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Linguistic Insights
Studies in Language and Communication

Yeonkwon Jung

Basics of Organizational Writing

A Critical Reading Approach

Peter Lang

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This book is a study of social interaction in organizational writing, looking at how and why members of specific groups use language in the ways they do. It shows how the discursive practices of writing shape and influence behavior of an organization's members and their perceptions and judgments of what they consider in reality as criteria for the practices. It investigates the products of organizational communication, including the situatedness of language and its consequences, and particular language features seen as signaling contextual presuppositions, or shared meanings, providing an interpretive framework for understanding written organizational discourse. This book is based on a data-driven approach rather than practice-driven or theory-driven approach, as it centers on a variety of situations that commonly take place in business and institutional organizations. Pragmatic processes such as speech acts and face theory are adopted to analyze how writers seek to encode their messages for a particular audience, and how readers make inferences when seeking to locate a writer's intended meaning.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Aim of the study

An organization is a group of people working together to achieve common goals (Richmond et al 2005). It is an organized collection of individuals working interdependently within a relatively structured, organized, open system to achieve common goals. This definition centers on the fact that people are working together in some organized fashion with some common goal in mind. In this respect, each organization might be seen as a discourse community with its particular norms or values (Swales 1990). Organizational writing is how people use "written" language to manage their practical tasks, and to perform the particular activities associated with their participation in organizational contexts. Writing practices in each organization are dependent on "shared patterns of social interaction" (Bizzell 1982) or "routine for the discourse community members" (Doheny-Farina 1992). In other words, the interactions of organizational writing indicate the writer's acknowledgement of the community's interpersonal conventions and connect texts with organizational cultures. The view that writing practices are constructed within discourse communities draws attention to what is similar in organizational genres and what is different across genres. Accordingly, the organizational writer must make assumptions about the nature of a discourse community and about how it will be received by a particular audience by *adapting* knowledge appropriately.

This book is a study of social interaction in organizational writing, looking at how and why members of specific groups use language in the ways they do. It is based on meaning-centered communication models heavily influenced by the linguistic turn in the social sciences where language is performative of social action (Austin 1975). It focuses on texts as the outcome of social interaction and explores the

claim that what writers at various organizations do with words is to engage in a web of transactional and interactional associations (Hyland 2000).

The rapidly changing business world demands knowledge far beyond theory-orientation. Consequently, theory-based university knowledge no longer guarantees success in the workplace. This trend requires a new teaching curriculum for university English courses incorporating skills such as business communication. Although research has increasingly turned to the analysis of professional texts, materials addressing the components and writing practices of such texts as a variety of business and institutional genres have been still rarely informed by writing research, and practice was led by the intuitions and experience of course trainers and materials developers until recently. To meet this requirement, this book aims at delivering essential knowledge and skills in "written" organizational communication in English. English organizational communication is a "practical" discipline through which students will learn English communication skills for conducting business. Unlike conventional knowledge-based organizational communication textbooks, it aims at offering knowledge far beyond tip-oriented organizational writing conventions. Since organizational communication is not a conventional discipline but a context-sensitive one, it emphasizes the role of context in designing English organizational communication materials. Accordingly, it will provide readers with situational cases in a variety of business and organizational settings to further develop their English business or organizational communication skills.

This book adopts a data-driven approach rather than a practice-driven or theory-driven approach (Ambady et al. 1996), as it centers on a variety of situations that commonly take place in business and institutional organizations. In this respect, it prefers the term 'organizational' to 'business' communication, mainly not because of research methodological issues, but because of the scope of the data, including non-profit organizational writing (e.g. schools). There are basically two types of organizations: profit and nonprofit (Richmond et al. 2005). Profit-based organizations must make a profit from selling the goods or services they provide otherwise they will cease to exist. On the other hand, nonprofit organizations have goals that are concerned

with providing products or services also, but they do not have to make a profit while doing so. Some common nonprofit groups are organizations such as churches, most educational institutions, and so on. These organizations survive based on the number of persons they serve and the quality of the service provided. This study deals with data collected from both profit-based organizations (e.g. companies) and nonprofit organizations (e.g. universities) in order to investigate a wide spectrum of writing practices in various organizations. Its main concern lies in a variety of "writing" practices in (non-)profit organizations. This claim goes well with Watson's (2009) argument whose central concept used in organization and management studies is 'organization' rather than 'business'. He contends that there is a great deal in common between "the activities which occur in private business organizations and organizations located in the public (i.e. non-commercial) sector" (Watson 2009: 226). Since detailed genre analysis is beyond the scope of the study, however, this book does not aim to conduct research for making a comparison between different organizational writing (i.e. business discourse vs. institutional discourse).

Organizational discourse refers to collections of interactions, communication channels, and texts exclusively embodied in the practice of writing (Putnam & Cooren 2004). In line with this definition, this study pays particular attention to effects of language in a variety of organizational settings (Phillips & Hardy 2002). Although this study, unlike the majority of organizational communication work (Miller 2003), is not interested in how the context of the organization influences communication processes, it seeks to understand how meanings are changed when messages are exchanged in both formal and informal networks (Tourish & Hargie 2004: 10) and how people in the organization ascribe meanings to messages. It shows how the discursive practices of writing shape and influence behavior of an organization's members and their perceptions and judgments of what they consider in reality as criteria for the practices, as clarified in Mumby & Clair's observation (1997: 181, emphasis given), "discourse is the principal means by which organization members create a *coherent social reality that frames their sense of who they are*". This study aims to highlight "members' sense-making efforts and provid[e]

a critical analysis of the underlying assumption upon which sense making is based" (Mumby & Mease 2011: 297).

An important domain within organizational discourse is rhetoric and its devices used in order to achieve particular objectives. Approaches focusing on rhetoric look at symbols within the organization to examine the way the symbols shape messages and message responses (Putnam & Fairhurst 2001). This study examines the way symbolic and rhetorical devices are used to communicate *strategy*. It points out the persuasive effect and/or image maintenance of rhetoric through pinpointing discourse's strategic dimensions (Cheney et al. 2004). Given Aristotle's (1954) definition of rhetoric, it analyzes symbols to *persuade* others to change their attitude, beliefs, values or actions. It mainly centers on discourse at a micro level. Namely, it orients to the ways regarding how an organization's members interact in writing as meaning-producing activities that give organizations substance (Fairhurst & Putnam 2004), with relatively less careful investigation of the macro level of discourse as a function to frame the broad social context within which everyday organizing processes occur (Mumby & Mease 2011). For example, various linguistic features to accomplish persuasion, such as hedges, boosters, lexis, are explicated. This is a book about writing negative, persuasive, and promotional messages with language devices for tone control and image management, not about organizations themselves. Accordingly, this study centers on "utterance force" (i.e. how a writer *intends* an utterance to be understood) (Bargiela-Chiappini et al. 2007: 193). Besides the illocutionary force (the force of the intention of the writer behind the utterance), attention has also been paid to the perlocutionary force (the effect of the utterance on the reader). Figure 1 illustrates a major scope of the book.

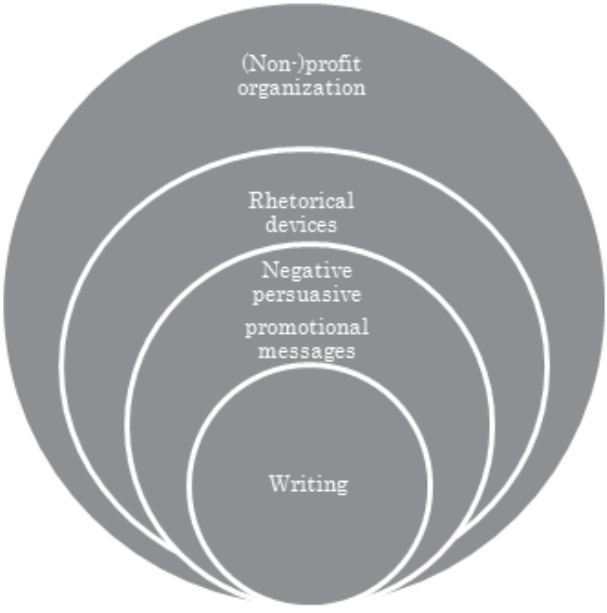


Figure 1. Major scope of the study

This study also focuses on the intended direction of persuasive efforts, so that it examines instances of both internal and external communication texts. A vital means of attending organizational concerns may be through effective internal communication by memos and electronic mail. Messages to people outside the organization have a far-reaching effect on its reputation and ultimate success. External written communication media may be letters and electronic mail. This study investigates how organizations direct their rhetorical efforts internally (Bullis 1993) and how they focus on external audiences in an effort to enhance, maintain or restore organizational images (Cheney 1992; Benoit 1995). It also advocates the claim that internal and external communication messages are not mutually exclusive but they are engaged in multiple rhetorical efforts simultaneously. For example, Swales and Rogers (1995) speculate that mission statements not only foster member identification with corporate value systems but also announce those value systems to external audiences, such as customers.

Special languages have become one of the most important tools of professional life. The commercial importance of such English language skills have been increasingly recognized by both L1 and L2 professionals. The value of efficient writing to these learners is of crucial importance. This study focuses on English data without conducting contrastive studies with other languages. It looks specifically at the use of English as a lingua franca for a variety of business and institutional transactions. It does not make a comparison of the difference between Business English (the lexis of business English, in particular, see Nelson 2000 for more details) with general English, either. This implies that the data of the study are not only limited to those in which technical languages are used. Therefore, this study deals with written genres used to *talk about business*, as well as written genres used to *actually do business*. It aims to explicate "real" English in various organizational contexts rather than textbook-based standard English. Seidlhofer (2011: 59, emphasis is mine) puts stress on its important function in English language teaching and learning as follows:

> For knowing the language now not only means knowing what is 'proper' English with reference to its grammar and lexis, but what is 'real' English as exemplified in the idiomatic patterns of *actually occurring native-speaker behavior* – and not only knowing the forms of these patterns, but also, of course, knowing in what contextual circumstances they can be appropriately used.

This study also aims to exemplify how critical reading skills are applicable to teaching organizational writing. It will clarify why we need to take a critical reading approach to teaching and learning organizational writing. It argues that the best way to learn business or organizational writing is probably by training critical reading. One objective of the study is to help readers develop their competence in text analysis and critical inquiry. This book to some extent aims to facilitate the development of critical capability.

1.2. Types of data

People in organizations produce a large variety of documents. For example, business memos for requesting attendance of a business meeting, monthly or quarterly reports on problems during a certain period, written statements of corporate policies and instructions, congratulatory letters to employees, letters for denying customer request, thank-you notes to clients, and so on. Those documents are organized to pursue common basic purposes of organizational writing, such as to *provide certain information*, to *request to act*, or to *manage organizational image*. The data of the study are organizational writing for pursuing those multiple purposes, and they include various speech acts (Austin 1975; Searle 1975) used relatively often in organizational settings as follows:

1. Representatives, to commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g. disagreeing, asserting oneself in job applications
2. Directives, attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something, e.g. request
3. Commissives to commit the speaker to some future course of action, e.g. threatening
4. Expressives to express a psychological state of the speaker, e.g. apology, complaint

Special attention has been paid to requests, as getting others to carry out tasks or perform an action is a key concern and the most frequently occurring across most organizational contexts (Vine 2004).

Organizational discourse is not only concerned with what is "discursive about organizations" but also what is "organizing about discourse" (Fairhurst & Cooren 2004: 131). Accordingly, organizational discourse data do not only include "organizational" data. For instance, in contrast to major research work of organizational rhetoric, this study is not only limited to formal, public messages and discourses (e.g. CEO's greetings (Jung 2012); mission statements (Swales & Rogers 1995); fundraising letters (Bhatia 2004), among many others), but also deals with discourses constituted for informal persuasion in

person. Besides business discourse data, it also collects institutional discourse data. Institutional discourse exemplifies "how people use language to manage their practical tasks, and to perform the particular activities associated with their participation in institutional contexts" (Drew & Sorjonen 2011: 192). Since institutional data mostly occur within "designated" physical settings, this study collects data from a popular setting for institutional or work-related interactions such as a university.

