email genre messages. Quantitative methods were used on a minimum basis to count the frequency of occurrence of certain features. This was the case because the main intention was examining the functional use of these features in their institutional context. Future research may use quantitative methods to examine statistically the occurrence of the 67 linguistic features listed by Biber (1988, 1995). However, the researchers are advised to bridge statistics with a discussion of the functional use of these features in their institutional context to examine the frequency of using these features and explain why they were used.

Future research may also examine language use as an institutional practice in other types of organizational or professional genres (i.e., business letters, memos, fax). The examination of the textual artefacts of genres is significant; however, genres are not just products of text-internal elements. They are products of text-internal and text-external elements that make the genre possible in its institutional context. Adopting the contextualized approach to genre analysis to examine other types of genres would provide a "thick description" and a holistic explanation of how writers construct the genre and why they construct it the way they are. This view of language use is recent and was not taken seriously enough before (Bhatia, 2008).

8.7 Conclusion

This study examined the genre of email communication in one educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. It examined the genre from four perspectives that are the ethnographic, textual, socio-cognitive and socio-critical perspectives. This study revealed that the emails in the educational institution belong to four types of email genres namely: discussion, enquiry, delivery and informing email genres. These four types of email genres have different communicative purposes, intentions and goals of communication.

The communicative intention of these email genres was either communicated in a single email message or in a chain of email messages. The genres that were communicated in a single email message, delivery end informing email genres, were mainly structured in relation to textual artefacts. The writers mainly used formulaic constructs to carry out the discursive practices of these email genres. The genres that were communicated in chains (discussion and enquiry email genres) were active in relation to involvement and more flexible in relation to register variation.

The professional practices in NED influenced the construction of genres. The writers used their "disciplinary knowledge" to construct the four types of email genres. As discussion and enquiry email genres intended to debate an issue and request-respond to a request, the writers applied creative, unique and dynamic strategies to achieve their communicative goals including "involved" production, "narrative and non-narrative" discourse, "on-line informational" elaboration and "overt expression of argumentation". As the delivery email genre intended to send a document or a file, the writers used "non-narrative" event reporting constructs. As informing email

genre mainly intended to notify a group of recipients about a general interest issue, it included “informational” production and “abstract” style.

The disciplinary conventions of NED also influenced language use. This was observed as the employees dealt with fellow colleagues and students in a friendly and supportive manner, and they promptly carried out their institutional duties. However, they also acted with integrity and enforced the rules and regulation to safeguard the ethical and institutional standards. This was reflected in the use of personal and informal style in the task that required involvement and formal style in the tasks that required a firm stand.

The findings in this study shed light on the language use as an institutional practice in NED. They reflect actual daily email practices in the institution over a period of forty-five days. These findings, however, do not close the door for empirical research on workplace emails; they merely open the door for other researchers to explore other (or perhaps similar types) of email communications. Examining language use as an institutional practice in different discourse communities is one of the least searched areas in Malaysia and abroad.

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