It is a well-known fact that English is used as an official language for international business and it is mostly used by non-native speakers of English, as illustrated in much research involving international business communication (Nickerson 2000; Louhiala-Salminen et al 2005; Planken 2005, etc). The texts introduced in the study are collected from two types of speaker sources, native speakers of English and non-native speakers of English. This is due to the global phenomenon of English as a lingua franca (ELF: see chapter 2 for more details about ELF), as clarified in the following two excerpts:

> [ELF is] a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication. (Firth 1996: 240)

> ELF interactions are defined as interactions between members of two or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue. (House 1999: 74)

These definitions highlight a distinctive feature of ELF, that the majority of ELF users are nonnative speakers of English. Seidlhofer (2011: 7) defines ELF as

> *any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option.* (italics in original)

Furthermore, as Charles and Marschan-Piekkari (2002) claim in their study of communication in multinational settings, native speakers of English can be a source of communication problems. This book includes not only standard data (errors not included) but also non-

standard data (errors included) to suggest some essential criteria of good business writing practices. The study of fallacies is the cultivation of a critical thinking that makes students better participants in organizational writing. Despite its inherently negative connotation, therefore, the word *error* is seen here as a vantage point to inform pedagogical methodologies, as Richards and Sampson (1974: 4) claim:

> Errors should not be viewed as problems to be overcome, but rather as normal and inevitable features indicating the strategies that learners use.

Unlike frequency-based error analysis (e.g. common English mistakes) in CALL (computer-aided language learning) methodologies (Stockwell 2012), error analysis is conducted in this study through *qualitative* text analysis in each non-standard business writing sample in order to present its counterpart to the reader of the text. Accordingly, this study "qualifies" English errors in organizational writing, without "quantifying" them.

Besides *authentic* data, this book also uses few *simulated* data in order to investigate a specific aspect of business discourse (e.g. job application letters) (see Connor et al (1995) for cross-cultural studies on US and Flemish letters of application in response to a simulated job advertisement). This is because difficulties associated with gaining access to companies and the confidentiality agreements necessary to work on the data and publish the data, as Planken (2002: 51) claims that "simulation serves as the best alternative, in terms of data collection [….], because participants are protective of potentially sensitive corporate information, or because they are reluctant about being observed and recorded on the job." Simulated or case write-up data are collected based on a set of instructions for the writers (i.e. students) involving where they are asked to play a certain role intended to elicit the particular aspect of language the researcher (i.e. instructor) is interested in. The "case write-up" represents students' most common writing assignment in response to the case in core business courses and it helps students perform as "problem-solvers, managers who can act in business situations, and disciplinary thinkers who can apply academic knowledge to the real world" (Forman & Rymer 1999: 103).

In a similar vein, the "case write-up" has also become popular in business communication courses (teaching corporate communication cases, in particular), in that communication plans for crisis management can be taught by role playing (Newsom and Haynes 2005: 416). Despite the lack of insights into how people actually communicate in organizations, simulated data in this study (i.e. job application letters) can be treated much like authentic data. Many of the applicants who write job application letters and are university students without rich experiences of work are like the subjects who have provided simulated data in this book.

1.3 Data analysis

Business organizational discourse research has not relied on any one approach or methodology (Bargiela-Chiappini et al. 2007). When investigating organizational writing, this book focuses on linguistic resources at various levels – lexical, syntactic, sequential, etc. – which all are mobilized to accomplish the interactional work of organizations (Drew and Sorjonen 2011). Bhatia's proposal (2004) of a multiperspective genre analytical framework is useful to analyze professional written genres.

First, 'discourse as text' refers to the analysis of language use confined to the surface level properties of discourse, such as lexicogrammatical, semantic, organizational, other aspects of text structure, such as register, move structure and intertextuality. This study is related to register analysis (Biber 1995), in that it correlates certain grammatical structures and contexts (e.g. passivizations and nominalizations).

Seminal genre analysts' work (i.e. Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993) has a tendency to explicate language use through formal and functional aspects of discourse (e.g. move structure and intertextuality) in a *conventionalized* communicative setting. Swales (1990) has introduced rhetorical moves as an essential part of the valid rhetorical

structure for socio-cognitive genre analysis because they remarkably orient to the task and purpose of the text. Swales (1990, 2002) defines genre based on communicative purposes. He describes genre as "a class of communicative events" characterized by a set of communicative purposes. According to him, communicative purposes are highlighted as a fundamental feature that sets constraints for the stylistic and linguistic choices of genre. Communicative purposes as a fundamental feature in defining genres are relevant as a first step when planning communication (e.g. Is the writer's message mainly meant to deliver objective information?; Is it mainly persuasive?; Or is it meant to create solidarity?). All messages have an underlying purpose. For example, the purpose of a credit refusal letter is to refuse the request while encouraging the customer's continued business. Creating goodwill is especially important when communicating unwelcome news with business partners. According to major genre analysts (Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993), the arrangement of text constitutes the rhetorical moves. Moves are functional units of texts and describe their communicative purposes. Therefore, moves can be basic elements of a certain genre. For example, Swales (1981) assigns a typical four-move structure to the introduction of research articles using the data of forty-eight article introductions, such as establishing the research field, summarizing previous research, preparing for present research, and introducing the present research. The order in which the writer presents his/her ideas is as important as the ideas themselves realized as atomic paragraphs. Given this claim, the data of the study are analyzed in a wider context. This study examines if there is a major rhetorical pattern in organizational writing across genres. Additionally, it explores if the placement of the main speech acts that I am interested in (e.g. request) yields any variation and whether there are distinct moves other than the main speech acts (e.g. problem-solution pattern).

Second, the reference of 'discourse of text' is not necessarily taking context into consideration. 'Discourse as text' operates solely within "a textual space". Until recently, genre studies in academic and professional contexts have been on the use of "text-internal linguistic resources" without in-depth analysis of "text-external sources", which belong to context (Bhatia 2012). For example, we do not persuade others by simply sparkling particular grammatical forms through our

texts, but via social and interactive conventions that are appropriate in particular contexts. The limitation to lack of data analysis of text-external sources demands a new perspective, "discourse as genre". 'Discourse as genre' extends the analysis to the level of 'socio-pragmatic space' incorporating context exclusively in order to explain certain language use in goal-oriented professional contexts. In other words, 'discourse as genre' is far beyond 'discourse as text', as its main concern lies in genre use *in* professional practice. Although generalizations are useful as they help us to see patterns, this perspective does not look into how moves represent staged strategies for realizing the communicative purposes. This book analyzes written discourse data in terms of using context to make inferences about meaning. That is, it investigates the products of communication, including the situatedness of language and its consequences, and particular language features seen as signaling contextual presuppositions, or shared meanings, providing an interpretive framework for understanding written discourse. The same is true for approaches in pragmatics. Approaches in pragmatics go beyond *conventional* discourse analysis in that they draw on the context-sensitive position (Blum-Kulka 1997). Pragmatics adopting the context-sensitive position offers insights into cross-cultural communication (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Wierzbicka 1991). The value of this approach "mediates the connection between language and social context and facilitates more satisfactory bridging of the gap between texts and contexts" (Fairclough 1995: 189), so that it allows us to reflect on "who uses language, how, why and when" (Van Dijk 2011: 2). For instance, words can mean more – or something other – than what they say. Their interpretation depends on a multiplicity of factors including familiarity with the context, intonational cues and cultural assumptions. The same phrase may have different meanings on different occasions and the same intention may be expressed by different linguistic means. In this respect, pragmatic processes such as speech acts and face theory are adopted in the study to analyze how writers seek to encode their messages for a particular audience, and how readers make inferences when seeking to locate a writer's intended meaning. In the negative situations, politeness strategies arise as important issues structuring the texts. The primary theoretical basis for the study is Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory of

politeness. Since face-threats are inherent properties of illocutionary acts, Brown and Levinson believe that it is necessary to study threats to face wants in the context of speech acts. Therefore, more than others, Brown and Levinson's model explicitly explains how facework is reflected in politeness strategies used in the performance of speech acts. Though Brown and Levinson's work provides the main theoretical basis for data analysis, I shall where necessary draw in other approaches (e.g. Spencer-Oatey's rapport management (2005; 2008); Benoit's theory of image restoration discourse (1995; 1997)). Other approaches may to some extent explain the cases where Brown and Levinson's patterns of politeness strategy distribution are not consistent with the data of the study.

The unit of analysis selected for this study is the clause consisting of subject, a finite verb, and the complements of the verb. The function or intention of each clause is contextually decided (Connor et al. 1995; Upton and Connor 2001). Because utterances can simultaneously carry multiple meanings when they are taken out of context, the function of each unit is contextually determined. For example, giving bad news is defined as an act conveying purely 'objective' information that embarrasses the reader. Therefore, in this study, bad news does not denote 'genuine' conflict, such as opposition or refusal. However, if a sentence denotes opposition or refusal, I consider it as a refusal, not bad news. Requests can also be bad news. However, if a sentence denotes a request, I consider it as a request, not bad news. For example, the sentence, 'The problems in the revised mock-up of 'OO' product have been found', is bad news, because it only delivers purely objective information that embarrasses the reader. In the sentence, 'We inform you that we are unable to accept your request for a price reduction at this time', the writer conveys bad news to the reader, but the sentence basically denotes refusal, thereby it is a refusal. In the sentence, 'If you don't pay by O assigned, we will be obliged to redeem the collateral offered by you by law', the writer gives bad news to the reader, but the sentence basically denotes request, thereby it is a request.

Third, this study uses all three views of discourse for data analysis. After exploring the textual space, this study works toward social space, using "social" context to find reason for special language use as

professional practice (e.g. reason for textualization of lexico-grammatical and discoursal resources in specific institutional or professional contexts). As in 'discourse as genre', 'discourse as social-practice' is a perspective to conduct text analysis within context. Furthermore, the scope of context incorporated in 'discourse as social practice' is much broader than that of 'discourse as genre'. In this respect, 'discourse as social practice' functions in far broader 'socio-pragmatic space' (e.g. power; distance). In the examples given, detailed context or background information of each example is provided to show how each written text functions in real-life situations. I also include counterexamples in order to support the claim that appropriateness of organizational writing should be assessed *in context* (Holmes 1995).

This book is primarily based on my English business communication lecture notes at Kansai Gaidai University in Japan. The English Business Communication lectures present applied frameworks for writing business documents, managing business email, and using business English as a lingua franca. Data analysis sessions from the perspective of critical reading aimed to help students' business writing skills to be improved gradually. Complementarily a critical reading approach is also adopted in this book. The notion of 'critical' is "something of an attitude, an attempt to provide a new perspective on traditional ways of seeing the world and engaging with it" (Bargiela-Chiappini et al. 2007: 23). In this study, 'critical' is irrelevant to research practices that question social injustice and inequality (Fairclough 1993). Instead, it is a term for "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (<http://www.critical thinking.org/>, cited in Bargiela-Chiappini et al. 2007: 23). To be able to critique, this study attempts to assess the strength and the well-reasoned *argument,* logical links that convince the reader of the coherence of the writer's argument (e.g. logical consistency, tone, organization, and a number of other important sounding terms).

1.4. The Organization of the study

Written discourse comes in various genres (Van Dijk 2011), such as job application letters, fundraising letters, letters of apology in response to the customer's complaint, among many others. These different genres may be partly characterized by a certain set of their typical structures, or register, such as the use of passive voice, non-human agent as a sentential subject, or noun phrase form. First, this book explains standard tones in business writing (i.e. directness; formality) primarily through CBS style and seven C's. It illustrates how a paragraph structure and certain registers make business writing direct and formal. On the one hand, a pyramid structure is explained: a direct paragraphing in terms of the placement of an obligatory paragraph before optional paragraphs. On the other hand, a variety of written English practices are introduced in order to explain registers for formal prose. For example, the self-effacing genre-specific feature of business writing makes a business document prefer non-human agents as sentential subjects. This feature also makes passive sentences popular in business writing. Besides, nominalized phrases represent written English practices for formality. Tying devices make business correspondence formal by placing linking devices either or both at the beginning and/or the end of the text.

Everyday life in organizational sites is characterized by conflicts and disorders discursively (Wodak 1997: 211). One of the many objectives of social interaction by text is the expression and communication of *rapport* among human participants. It is in this way that discourse as interaction is part of 'social situation' in people's everyday lives (Van Dijk 2011: 315). The social situation defines the 'proper' context and enables language users to perceive a certain communicative situation in a text appropriately. Second, this book investigates the 'unmarked' conditions and rules in writing sensitive and persuasive messages. It explores *you*-attitude, offering credibility, and image restoration discourse, in order to discuss a variety of tone control practices. After explicating *you*-attitude, it illustrates the function of credibility in promotional genres and persuasive messages. On the one

hand, it argues that message structures can play an important role in offering credibility (e.g. a three-part pattern in cover letter writing (introduction-body-ending)). On the other hand, it exemplifies that sufficient reasons, evidence for the applicant's qualification in cover letter writing and reasons for persuasions and promotions realized in the forms of problem-solution-pattern and opener-body-action closing, play essential roles in maximizing the writer's credibility. It also investigates complaint management discourse. Special attention is paid to corporate image restoration strategies in response to the customer's complaint

Third, this book ends with exceptions running counter to the major claim of the study (e.g. indirect organization of negative and persuasive messages). It highlights context-sensitive features of business writing. It investigates three conditions (sociality rights and obligations; a negative as a common ground; differentiation) in order to justify the direct approach in negative/sensitive messages. On the one hand, social norm-based shared knowledge, such as sociality rights and obligations, is of vital importance to help us justify direct requests. Another exception for justification of directness in face-threatening situations can be made in cases where a *differentiation* situation is involved. On the other hand, one of the strongest applications of shared knowledge is to establish a common ground with the reader. This book claims that a negative makes a good common ground for persuading the reader of the writer's main point. It also exemplifies the claim that the writer should deliver information about what the readers need and want to know (amount of information, in particular). Emphasis is given on reasons behind the negative messages as contributions to positive interpretations of the messages.

This book represents a contribution to theoretical and applied research on many aspects of organizational writing. It is organized for one-semester business communication (or related) classes in undergraduate or (post)graduate programs. Its intended readership is junior/senior undergraduate or 1st year (post)graduate students majoring in communication, English, linguistics, journalism, PR, business, or marketing. Because it is concerned primarily with organizational communication, the discussion and illustrations focus mainly on business and institutional messages. Since it is fundamentally pertaining to

effective communication in general, the reader of the book can apply numerous principles introduced here to various organizations, to the professions, and to personal communications. The writer's teaching and research experiences of business communication in a variety of cross-/inter-cultural academic contexts are expected to make this textbook more thickly described, as business and/or organizational communication is a multi-disciplinary subject.

The following chapter reviews the literature on English as a lingua franca, English for specific purposes, and speech acts.

2. Literature review

2.1. English as a lingua franca

Recently, researchers of business communication, business discourse, and English for Specific Purposes have paid special attention to the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in international business (e.g. Firth, 1996; Nickerson, 2000; Poncini, 2004; Planken, 2005; Kankaanranta, 2006; Louhiala-Salminen & Charles, 2006; Charles, 2007; Rogerson-Revell, 2007; Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson & Planken, 2007; Gerritsen & Nickerson, 2009: Jenkins 2007, Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta 2005, Seidlhofer 2004, Mauranen 2003). For example, the roles of culture and language have been discussed; what is the relationship between language and culture-bound or societal behavioural norms when communication takes place in ELF? There are several possible scenarios. Firstly, we could argue that ELF communication involves the cultural and behavioural norms associated with the use of the English language; secondly, we could consider ELF as a "culture-free" pidgin-like language, and thirdly, ELF could be considered to carry a mixture of the interactants' norms with it. The standpoint taken by most recent ELF research seems to blend the hypothetical extreme options and assume a constructionist view that emphasizes the particular communicative situation and its participants. The two-dimensional description of ELF as both "linguistic masala" and "language stripped bare" by Meierkord (2002) has been frequently cited and seems to grasp the essential**: "**language stripped bare" refers to the observations by Meierkord that, for instance, discourse participants only make use of such politeness phenomena that are experienced as culturally relatively neutral and impersonal. For example, speakers use a reduced amount of tokens for expressing requests, greetings, how-are-yous and leave-takes, and speakers avoid topics when they are uncertain about their acceptability (Meierkord 2002:

126). The "linguistic masala", is created by the heterogeneity of ELF users and is shown as a highly dynamic "communicative hybridity" (Meierkord 2002: 124), i.e. the speakers incorporate their own cultural norms and linguistic backgrounds as well as the situation specific requirements into a mixture that works for them, in the particular situation.

Louhiala-Salminen, Charles and Kankaanranta (2005) studied ELF encounters within a context of business mergers and introduced the concept of BELF ("Business ELF" or English as a Business Lingua Franca) to refer to the language that business professionals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds use to conduct their daily work activities. The concept of BELF was applied to emphasize the overall communicative goal and the domain of use of the English lingua franca. According to Louhiala-Salminen et al.(2005), BELF speakers share the 'B', i.e. the context and knowledge of business, the 'E', i.e. at least the 'core' (see Jenkins 2007) of the English language and, to some extent its discourse practices. However, they are, at the same time, separated by the previous knowledge and experience connected with their various native languages and related discourse practices, and their own, often hidden and implicit rules of communication. The BELF perspective is aimed at drawing attention to the central role that the language of communication plays in interaction. By emphasizing the distinction between 'English' and 'ELF/BELF' we also want to question the validity of the straightforward association between 'English' and, consequently, 'the discursive norms of English'.

2.2. English for specific purposes

Besides ELF/BELF, a review of business communication and English for Specific Purposes reveals few studies of text-linguistic feature analyses for management. Much has been written about the code of conduct for shaping workplace realities and articulating business stra-

tegic shifts (cf. Bird 2007; Fairhurst 2005). For example, studies examine framing (Fairhurst et al., 1997; Goffman 1974; Lakoff 2004), using metaphor for administrative activities (Morgan 1983), building a corporate culture (David & Graham 1997), altering business performance (Suchan 1992), and managing diversity in organizations (Kirby & Harter 2003). These studies have a tendency to focus on the social constructs rather than the language use.

Despite their crucial function in formulating the corporate code of conduct, less is known about the use of textual components as the language of management. In particular, organizational discourse analysts orient to formal, public messages and discourses for persuasion and identification (e.g. public relations campaigns and discourses regarding organizational efficiency and change). Among few studies on the use of management language, Schneider (2001) reveals the construction of organizational knowledge through explicating the interrelationship between talk and writing. She refers to the practice of note-taking and the interaction of text and talk involved with the interviewing process to explain their function in building legitimate knowledge necessary for credible decision-making in organizations. Livesey (2002) illustrates how rhetorical analysis is used in professional communication research through examining a four-part series of advertorials published by Exxon Mobil in the New York Times. She argues that the advertorials play a role in shaping the identities of the actors involved. Ran and Duimering (2007) investigate how language is used for organizational identity claims in corporate mission statements. Rogers and Swales (1990) consider Dana Corporation's 1987 Philosophy and Policies intriguing for its use of sentence subjects that create an inclusive tone while communicating management goals. Jung (2012) also sheds light on the use of language features as tools for management through the analysis of Korean CEO's on-line PR texts, each Korean company's vision, management policy, business and management principle. He exemplifies that communication orientation to stakeholders is different across companies. Furthermore, his finding shows that the actual code of conduct emphasized by the CEOs is not going well with the official corporate values.

2.3. Speech act

Applications of speech act theory to organizational communication have been made until recently. Clyne (1994) pays particular attention to complaints, directives, commissives and apologies. Mulholland (1991, 1994) makes a classification of speech acts in the workplace (e.g. accepting, accusing, dismissing and reprimanding). Maier (1992) centers on how one makes assertions when asking for a second chance at a job interview. She finds that applicants' letters include representatives asserting the merits of the applicant and the benefits to the company for persuasion. Hyland (1998) explores the use of metadiscourse/metadiscursive features through CEO's letters included in annual reports. He contends that metadiscourse features (e.g. hedges (*might, perhaps*), emphatics (*in fact, definitely*), logical connectives (*in addition*)) play a crucial role in organizing and evaluating information, so that they help a particular company satisfy shareholders. Hartford and Mahboob (2004) identify cross-cultural differences in complaints and suggest a paragraph convention of complaint letters, such as introduction, praise, alerters, background, complaint, appeals to editor, request for redress, suggestion, justification for request/suggestion. Bilbow (2002) examines commissive speech acts (promises and offers, in particular) using intercultural meeting data in a large multinational airline company in Hong Kong. Cooren (2001) puts stress on the sequential order of speech acts in episodic encounters. Likewise, Cooren & Taylor (2000) examine coalition-building during ecological controversies. Buzzanell and Turner (2003) suggest discourse as a type of organizational sensemaking that helps shape meaning for a key organizational event: job loss.

A comprehensive literature on requests in politeness enactment has also been built up (Pilegaard 1997, Jung 2009a, among many others). Yli-Jokipii (1994) investigates how requests are made in her cross-cultural data of British, American, and Finnish business writing. Akar (1998) examines requests in Turkish in her data consisting of memoranda and fax messages collected from four different Turkish companies. Kong (2006) examines intra-institutional written requests

which are directives circulated within an institution. Pilegaard (1997) explains how the distribution of positive and negative politeness varies in requests in British business letters. He maintains that the quantity of positive politeness strategy decreases when the realization of negative politeness strategy increases during the course of business. Bilbow (1997) and Yeung (1997) examine requests in English and Chinese business and contextual factors affecting the choice of politeness strategies. Neumann (1997) has found that German managers are more direct in making requests than Norwegian counterparts in business discourse. Mulholland (1997) maintains that national cultures significantly affect the selections of request forms through examining requests made between Australians and Asians. Jung (2009) investigates requests in Korean business correspondence with particular reference to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. His research shows that politeness strategies for requests employed in Korean business correspondence reflect cross-cultural differences. For example, requests are not always considered as a threat to the addressee's negative face but sometimes a way of creating solidarity in Korean culture.

3. General characteristics of business communication

Since emotions tend to be generally excluded in business communication, its tone is cold, direct, official or formal. These tones are owing to so-called CBS style, pyramid structure (direct paragraphing), and a variety of registers or written English practices (e.g. subject pronoun choices (use of exclusive *we* instead of *I*), passivization, nominalization, and tying devices (linking devices to create a contextual sequence)). This chapter turns to how the direct paragraph structure and registers play a role in establishing the standard tone of business communication.

3.1. Directness

3.1.1. CBS style

Since written business communication is a goal-oriented activity, direct tone can be used for maximum efficiency by letting the reader know the urgency based on mutually shared knowledge. Namely, due to the goal-oriented characteristic of a company, the writer's wants or needs are able to override face concerns about the reader in order to achieve the corporate goal. For example, in the following business e-mail messages, writer's requests are simple and short, so that they look clear and straightforward.

(1) Did you check it with the support team? Get those documents ready

(2) There is a major commission pending. I ask you to pay commission as soon as possible

On this occasion, a consideration to the reader's emotions or feelings is not made. Good business writing practices can be mostly done by following the CBS style. The writer chooses to observe the 'C(larity)-B(revity)-S(incerity) style' (cf. Scollon & Scollon 2001: 106) in business context. The CBS style facilitates the writer to design clear, simple or considerate messages. As illustrated in its sequence of the components of the CBS style, clarity is the most highly valued element in business writing and it is the primary goal for most of the writing we will do in business. A clear tone can be realized by simple message structures (i.e. simple paragraphing/vocabularies, short sentences). Naturally, simple paragraphs/vocabularies and short messages can make texts relatively clear and obvious. The foremost suggestion for word selection for clarity purposes is to use familiar words for both ends. Using familiar words may mean that we use the language that most of us use in everyday conversation. It means avoiding the stiff, difficult words that do not communicate so precisely or quickly. The suggestion to use familiar words does not mean that we disregard some use of more difficult words, such as technical languages. A good suggestion here is to use the simplest words that carry the meaning without offending the readers' intelligence (Munter 2011). Simple or short words tend to communicate better than complicated or long words. To use simple words may be relevant to the use of concrete words, thus avoiding abstract words. Concrete words mean being simple and specific, so that they can make messages clear. At sentence level, likewise, business audiences tend to prefer brief and simple sentences over long, complex ones. To give too much information in a simple sentence/paragraph is to risk falling short of communication purpose of the text, as explained by Ries and Trout's (2000) argument that the problem of over-communication can be attributed to the limited mental capacities of audiences.

On the other hand, sincerity (consideration or courtesy) is in contrast to the other two principles, clarity and brevity, as message structures and length become complex and longer to meet the requirement of sincerity or indirectness (see table 1). The CBS style illustrates that although we generally make clear or simple messages at work, we also need sincere or indirect business messages, depending on situations.

Style	Tone
Clarity, Brevity	Direct, Informal
Sincerity	Indirect, Formal

Table 1. CBS style and its relation to tones

It is of interest to consider the CBS style together with a well-known business communication principle, seven C's (*completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, clarity, courtesy,* and *correctness*), as summarized in the following guidelines (Murphy et al 2000):

Seven C's

1. Completeness
   - A. Provide all necessary information
   - B. Answer all questions asked
   - C. Give something extra, when desirable

2. Conciseness
   - A. Eliminate wordy expressions
   - B. Include only relevant material
   - C. Avoid unnecessary repetition

3. Consideration
   - A. Focus on "You" instead of "I" or "We"
   - B. Show audience benefit or interest in the receiver
   - C. Emphasize positive, pleasant facts

4. Concreteness
   - A. Use specific facts and figures
   - B. Put action in your verbs
   - C. Choose vivid, image-building words

5. Clarity
   - A. Choose precise, concrete, and familiar words
   - B. Construct effective sentences and paragraphs

6. Courtesy
   - A. Be sincerely tactful, thoughtful, and appreciative
   - B. Use expressions that show respect
   - C. Choose nondiscriminatory expressions

7. Correctness
    A. Use the right level of language
    B. Check accuracy of figures, facts, and words
    C. Maintain acceptable writing mechanics

To some extent, the principle overlaps with the CBS style. As in its primary placement in the sequence of CBS style, clarity is highlighted even in the seven C's, according to its highest frequency (see table 2). The four principles of the seven C's (i.e. completeness; concreteness; clarity; correctness) illustrate clarity in CBS style, as they are for eventual clarity. In this respect, the two business communication principles claim that clarity is the highest value for business writing exercises.

Seven C's	CBS style
Completeness	**Clarity**
Conciseness	Brevity
Consideration	Sincerity
Concreteness	**Clarity**
Clarity	**Clarity**
Courtesy	Sincerity
Correctness	**Clarity**

Table 2. Principle of the seven C's and its equivalent to CBS style

3.1.2. Pyramid structure in business writing

The direct tone used in business writing is also due to its rhetorical structure. Generally speaking, apart from unique move structures in particular business genres meant to achieve their communicative goals (see 1.3 for more details), business texts need to begin with a clear opening in order to make the objective and the main content of the texts crystal cut. The opening paragraph, including a main topic sentence, is developed from one paragraph to the next. Paragraphs are hierarchically placed depending on the value of information from the most important to the least important, so that they establish a pyramid structure. This pyramid structure meets the standard of "straightfor-

ward" rhetorical structure of English business writing. This claim goes along well with that in an English business writing convention, a subject line tends to be incorporated into the very beginning of the text. The following example exemplifies this claim. This internal email message is organized for delivering information about cancellation of the reader's foreign business trip.

(3)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I inform you that the plan for a foreign business trip has been cancelled	Giving unwelcome news
2	It is because business conditions are not good	Reason for cancellation
3	I hope that you understand this situation	Seeking agreement

Example 3 is composed of three sentences and the function of each sentence is different. This is the fundamental convention of paragraphing. A paragraph should deal with one topic. A new topic should be dealt with by a new paragraph. This claim expresses the central idea of the whole text and structures the information clearly. In example 3, the writer starts his email message with unwelcome news to the reader, the cancellation of a foreign business trip. This news precedes the reason for its cancellation. These two pieces of information are placed one after another, depending on the value of information. Although the reason should be an important part of the message, it is subordinate to the main issue of the text, the cancellation of a foreign business trip. Accordingly, it seems a natural sequence that the reason follows the objective information. A sentence to seek agreement is preceded by the first two sentences. Its function is to restore the distance created after the two pieces of unwelcome news. Here the writer tries to seek empathy from the reader, so that he tends to make this message understandable to the reader. Consequently, this example follows a pyramid structure, as an obligatory paragraph (paragraph the writer must include) precedes an optional paragraph (paragraph the writer may or may not include).

Likewise, the following business correspondence is pyramid-structured. Its main purpose is to refuse the reader's request for exten-

sion of the settlement condition. Refusal may be a substantial part of disagreement in definition. The majority of disagreement researchers consider that the concept of 'opposition' is a key feature in defining disagreements (Eisenberg and Garvey 1981; Maynard 1985; Goodwin and Goodwin 1990, among many others). On the one hand, the term *disagreement* is normally used in the sense of disagreeing with prior opinion (e.g. 'I think it happens not because of the quality of product but because of the unreliable stock control procedure which ignores the basic order of acquisition'). On the other hand, it denotes disapproval or refusal (e.g. 'We inform you that we are unable to use the product of OO type that you propose'). These definitions of disagreements may be supported and complemented by the content of disagreements. That is, it is of importance in defining disagreements to address the issue of which items can be 'opposed' to decide whether a discourse unit is a disagreement. Several items able to be opposed are listed: an opinion, statements of intent, and requests for action. Therefore, disagreements can be defined as acts disagreeing with both truth/fact and action.

In example 4, the specific purpose (i.e. a refusal to the reader's request) is placed in the very beginning of the text (unit 1). An alternative given in unit 2 is following the main purpose of the text. Broadly speaking, giving an alternative implies the meaning of refusal, as the writer suggests acceptance of a similar one, instead of acceptance of exactly the same. In conclusion, onset position of refusals makes this example follow a pyramid structure.

(4)

Unit	Text	Function
1	We inform you that your request for the extension of 120 days settlement condition is not acceptable.	Refusal
2	We generally do not allow 120 days settlement condition but we will accept 60 days settlement condition	Alternative
3	We would appreciate it if you would continue with the existing contract	Request

3.2. Formality

Despite a functional contradiction, the two values of directness and formality have a tendency to go side by side as business writing conventions in "standardized" business writing. Needless to say, in business settings, formality is of crucial importance in that it enables the writer to show his respect or courtesy for the reader, thereby a cooperative business atmosphere can readily be maintained. Accordingly, formality can be closely relevant to politeness in business. In general, perceptions of business politeness depend heavily on the formality level of utterances based on social factors such as power, distance, status, etc. A formal style of writing maintains a greater distance between writer and reader than an informal style. It avoids personal references and contractions.

The use of written English enables the tone in business writing to be formal. Although a wide range of features overlap across speech and writing, writing is different from speech in fundamental ways (Chafe 1982, 1992, 1994). These differences are generally attributed to the distinct functions that speech and writing have evolved to perform (e.g. Halliday 1989). Relatively speaking, writing is more subordinate and passive, structurally elaborate, complex, abstract and formal. The perceived differences are generally realized by conventions or linguistic structures specific to particular genres and contexts (Biber et al 1999). These communication practices mainly occur in written texts (professional writing, in particular). In other words, identification of linguistic features for writing is based on grammatical labels which have to do with *formal* structural rules. Conventional expressions might be an important part of written English practices. For example, conditional appreciation (e.g. "I would appreciate it, if you could…") would enhance the formality of business writing by making its tone official (see 4.1.5 for conditional appreciation in detail). Without using this written English convention, examples realized solely by spoken English should relatively sound informal, casual, or private. (i.e. "Please consider our situation and continue to comply with the terms of the existing contract" vs. example 5; "Please pay the

full amount receivable for the transaction by tomorrow" vs. example 6).

(5) I would appreciate it if you would consider our situation and continue to comply with the terms of the existing contract

(6) I would appreciate it if you pay the full amount receivable for the transaction by tomorrow

This section explicates formal structural rules. The formality of business writing can be realized by the following business *writing practices*: self-effacement orient to state, business *we*, passive voice, nominalization, and tying devices.

3.2.1. Self-effacement in business writing

3.2.1.1. State-orientation in business writing

Business writing is a sort of 'self-effacing'. A *state* is emphasized much more than an *action* with a human agent. 'What [non-human agent] happened?' is more important than 'what did [agent] do?' in the business context (Brown and Miller 1991). It is due to the primary transactional or goal-oriented functions of official business, such as conveying objective information, as in the following examples.

(7) Cost estimates for product brochure cover artwork

(8) The settlement date of this job is next Friday

(9) Final revisions to product estimates have been made

Like academic writing, the high frequency of referring to human agents may weaken the objectivity of business discourse. Accordingly, business writing tends to discourage the frequent use of animate subjects (the human participants), such as *I, we, you, s/he, they*. The writer's statements (i.e. highlighting human agents and possibly their actions) would not be subject to substantial interpretation for efficient communication in business. In contrast, the non-human participants

(so-called inanimate subject) increase the coherence of business texts. The writer can control the use of human subject pronouns in order to deliver information more properly, rapidly and effectively. In the following sentence, for example, a non-human agent ('prepayment of an export fee') is placed in a subject position instead of a human agent (*we*, as in 'We cannot accept prepayment of an export fee') to pinpoint the central idea of the sentence (i.e. Prepayment is not acceptable).

(10) Prepayment of an export fee is not acceptable for us.

3.2.1.2. Passivization

Preference for a non-human agent in business writing may also explain the heavy use of the passive. The passive voice establishes a tone of 'detachment' by de-emphasizing human agents' actions (Chafe 1982). That is, the passive keeps a distance from the action that the writer performs, so that it makes a sentence formal. By defocusing a human participant through placing a non-human participant in the subject position, the writer increases distance from information implying business actions. In this respect, the passive voice tends to make the actions themselves less strong, so that their tones become indirect. Unlike self-effacement in business writing for delivering objective information, therefore, using the passive in negative messages is also related to politeness. Certainly it is better not to overuse the passive voice when attempting to produce documents in clear, but vigorous prose for efficient communication in business correspondence. In negative situations, however, passive verbs or inanimate subjects need to be used in order to protect the reader's ego. Likewise, inanimate subjects omit agent and talk only about things with no saying who did it, so that they can protect the reader's ego. According to Brown and Levinson, "the passive coupled with a rule of agent deletion is perhaps the means *par excellence* in English of avoiding reference to persons involved in FTAs" (1987: 194, see 4.4 for Brown and Levinson's face-threatening acts (FTAs)). The writer avoids personal involvement by placing something other than the agent at the sentence-initial position in order to minimize the force of the face-threatening acts. There-

fore, the passive structure provides the writer with a sort of device for removing the human agents involved in the action, especially in potential face-threat situations. Passivization plays a role in defocusing noun phrases by means of putting the new subject at the sentence-initial position, and thereby the face-threatening acts are camouflaged and de-emphasized in passive sentences.

Besides the placement of a new item other than the main subject in subject position, the passive voice also appears to be connected to the rhetorical effect of the message. Namely, the passive voice tends to make the actions themselves less strong. For instance, in the following examples the action is weaker in the passive voice than in the active verb, because the intent of the agent of the action (i.e. bad news) is less explicit in the passive voice (i.e. someone finds → something found; someone withdraws → something withdrawn; someone does not pay → something not paid). That is, the action made by a human agent is de-emphasized in the passive voice, so that its tone becomes objective.

(11) The problems in the revised mock-up of 'OO' product have been found

(12) The new product OO was withdrawn

(13) The commission has not been paid yet

Passive sentence structure also determines emphasis. Non-human agents in the above examples are highlighted in terms of their initial arrangement in each sentence. Determination of sequence of placing certain information has to do with information's value. Value of information determines 'constituent order', the order of elements in the clause, the relative positions of the verb, subject and object, in particular (Cumming et al. 2011). In a similar vein, it is relevant to 'focus' resources for packaging information in order to make information stand out for the reader. In this respect, the value of information is to some extent concerned with 'focus management.' Focus management means "how the speaker lets the listener know what in particular she should notice about that central element" (Tomlin et al 2011: 53). One of the linguistic devices the writer provides for making information

seem relatively more prominent or significant than others is formulation of "information structure" (Halliday 1967), the element expressed in *the first position of a sentence*. Namely, focused information occurs in the first position in the sentence (Dik 1989). The writer places the most important information at the very beginning of the sentence, so that it will not have to compete with other information for the reader's attention.

3.2.2. Business we

Despite the low frequency of pronominal choices in business writing, special attention has been paid to *we* because of its strategic use (Haverkate 1992; Jung 2001). In general, *we* has three functions: (1) inclusive *we* (*I* + *you*), (2) exclusive *we* (pluralization of *I*, excluding *you*), (3) *we* instead of *you,* as a mitigator. Among these, a strategic use of *we* is relevant to the 2nd and 3rd functions (see 4.1.5 for *we* instead of *you* as a mitigator).

The exclusive *we* is closely associated with Brown and Levinson's (1987) so-called business *we*. Brown and Levinson (1987: 202) contend that "there is the widespread phenomenon of *we* used to indicate *'I' + powerful* which is a corporate identity" (emphasis given). That is, the exclusive *we* signals that the corporation rather than simply the individual is responsible for the utterance (Neumann 1997). In this respect, we can consider exclusive *we* as a device to defocalize or defocus the propositional content, which is a business action (e.g. "We are unable to accept your request to share the responsibility for being unable to meet the shipping date").

In the following example, a *we* pronoun is used ("we manage the process…; Sadly we have to…which we receive; we still do not…; because we could not offer…; we cannot give…; we need your help"). By avoiding directly to refer to the action performer (i.e. *I*) through the exclusive *we*, the writer tends to minimize his assertiveness, so that he can strengthen the text's formality. Due to its self-assertive characteristic, the use of an *I* pronoun possibly increases the informality of the text, which may not convey a suitable tone in formal business writing.

(14)

Unit	Text	Function
1	As Head of Scholarships and Student Funding at the University of OO, we manage the process which decides which students receive financial aid through our access bursary programme each year. Sadly we have to turn down a number of bursary applications which we receive from worthy students. Even with the support of many alumni and friends like you, we still do not have sufficient funding to meet the demand. In 2012, 470 undergraduates applied for an access bursary, but a lack of funds meant that only 257 applicants received one. Over 210 applicants may have been put off from taking up their place at university because we could not offer additional financial assistance by means of a bursary. At this time, we cannot give a bursary to every student who really needs one. That is why we need your help.	Reason for asking charity
2	Please read on to learn more about our access bursaries, and how by supporting them, you could change a student's life forever.	Request

As another example of business *we*, example 15 is an internal email message for informing the reader of distribution of the new edition of the corporate directory. Although to make the new edition might be an individual's responsibility in the corporate communication division, the writer adopts a *we* subject (exclusive *we*) to make his message look formal. The tone in example 15 with a *we* subject looks "heavier", so that it is more formal than the case using an *I* subject, as in "Last week *I* started the distribution of the new edition. *I* have used

the same list and numbers of copies as last time. If you want to change the contact person or number of booklets for the next time, please contact *me*. If you have not received the directories by the end of April, please let *me* know". Alongside business *we*, another written English practice is used in unit 1, a nominal form, *the distribution of the new edition* (see 3.2.3. for nominalization as a written English practice). Business *we* can be replaced by the nominal form in order to boost formality (see 3.2.1. for the use of an inanimate subject in business writing). As stated in the claim of a proper information structure on the informative value made in 3.2.1.2 (what [non-human agent] happened), "the distribution of the new edition" can be emphasized by the placement of the state in the subject position (action made by a human agent, *we*), as in *The distribution of the new edition was made last week (by us)*.

(15)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Last week we started the distribution of the new edition. We have used the same list and numbers of copies as last time.	Giving objective information
2	If you want to change the contact person or numbers of booklets for the next time, please contact us. If you have not received the directories by the end of April, please let us know.	Request

3.2.3. Nominalization

Besides passivization (i.e. to passivize an action verb), nominalization (i.e. to nominalize an action verb) is another grammatical device to make "an action-oriented sentence" as "a state-oriented sentence", so that texts become more formal. Although a verb itself is a word for describing some kind of action, the action can be defocused or obscured and the tense of the action prototypically omitted by *nominaliz-*

ing the verb (Kolln 2007). Nominalization converts an action that pertains to an agent into a nominal construction without an agent so that a sentence becomes more abstract and formal. Therefore, nominalization can be a convention for constructing formal prose, such as business correspondence. For example, in the following sentences the writers make the readers' actions nominalized (i.e. "reset of the deadline" in example 16; "the development of good new product" in example 17) to make their actions more formal than the sentences in the use of active verbs (i.e. "resetting the deadline"; "developing good new product"). Gerund forms (*resetting; developing*) immediately after an anticipation statement (*look forward to*) should generally be more natural in spoken English, whereas a noun-phrase is more natural in this occasion, as formality is increased in the nominalized sentence.

(16) We look forward to a reset of the deadline for the work assignment

(17) We look forward to the development of good new product to meet customers' needs.

Like passivized verbs, nominalizations also have a rhetorical effect on the message. Namely, the writer can avoid presenting the action strongly because the action is nominalized. By defocusing the agent's *action* by nominalization, the writer can bring distance to the utterance and readily increase its formality.

Furthermore, by topicalizing nominalized action in the subject position, the agent becomes even more oblique. A certain phrase or utterance is topicalized in a subject position to emphasize one element which is more important or central to the discourse (Tomlin et al. 2011). To understand the issue of topic requires that one should deal with four interrelated matters. First, the theoretical definition of topic, which is articulated in terms of "*starting point* or *aboutness*" (Tomlin et al. 2011: 48, emphasis is original). Second, its manifestation through syntactic form, mostly discussed in terms of the constituent order (see 3.2.1.2 for constituent order) or syntactic subject. Third, the center of attention for the sentence. Finally, the interplay among those and the extent to which the definition of topic includes information

about its syntactic manifestation. For example, a nominalized phrase is topicalized in the following example, a refusal to the reader's request to extend a settlement condition. The following sentence might be originated from the two sentences: 1. 'We cannot accept to extend the existing 60 days condition to 90 days'; 2. 'We cannot accept the extension of the existing 60 days condition to 90 days'. After an action (i.e. the reader's request) becomes nominalized (i.e. to extend → extension), the nominalized action becomes topicalized in the subject position (i.e. The extension…is…). Accordingly, the action with an agent is defocused and to topicalize a nominalized action makes the sentence state-oriented.

(18) The extension of the existing 60 day condition to 90 days is an impossible proposal to accept.

3.2.4. Tying devices

As clarified in 1.3, rhetorical structures are of vital importance in understanding stereotypical business writing, because they shape conventionalized social practices such as genres (Bargiela-Chiappini and Nickerson 1999). An important writing system constructed in written business texts is that of temporal and spatial dimensions which are constructed by 'acting subjects' through 'tying' devices. Tying devices allow 'acting subjects' to construct texts and they 'bracket time and space' in organizations (Giddens 1987). In business writing, actors express sequential text to bracket time and space by referring to prior written texts through 'tyings', specifically in the very beginning of the text. That is, 'tyings' are acts which enable the writer to link the current text to prior written texts to create a contextual sequence (Firth 1991, 1995; Loos 1999). In the following example (a refusal to the reader's request for a price reduction), the 'tying' sentence refers to previous events or texts in unit 1. That is, a prior event, which is the reader's request for a price reduction, links to a current event of receiving the letter of request.

(19)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I received your letter of request for a price reduction.	Tying
2	Although your request for a price reduction is understandable	Partial agreement
3	we cannot comply with it.	Refusal to request
4	This is because we have been in the red since the last fiscal year.	Reason for refusal
5	I hope you will understand our situation.	Seeking agreement

Actors want to make intertextual networks mainly for two reasons. First, the tying sentence at the beginning of the text partially serves the function to be a topic sentence, so that it makes the overall paragraph structure of the text look formal and well-balanced. For instance, the tying sentence in example 19 might be equivalent to the sentence, "This correspondence is a response to your request for a price reduction". Despite its optional feature, this Western business *writing convention* incorporating a topic sentence into the very beginning of the text enables the text to be formal and official.

Second, the motivation to make sequential text at the beginning of the text is partially motivated for creating solidarity, as Boden and Zimmerman (1991: 10) argue that "the resources for mutual understanding are found in the fundamental nature of sequencing." By letting the reader know that common knowledge is established between participants at the beginning of the text through tying devices, the writer tries to claim common ground with the reader. The sequence functioning as 'tyings' at the beginning of the text establishes the context for shifting to the main content. Because of the lack of immediate sequential written texts, the writer can show that shared knowledge is fully established between the two by means of 'tyings'. Reference to prior things which happened to the reader (i.e. 'old information') in initial tying sentences allows participants to share meaning and helps them to communicate much faster and easier. In this respect, in order to remind the reader of 'old knowledge' (Kolln 2007), they must correspond with the 'Coherence Tool' (Rogers and Rymer 2001) to claim common ground between the writer and the reader. Through tyings,

the writer clarifies or elaborates on a prior point. Therefore, tyings produce a kind of sentence cohesion called the 'known-new contract' (Kolln, 2007). It runs hand in hand with Kolln's (2007: 24) remark about the importance of repetition of old knowledge: "The lack of old information should signal the writer of a possible trouble spot, a weakness in cohesion". Therefore, tyings may work to allow the writer to elaborate on a prior correspondence emphasizing the old information.

3.3. Summary

This chapter has explained standard tones in business writing (i.e. directness; formality). After discussing a basic principle of business writing (CBS style), it has illustrated how a paragraph structure and certain registers make business writing direct and formal.

First, a pyramid structure was explained: a direct paragraphing in terms of the placement of the obligatory paragraph before an optional paragraph.

Second, a variety of written English practices were introduced in order to explain registers of formal prose. For example, the self-effacement in business writing makes business documents prefer non-human agents as sentential subjects. This feature also makes passive and nominalized sentences popular in business writing. From a macro perspective, formality can also be increased using tying devices.

4. Tone control

Irrelevant to paragraphing, micro issues in business writing have to do with choices about a style or strategy to make tone appropriate. This chapter mainly explicates "strategic" choices of sentences and words for tone control in negative and persuasive messages. It has to do with *marked* behaviors to make writing style appropriate in a given situation.

Although tone in business writing needs to be generally formal and direct as discussed in chapter 3, it needs to be controlled for saving (self-/other-) face in sensitive messages (e.g. request; giving unwelcome news; rejection; complaint, and so on). Because the indirect approach is harder and takes longer for audience to understand, and because it does not take advantage of the audience's attentiveness at the beginning of the message, we need to use it exclusively when we deliver sensitive messages. In the situation in which this condition applies, the indirect strategy may soften our audience's resistance, arouse their interest, and increase their tendency to see us as fair-minded. Also the indirect approach gives us the chance to let our audience take positively our claims they agree with or a problem they need to solve.

As a type of sensitive messages, persuasive messages are also explored, as many organizational situations call for well-thought-out persuasive writing. Many times we want our readers to do something: we wish them to act, to accept a point of view, to follow our wishes, to respond, to change, or not to change. In short, we desire a "positive" response from our message receiver. Here communication strategies are of necessity for successful persuasive messages. We are successful only if our message leads to the response we desire from our audience. To get that desired audience response, we need to think *strategically* about our communication. Various communication strategies are explored in the study, such as the *you*-attitude (e.g. cases of (not) using 'you' as a subject pronoun), giving options or conditions in request,

and to be suitably confident by giving reasons or evidence in promotional genres. This chapter also illustrates image restoration strategies as complaint management discourse. Emphasis is given on the use of apology as image restoration discourse. To a lesser extent it also discusses how paragraph structures play a role in offering credibility in promotional genres and persuasive messages (e.g. using a problem-solution pattern in formulating persuasive messages).

Now let us first explicate the fundamental perspective for the formulation of sincere messages, the *you*-attitude.

4.1. *You*-attitude

As "orientation devices" (Jenkins and Hinds 1987), much attention has been given to the concept of *you*-attitude in business communication theory. The *you*-attitude is a style of communication that looks at things from the other's point of view (Locker & Kienzler 2009). Revisions for the *you*-attitude do not change the basic meaning of the sentence. Instead, revising for the *you*-attitude often makes sentences look more courteous to the reader because it serves the function to give a priority to the reader. It can be realized by the following techniques:

- Emphasize the audience's primary interest
- Neither show your emotions nor assume the audience's feelings
- Use *you* in positive messages
- Don't use *you* in negative messages
- Emphasize the positive to hide the negative

4.1.1. Emphasize the audience's primary interest

The *you*-attitude is an important part of generosity in that it can maximize a benefit to the reader by noticing or emphasizing his/her wants or needs (Locker 1994). We avoid talking about what we are giving or doing to the audience (e.g. see lack *you*-attitude sentence in example

20). Instead, we highlight audiences' wants to know how they benefit (e.g. see *you*-attitude sentence in example 20). On this occasion, a perspective shift is inevitable from *I*-orientation to *you*-orientation (see also 4.1.3).

(20) Lack of *you*-attitude: *I will give* you a 20% discount off list prices
You-attitude: *You will receive* a 20% discount off list prices

Likewise, what the audience wants to know should be highlighted to meet the addressee's expectations. For example, as shown in example 21, the audience is more interested in the actual arrival date of the ordered goods than the shipping date when the company will send the goods to the reader. On this occasion, this technique goes along well with the claim that business communication is a *state*-orientation discipline (see 3.2.1).

(21) Lack of *you*-attitude: *We will send* the goods to you by October 18.
You-attitude: *The goods will reach* you by October 23.

4.1.2. Neither show your emotions nor assume the audience's feelings

In most business writing, the writer's feelings should be omitted. Only what all our audience cares about is the situation from their point of view. Also the writer should not assume or predict the audience's feelings, either. It may distance to have others tell us how we feel especially if they are wrong. It is fair enough to explain the situation without assuming the audience's feelings. Example 22 exemplifies this claim. It is business correspondence to reject the reader's job application.

(22)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Thank you for your application for the above post.	Thanking
2	Unfortunately I must inform you that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.	Refusal

3	I hope that you are not too disappointed at the outcome	Showing emotion
4	and trust that this will not deter you from applying for any further vacancies with us in the future.	Showing interest
5	I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your application and for the interest you have shown in working with the University, and	Thanking
6	I wish you all the best in your search for a suitable position.	Expressing wish

A job applicant may prefer a rejection letter that says something specific about his/her good qualities, that phrases the refusal indirectly, that offers a clear explanation of the procedures for making a hiring decision, that offers an alternative (such as another position the applicant might be qualified for), and that shows continuous interest (such as to retain the application form for a future vacancy).

After a refusal to the reader's job application in unit 2, the writer shows his/her emotion to the reader in unit 3 to restore social distance created after the refusal. It is because the writer needs to build goodwill or restore image of his/her organization. However, this emotional assumption on the reader may rather cause the increase of distance, as heavy concern about the reader's feeling can be interpreted as an interruption to him/her. In unit 3 "not too disappointed" sounds like the writer makes sure that the reader has already been disappointed. This subjective assumption may discourage the text to be professional.

An exception counter to this claim can be made as regards a congratulation or compliment. It may be common sense to use a direct tone or talk about our own emotion in positive messages, because it may readily help rapport management between the writer and the reader. The following example is about how an acquisition editor delivers good news to the reader whose book has just been published. The editor shows her pleasure twice, one in unit 2 and the other one in unit 4. Contrary to the case of a negative message, to show the writer's emotion in a positive message may serve the function to create solidarity between the two. Likewise, it may be of interest to study the function of *we* in both negative messages and positive messages. Un-

like *exclusive we* (business *we*: pluralization of *I*, excluding *You*) in negative message (see 3.2.2 for business *we*), *we* in positive message as in unit 4 is *inclusive we* (i.e. *I* & *You*).

(23)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Congratulations on the publication of OO	Congratulating
2	I am very pleased now to be sending you a copy for your retention.	Showing emotion
3	If you wish more copies for yourself, our author's order form is enclosed.	Request
4	We are pleased with the final results.	Showing emotion

4.1.3. Use you *in positive messages*

You-attitude refers to how the message is expressed, as opposed to the actual content of the message. As exemplified in 4.1.2, it illustrates that positive emphasis should be kept distinct between positive messages and negative messages. In other words, it is not only limited to negative messages. Unlike the cases of negative messages, the writer needs to boost tone in positive messages to create solidarity. To use *you* can boost its tone, so that the writer uses *you* when s/he shows interest in good news to the reader. *You* may further enhance solidarity between the two on this occasion. For example, the writer uses *you* as a subject in complimenting the reader on his work ability in example 24. *You* may boost the size of the writer's compliment on the reader. A good appraisal motivates the employee to improve his/her performance. The subject *you* makes the tone in positive performance appraisal strong to boost the reader's face. A buffer in an appraisal might discourage the reader to have motivation to work harder. Example 25 also exemplifies the claim that *you* boosts positive performance appraisal. It is a conference organizer's email message to express thanks to the participants of the conference. The reader's performances, *participation*, *the time you took, sharing insights* in unit 1 & *contribution* in unit 3, are more highly valued by (genitive) *you*. The use of *you* not

only gets the attention of the reader, but it actually values the reader in the subject matter, thanking for the reader's performances.

(24) You made a big contribution to our firm through the development of new products

(25)

Unit	Text	Function
1	On behalf of the conference committee, I would like to extend heartfelt thanks for your participation as a speaker at the OO Conference. We appreciate the time you took out of your busy schedule to join us and thank you for sharing your insights and expertise with the conference attendees.	Thanking
2	From the feedback we've received, the program was a great success.	Reason for thanking
3	We know that this would not have been as strong a conference without your contribution.	Performance appraisal
4	Thank you for joining us once again, and	Thanking
5	best wishes to you in your professional endeavors.	Expressing wishes

4.1.4. Don't use you *in negative messages*

The reader-orientation can display *you*-attitude in a negative way. Namely, in dealing with the force of *you*-attitude, we have to focus on the negative use of *you*. Let us consider an example where the reader orientation is realized. The following two sample data are business memoranda (a request to attend a regular meeting). Memos are a form of letter written inside the business (Locker & Kienzler 2009). They are exchanged internally by employees in the conduct of their work. In example 26, the pronoun *you* seems to contribute "deontic force" to the writer's request in that it conveys "obligation or necessity" (Yli-Jokipii 1994: 231).

(26)

You are requested to attend the following meeting. Date: OO Time: OO Place: OO

Since the pronoun *you* can increase the threat to the reader's facewants not to be interrupted or to boost the force of request, the writer tends to avoid direct reference to *you* using a conventional expression (i.e. "This is to inform you of…") without an action verb (which may threaten the reader's freedom of action), *request*, in example 27. Unlike spoken English realized in example 26 with a *you* subject, written English with the conventional expression makes the tone in the request formal (see 3.2).

(27)

This is to inform you of a monthly business meeting that is scheduled as follows: Date: OO Time: OO Place: OO We would appreciate your attending the meeting. Thank you for your cooperation.

Example 28 is a reminder of example 27. As in example 27, a conventional expression is also used for formal tone. Nevertheless, its paragraphing is not a pyramid structure. Since the writer has already delivered information about a monthly business meeting in example 27, the information reminded in example 28 is old information. However, this old information precedes new information (information the writer treats as not known to the reader (Halliday 1967)), "From this fiscal year, your attendance is required at every meeting". Despite its professional feature (i.e. using a technical language), example 27 still violates *you*-attitude, because of an optional paragraph, "We would appreciate your attending the meeting". This sentence sounds like saying that attending a regular meeting is optional, so that the reader may be able to feel flexible in the decision of attending the meeting. However,

the new information in example 28 does not meet the reader's expectation made after reading example 27. This finding sheds light on the proper sequence of delivering information. Depending on the delivery sequence of certain information, miscommunication or face-threat can be caused. To move the new information in example 28, obligation of attending the meeting, to example 27 right after delivering detailed information about a regular meeting should enable the reader to avoid possible misunderstanding caused by the optional sentence in example 27.

(28)

This is a reminder to inform you of a monthly business meeting that is scheduled as follows: Date: OO Time: OO Place: OO From this fiscal year, your attendance is required at every meeting.

Another example of lack of *you*-attitude is as follows. Example 29 is an external email message in response to the reader's inquiry about whether he can submit his manuscript to a journal published by the writer's university. It is of interest to look into the use of directives in unit 2. Directives play an important role within encounters involving instructions or procedures. Numerous studies have examined directives and requests in a variety of workplace and institutional situations, including university office talk (Pufahl Bax 1986), doctor-patient encounters (Harris 2003), and workplace meetings (Bilbow 1997; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; Vine 2004). These studies show that directives can have a variety of realizations, from imperatives, to modals of obligations (i.e. *have to; need to*), to more indirect requests (e.g. *would; could*) (cf. Koester 2010). In unit 2, an unmitigated directive using the second person pronoun ('you should') occurs in the suggestion. Like requests and giving advice, suggestions can be a face-threat on the reader's wants not to be imposed on. Nevertheless, besides the forceful deontic modal ('should'), *you* accelerates threats to the reader's wants not to be interrupted. Despite its high possibility

of imposing the reader's facewants to enjoy freedom of action, the writer repeatedly uses *you* with another deontic modal verb ('had better') in unit 3 to express obligations and necessity in making another suggestion. On this occasion, the suggestion becomes a strong face-threat rather than a device to show the writer's concern about the reader. On the other hand, suggestions in units 2 and 3 can be face-threats to the reader's facewant to be desirable, in that those two suggestions make implications of refusals to the reader's request. Since this email is a reply to the reader's inquiry about contribution to a journal published in the writer's university, the writer should give response to the reader's inquiry like *yes* or *no,* before or instead of making suggestion(s). Although giving a suggestion can be interpreted as a refusal depending on context, sudden suggestions (to make indirect refusals) made from the beginning of the text just minimize the reader's facewant to enjoy his individuality.

(29)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I have read your mail.	Acknowledgement
2	Since you made a presentation at the conference of OO association, you should contribute it to the Journal of OO	Suggestion
3	If you didn't apply or your paper was refused, you had better submit your article to the journal of your university.	Suggestion
4	OO journal is not open to outside members in principle. Exceptionally we ask outsiders to contribute their articles in memorial issues.	Reason for rejection
5	See you in the convention.	Ending remark

4.1.5. Emphasize the positive to hide the negative

No reader wants to receive messages that offend, so the writer needs to create positive emphasis in sensitive messages, if s/he can. Sensitive messages include rejections and refusals, announcements of regulation changes that do not benefit the audience, requests the audience will see as insulting or intrusive, negative performance appraisals,

disciplinary notices, notices of defects, and so on. Since in many negative situations the writer and the reader will continue to deal with each other, and when further interaction is likely, the reader expects that the writer may say something positive or at least neutral rather than negative.

Let us explore how important positive tones are in persuasive messages. Example 30 is sent to an academic peer having great distance with the writer. It is an email message to request the reader for resubmission of an abstract for a presentation in a conference because of his violation of a submission guideline (i.e. short length of his abstract).

(30)

Unit	Text	Function
1	We have begun the review process, and have found that your abstract is some 80 words, which is shorter than the word count of 150-200 words (not including title, affiliation and key words).	Reason for request
2	We would highly appreciate it if you could resubmit the abstract at your earliest convenience.	Request
3	If you need any other assistance, please let me know.	Forward-looking ending
4	P.S. A bit of clarification: you do not need to include the two references at this time. Sorry!	Request

Although the writer gives a reason for his request for resubmission of the reader's abstract in unit 1, actually no reason for request is given as the writer only intensifies the reader's fault or mistake, saying that "we have found that your abstract is some 80 words". It seems better to describe the problem or tell the reader what is wrong clearly and logically using rationale to claim common ground, so that the writer can get a positive answer from the reader. First the request is made in unit 2 with a conventional expression (i.e. conditional appreciation) to make the writer's request formal. In conditional appreciation, the writer mitigates the force of his request by claiming his indebtedness to the reader. The writer uses an *if*-clause in order to minimize the size

of his request. It shows that the indebtedness expressed by the writer is conditional and it is entirely dependent on the completion of the reader's action described in the *if*-clause. By letting the reader know that the expression of indebtedness is conditional and is solely dependent on the reader's intention or future action requested, the writer shows respect or deference for the reader because he gives the reader the option to choose.

The writer makes another request in unit 4 under the line of P.S. Despite an apology for a possible interruption on the reader (i.e. "Sorry!"), a request in unit 4 lacks *you*-attitude, as it uses a *you* subject. On the one hand, a passive verb is desirable in this situation to emphasize the object receiving the action, not the agent. Since an active verb would require the writer to specify *who* is the requestee, the passive here is more tactful. Furthermore, a request is clearer to read if "new" information comes at the beginning of a sentence, "The two references do not need to be included". On the other hand, the implicit referential forms correlate with the degree of empathy (Duranti 1984; Mayes & Ono 1991). The writer can minimize the force of his face-threat to the reader, create solidarity by assuming shared knowledge with the reader, and persuade him to agree with him by using *we* instead of *you* (i.e. "We do not need to include the two references"), as Swales and Rogers' (1995) work on mission statements shows that the use of the first-person-pronoun *we*, denoting an employee, plays a significant role in making solidarity. Writers may use the pronoun *we* in place of *you* to mitigate his propositional content (e.g. request) and to make solidarity with the reader (Bilbow 1997; Nickerson 2000).

In principle, when the writer refuses requests from people outside his organization, it is necessary to use more buffers. In the following example, nevertheless, the writer refuses with highly limited buffers. Example 31 is a reviewer's negative comment on the reader's journal article.

(31)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I find that, while the topic under investigation is both interesting and relevant,	Pseudo-agreement
2	this paper ultimately disappoints, at both the descriptive and the theoretical level.	Rejection
3	In the last few decades it has become very fashionable to criticize Brown & Levinson's model of face work. While that model – like most theories – can undoubtedly be improved upon, I find that, frequently, the criticism appears to be based on a very superficial reading of B&L's book. This paper, unfortunately, is no exception to that. The paper actually contains very little data, and it's not at all clear why B&L's model couldn't handle that specific data.	Reason for rejection
4	Any such inability would need to be demonstrated.	Request
5	In general, I find the paper lacking in intellectual rigor,	Reason for rejection
6	and publication at the current stage of research strikes me as premature.	Rejection
7	Essentially, this project needs a good deal more work done on it.	Request

Even when it is unlikely to make the reader happy with the unwelcome news the writer must convey, the writer can still make the reader feel that the writer's decision or opinion is fair and reasonable or he can make the reader feel he has been taken seriously at least, in terms of positive emphasis.

Despite a mitigating device to minimize a face-threat to the reader in unit 1 (i.e. pseudo-agreement: agreement right before disagreement, see 4.5.2 for more details), the writer does not care much about the reader's feelings throughout the text. Attacks on the person rather than the argument with scientific or logical reason(s) for rejection are not a valid method of critical reasoning (Cottrell 2011). It is certain that when the writer has reason(s) that the reader will understand and accept, s/he must give the reason clearly and objectively before refusal. Before or after giving reasons, however, the writer

gives the negative information or refusal emotionally (e.g. "this paper ultimately disappoints" in unit 2; "the criticism appears to be based on a very superficial reading of B&L's book" in unit 3; "I find the paper lacking in intellectual rigor" in unit 5; publication at the current stage of research strikes me as premature" in unit 6). "Emotional" refusals make his/her writing non-professional (see also 4.1.2). When the reviewer offers the reader 'performance appraisals' that need to document areas for improvement, s/he should avoid labels (*wrong, bad*). Instead, s/he has to cite *specific* observations that describe the reader's article. Except for inconspicuous refusals, moreover, it is enough to give the negative information or refusal just once, clearly and unemotionally (Locker and Kienzler 2009). If the negative information is unimportant, it is better to omit it. The writer needs to check his/her text before sending for positive emphasis (e.g. giving alternatives) and *you*-attitude. First, messages that at first appear to be negative should be structured to create a positive feeling through an alternative strategy for negative situations. Example 31 could be improved by presenting an alternative or suggestion, instead of including emotional and not-hedged refusals. Second, not to end with a positive statement lacks *you*-attitude. Locker and Kienzler (2009) claim that the natural position of negative information should be in the middle of the text in order to *deemphasize* a written negative. Rejection in unit 6 as an ending is insincere, as the negative message can be highlighted in the end of the text.

Tone in this case is particularly important in order to make the reader feel that the writer has taken the reader's work seriously. For example, the writer should be less assertive using asides (e.g. "as you know") right before giving old information, which the reader has already known (e.g. "In the last few decades it has become very fashionable to criticize Brown & Levinson's model of face work" in unit 3), as criticism on Brown & Levinson's theory of politeness was already made in the reader's article. According to Hyland (1998, quoted in Nickerson 2000: 130), asides are devices to claim "common ground with the reader, triggering agreement on the claims discussed by presenting oneself as a person with similar views, interests and objectives as the reader". Asides are relational markers, because they can be used to demonstrate relational metadiscourse by showing the writer's wants

to emphasize his partnership with the reader and tend to attract the reader to the current text by drawing the reader's attention. In this respect, 'asides' seem substantially different emphatic devices from 'boosters' and 'repetition' in that the former functions as seeking agreement by showing the writer's own interest and the latter serves emphatic purposes to claim common ground by emphasizing interest in the reader's wants, needs, etc (see 4.4. for boosters). The writer tries to persuade the reader to agree with him and tries to reduce the possibility of unexpected results, such as disagreement or rejection by using asides. Therefore, asides can be the groundwork for making the reader agree with the writer's line of reasoning by agreeing on the assumptions in advance.

Basically example 31 tends to follow a problem-solution pattern (see 4.3.1.1 for problem-solution pattern). In a problem-solution pattern, problem(s) acceptable or understandable to the reader should be described as preliminary condition(s) for justifying offering solution(s) realized as request(s). In this writing, a major problem the writer raises seems that the reader's article does not choose Brown & Levinson's model for data analysis (e.g. "While that model – like most theories – can undoubtedly be improved upon" in unit 3). The writer requests the reader for working harder (i.e. "this project needs a good deal more work done on it" in unit 7) as a solution to the problem. Without proper descriptions of objective problems on the reader's paper (e.g. "the paper lacking in intellectual rigor" in unit 5), however, substantial revisions to the paper are unlikely to a certain extent.

4.2. Be suitably confident in promotional genres

4.2.3. Global perspective of job applications

Promotional genres have an overlapping communicative purpose of promoting a product or service to a potential customer (Bhatia 2004).

They include advertisements, sales promotion, book blurbs, reference letters, and so on. One of the most dominant forms of promotional genres is the cover letter, a written statement to provide specific, distinctive, original, and unique information about the applicant's background.

Unlike typical self-effacing business writing (see 3.2.1. for self-effacement in business writing), the cover letter is an *I*-orientation genre. The use of *I* as a subject is exclusively unmarked in a cover letter, which presents a description of the applicant's self-identity. Based on elaboration of his/her story, the applicant needs to control the tone and establish credibility to suit job requirements. Since writing a job application letter is an endeavor to be an in-group member of a target company, however, a description of the applicant's background should be made *within* the domain of the company's group or social-identity to meet corporate values or selection criteria.

As figure 2 illustrates, self-identity is a part of social-identity and self-identity and social-identity should be closely related for achievement of a common goal in any given (non-)profit organization.

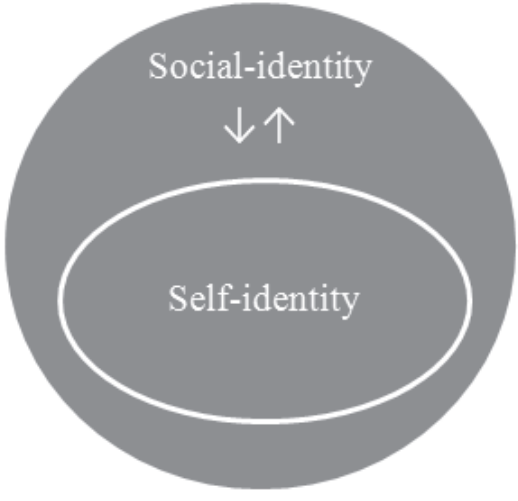


Figure 2. Domain of social-identity and self-identity.

In a job application letter, the applicant needs to incorporate social-identity into his/her job application letter which self-identity bears on. Solid link of self-identity to social-identity may demand that the applicant's proper understanding of a target company's or organization's prior orientation to work and priorities in what companies or organizations want from their work. The concept of work orientation explains the factors, which influence people's attitudes and behavior with regard to their work. According to Watson (2008: 56-57, emphasis is mine), the concept of 'orientations to work' corrresponds to "links between actions in the workplace and the external community and cultural life of *employees"*. The orientations perspective takes the employee's own definition of the situations as an 'initial basis for the explanation of their social behavior and relationships' (Goldthorpe et al. 1968). This definition tends to focus on the needs of workers. According to Watson's definition, the notion of work orientation is limited to the employee's needs. He has a tendency to pay attention to the needs of employees in defining the concept of work orientation. His definition originates from 'human identity', who or what a particular person is, in relation to others. He defines human identity as in what ways any given individual is like other people and in what ways he differs from others. There are two broad aspects of 'human identity': internal self-identity and external social-identity, the former being personal and the latter cultural or discursive (Watson 2008). According to Watson's definition of work orientation, employees might opt for work that allows them more scope to express their own identities, actually self-identity (internal aspect of human identity; the individual's own notion of who and what they are). Employees may also display varying priorities, attitudes and interests, depending on the context. Namely, every employee may have different priorities at different times and in different contexts and strive to shape a relatively cohesive notion of self-identity and struggle to negotiate with the various social-identities pertaining to them in the various contexts (see Jung (2012) for an empirical study of *actual* 'orientation to work' different from each corporation's official key values).

Employees' work orientation is substantially affected by needs of companies. A company may require its employees to "surrender a degree of personal autonomy" (Watson 2008: 300). Organizations

often try to "homogenize" the type of people they hire (Conrad & Poole 2012: 47). If employees are as similar as possible, they are more likely to understand one another and work together easily. Work-orientation in a company is likely to fail to meet a worker's needs-oriented identity work. In this occasion, employees may need to adjust to this requirement and accommodate it. This is the case that self-identity is superseded by social-identity, the external aspect of human identity. Accordingly, this claim may raise questions about identity work: how much scope do companies allow employees to express their own identities?; which identity goes first between self-identity and social-identity?

The argument about work orientation illustrated with the two identities (self-identity and social-identity) is the one the applicant must keep in mind for successful job application letters, as Gunnarsson (1997: 141, emphasis given) claims that "writing in an organization is not only a matter of knowing how to write a certain document for a specific audience but also a matter of how to *fit into* the organizational structure and how to *adapt to* the organizational subculture and its norms, attitudes, and values." Corporations tend to accommodate soon-to-be employees to the norms of their organizations. This is because organizations' impetus for homogenization is the desire of management to increase certainty, so that there will be less need for employee-relation management and the organization will operate more effectively. This might be the reason why scholars contend that one of the most influential factors that takes place in determining organizational attraction is person-organization fit (POF) (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Gardner et al 2012). Person-organization fit is the congruence between individual values and organizational values (Krisof-Brown et al. 2005). When employees' values are in tune with organizational values, they have a tendency to have more positive attitudes toward the organization.

Given the claim about POF and organizational attraction, the following section exemplifies good cover letter writing.

4.2.2. Cover letter writing practices

The cover letter is an opportunity to 'sell' the applicant into an interview. Job application letters are often seen as evidence of written communication skills to successfully target an employer and motivate him/her to read them with interest. Motivation for promotional purposes can first be done through message structure. Generally speaking, a cover letter is composed of three sections: introduction, body, and ending (Connor et al 1995).

1. Introduction

Introduction needs to grab the reader's attention. It builds the reader's interest and explains the writer's purpose for writing in order to make the reader establish a common ground and read with the writer's reason or purpose for writing in mind. The writer needs to state his/her reason for application as a topic sentence to begin the introduction with a generalization. The introduction serves the function to arouse the audience's interest by

(1) Identifying the source of information: beginning with an opening statement which states the job the applicant is applying for and where s/he learned about it.

(2) Giving a reason for job application: an explanation of why the applicant is attracted to the post.

2. Body

The body is a main paragraph to appeal as a prospective employee. The generalization in the writer's topic sentence must be fully supported with sufficient evidence in the body of the text. What the writer says in the body of the message can enhance his/her persuasiveness. The applicant places his/her "selling point" to the reader immediately after the introduction or in the very beginning of the text with no introduction. This will facilitate or improve comprehension of the applicant's cover letter. In the body of the text, the applicant links his/her education, experience, and personal qualities to the job requirements: he/she supports his/her claims of ability by citing specific achieve-

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ments in education, work or outside activities to offer credibility. The use of the applicant's knowledge of the company, coursework, understanding of the field, his/her experience in jobs and extracurricular activities to show that his/her backgrounds are unique and distinctive is of crucial importance. The applicant also demonstrates knowledge of the organization by mentioning its operations or trends in the industry.

3. Ending

The message ending is another place the writer might use a motivational technique. When the writer reaches the end of a document, s/he needs a sense of closure. Also the writer reinforces his/her communication objective and leaves the reader with a strong final impression. Ways to do so include the following:

(1) Referring to the attached or enclosed CV/resume/other documentation

(2) Forming the enclosed CV the applicant will find more details about work experience and others

(3) Showing the applicant's willingness to offer further information

The three-part pattern of the cover letter organization is summed up in table 3.

1. Introduction (Capture the reader's attention by stating that you are applying for the job and tell where you learned about the job. Create a bridge between the attention-getter and your qualification in terms of briefly showing your motivation or reason for a job application)	• Identify the source of information. State where you saw the vacancy, or mention a person whom the reader knows and who suggested you apply, or refer to a previous telephone conversation with the reader about the post. • Mention about motivation to work. Give a reason for applying for the job.
2. Body (Develop your major qualifications in detail. Relate what you have done in the past to what you could do for the company. Offer credibility with sufficient evidence. Show what separates you from the other appli-	• Demonstrate your knowledge of the job requirements and the company • Link your education, experience and personal qualities to the job requirements

cants. Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization)	
3. Ending (End on a positive, forward-looking note)	• Refer to the attached or enclosed CV/resume/other documentation • Finish the message politely

Table 3. The three-part pattern of the cover letter organization

We may be able to consider this three-part pattern along with paragraph length and unity issues. As in standard business writing, the applicant should avoid wordiness in cover letter writing (introduction and ending paragraphs, in particular). The writer's choices about how much or how little information his/her audience needs are *strategic*. It is desirable to limit the applicant's letter to one page, as it is an invisible code of writing a cover letter (Locker & Kienzler 2009). If the letter seems likely to be a bit over a page, it is better to use smaller margins or a type of a smaller font size to fit one page. Generally speaking, employers do not want longer letters. Although they will read them in case the applicant establishes early in the letter that s/he has the credentials the company needs, the trend is toward shorter letters. Example 32 exemplifies this claim. It is a solicited cover letter for an internship. We cannot stress much the fact that a long cover letter, which is generally thought to be too heavy, is a successful cover letter in practice. Although the ideal of brevity is often expressed in the introduction, the reason for the job application given in unit 3 (143 words) is longer and more detailed than professional details in unit 4 (101 words). This departure may bring about a negative result in terms of employment.

(32)

Unit	Text	Function
1	This semester I am a junior at OO University, working toward my bachelor's degree in foreign language.	Self-introduction
2	From the web page I learned your "Environmental policies & guidelines".	Identifying the source of job application
3	I am seeking an internship for half year, and while researching opportunities in the field of international bank, I found your program. I am writing to inquire about a position in "House	Reason for job application

	Ecology Program". I am impressed by your targets which reduce group-wide CO2 emissions and the environmental impact of paper consumption and waste and consider the environmental impact of its suppliers' business practices, products and services because I sometimes take care of environmental news and think what I can do. After that, I put in practice. For example, I didn't waste paper when I worked in Seattle. I made notepad using copy paper in which it was printed one side. This is one of the eco activities. Unfortunately, I don't have any environmental background. However, I prefer to do something in new environment. It means I would like to expand knowledge and experience.	
4	I have acquired a variety of skills through a variety of activities and work assignments. I am outgoing, enjoy meeting with new people and am enthusiastic as well. One year ago I attended "International Business Professional Program" for a year at OO College in OO, USA. I went to Seattle without knowledge of English. I studied harder and harder to get used to it and catch business class up. In the end I could work in a domestic company as an internship student. Thanks to that experience I acquired business skills, communication skills and confidence. I believe my background will help your company.	Qualification
5	I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you at your earliest convenience. Please contact me at 090-0000-0000 or OOO@OOO.com to arrange an interview and further discuss how an internship with OO would be mutually beneficial. Thank you very much for your consideration.	Ending remark

The following example is another solicited letter requesting an internship. It starts with an identification of the source of information about how the applicant learned about the job. This situation is similar to a

direct request in persuasion: the writer indicates immediately that s/he is applying for the position. Since a job application letter is basically a claim that the applicant could do a job, he uses his knowledge of the position and the company to choose relevant evidence from what he has done to support his claim that he could help the company in unit 3. He ends his cover letter with reference to his resume (which he enclosed with the cover letter) and the request for an interview in unit 4. From the perspective of a macro issue of writing, consequently, this letter creates a professional image, as it follows the standard paragraph structure of a cover letter. However, it does not offer credentials from the micro perspective. Namely, the applicant includes philosophical or subjective reasons for the job application in unit 2 and he does not adopt a mature or businesslike tone in describing his qualifications but is boasting or exaggerating in unit 3, as the opinion that people having theoretical knowledge do guarantee to meet all demands in practice is doubtful. Every employer wants businesslike employees who understand professionalism.

(33)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I am applying for an internship announced on your company's website	Identifying the source of job application
2	The reason for me to apply for an internship in your company is that I am searching for new challenges and professional progress.	Reason for job application
3	I am qualified to work in various departments, especially in marketing and data processing, because I obtained very good results in these subjects. Nevertheless, not only the necessary theoretical background but also the right spirits and attitude are vital when it comes to the exacting IT-business. At times some acrobatics is needed as well. I would be ready to meet all these demands in practice.	Qualification
4	The enclosed resume summarizes my capabilities. I look forward to hearing from you and to have a talk about Adobe in detail.	Ending remark

Like in the previous examples, an applicant writes a solicited letter when s/he knows that the company is hiring: the writer has seen an advertisement, s/he has been advised to apply by someone. In the following job advertisement, OO Corporation seeks applicants for their store manager trainee program in Hong Kong. They expect applicants to meet their major job requirements clarified in its advertisement.

Job Description	Our store manager trainee program provides a solid path for graduates with great potentials to become Store managers. The program combines work experience with on-the-job trainings, with the goal to develop high calibre people to become future business leaders.
Requirement	Degree holder, demonstrates enthusiasm for fashion industry & passion for the OO brand Sales focus & customer-oriented, can remain flexible in line with the business requirements e.g. alterations, stockroom, till operation & sales floor. A team player with high standards of personal presentation, conduct and behaviour. Positive attitude, able to work effectively under pressure, use initiative to resolve problems. Strong computer skills including Microsoft Word, Excel & PowerPoint, and Chinese word-processing. Good command of both spoken & written English & Chinese.

Table 4. Job advertisement in OO Corporation

Let us look into two case write-up samples in response to the job advertisement (examples 34 and 35). Following the standard paragraph structure of a cover letter, the applicant in example 34 starts his solicited letter with the identification of the source of the job. After the introduction, instead of showing knowledge of the position and the company, he solely expresses his wish to have a job before and after describing his qualifications (units 2 & 4). It sounds like pleading (i.e. "Please give me a chance"). The writer should avoid making a pest of himself by keeping asking a chance, as this practice can be considered interrupting. Although the writer introduces his qualification in unit 3, unsupported claims may sound overconfident, selfish, or arrogant. No employer will believe that a freshman ("I major in business administration at OO University and will take my degree in four years" in unit 3) has a comprehensive knowledge of a field. A *You*-attitude

needs to be used (see section 4.1. for the *you*-attitude) by describing accomplishments and showing how they relate to what the applicant could do for an employer. Even though audiences know nothing about the writer, the writer's good ideas and his/her persuasive writing will help earn the writer credibility. The apparent way to boost the writer's credibility generally has to do with expertise based on scientific, objective knowledge or competence. In this respect, unit 3 shows lack of enhancing credibility.

(34)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I read with interest your advertisement for the post of store manager in your company's website.	Identifying the source of job application
2	After reviewing my enclosed resume, I hope you will agree that my qualifications match your needs and consider me for the position.	Showing the applicant's wish
3	I major in business administration at OO University and will take my degree in four years. I have an experience for an internship. I applied for your company's internship and worked during last summer vacation. I worked part-time at OO as salesperson for three years. I have leadership and communication skills because I have been captain of track and field club. I have an ability to organize. I work well under pressure, and know I can add value in a fast-paced working environment.	Qualification
4	It would be wonderful to be given an opportunity of becoming store manager trainee of your company which has competitive products and trusted brand. My resume is enclosed for your review, but I would like to meet with you or your staff and discuss a possibility of joining your company.	Showing the applicant's wish
5	Would you please let me know the result of my application at your earliest convenience?	Solicit response
6	Thank you very much.	Ending remark

Another solicited letter to OO Corporation illustrates that credibility in terms of offering the reader knowledge about the writer's expertise can motivate the reader positively. In the following solicited letter, the first paragraph starts with identifying the source of job application and indicates the specific position for which he is applying. Reason for job application introduced in unit 2 basically serves the function to catch the reader's interest by showing the applicant's strong motivation. Besides credibility, motivation is another key issue for successful job applications. Credibility emphasized through the writer's professional knowledge may be relevant to the reader's benefit. A motivational technique applying audience *benefits* may also be pertaining to reciprocity or bargaining (Munter 2011), as clarified in "I feel that my knowledge of marketing, foreign languages and strong will to work for your company will be a benefit for working at your company". It is because the writer's expert knowledge can be contributable to the audience. Then in unit 3 the applicant shifts the focus to his skills and experiences, describing his theoretical background and practical background and showing how they can be useful to the employer and specifying the job he is seeking. In unit 3, the letter uses the exact language of the job advertisement and addresses items included in the advertisement, such as 'communication skills' and 'leadership'. The applicant first focuses on qualifications to meet major requirements of the job in terms of introducing his theoretical background (knowledge acquired from an academic world), and then he develops his major qualification in order to clarify his practical background (i.e. work experience) by linking his education, experience, and personal qualities to the job requirements (e.g. leadership).

(35)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I would like to apply for the store manager trainee program (Ref. MT/1110) advertised on the company website.	Identifying the source of job application
2	I am applying for this program because I am very interested in the OO fashion and would like to know more about the business style and also have the opportunity to work under such a world known company. I personally want to	Reason for job application

	work at a growing worldwide company that deals with fashion and I believe that your company is the best place to do so. Also I feel that my knowledge of marketing, foreign languages and strong will work for your company will be a benefit for working at your company.	
3	I have a bachelor of arts in English language from OO University. During my time of studying, I have learned English as well as Chinese and am able to speak in Japanese, English and Chinese fluently. I have taken courses that focus on international business, and especially had interest in the Global Business Teams course where I learned how to work with a global team and also learned leadership skills during the course, by becoming the leader of my team. I have also taken courses on Microsoft Word and Excel, therefore I have knowledge of computers from taking classes and also using them on daily basis. I also have hands on experiences by working at a hotel in OO for three years. There I worked part time and eventually was assigned chief of the restaurant. I have learned leadership skills by leading the staff of the restaurant as well as customer satisfaction and sales. Which I believe can be of use for this program.	Qualification
4	I will be willing to give any further information regarding my studies or field work if necessary. Also for further information from a different source please contact OO University or OO Lodge for information about my background.	Showing willingness to offer further information
5	Thank you very much and I look forward to hearing from you soon.	Ending remark

4.3. Placement of request

A request is made in business contexts when the requested act is desirable to continue business. The content of requests may support this claim. Some contents of requests in business are a request for shipping, a request for replacing damaged stock, a request for paying the amount receivable, etc. In these cases of making requests, unless the requested acts are performed, business cannot be continued. Therefore, these requested acts are necessary conditions to be able to continue business and thereby they are for the benefit of the company, not only of the person who writes the request letter. For example, in the sentence, 'We once again ask you to meet the payment deadline', without performing the requested act (i.e. meeting the payment deadline), business cannot be continued. Likewise, the requested act ('paying the full amount receivable for the transaction') in 'I would appreciate it if you paid the full amount receivable for the transaction', is a necessary condition to continue business. In sum, requests can be described as acts by which the writer gets the reader to perform an act, which is for the benefit of the company/organization or the requester, to continue core business or affiliated activities.

As a request is an essential condition in conducting business, there is a comprehensive literature on the features of the linguistic speech act of cross-cultural requests (see 2.3). Despite its crucial function in formulating persuasive messages, although abundant research work on the strategic aspect of requests exists, less is known about the position of requests. Among the few studies on the placement of requests, some business communicators claim that requests are normally placed towards the end of the text, regardless of any variables (Akar 1998; Yli-Jokipii 1994; Kirkpatrick 1991; Jung 2009). The occurrence or non-occurrence of this particular rhetorical structure is due to differences in communicative purposes. For example, negative acts (e.g. disagreement, complaint) are performed mostly to find solutions in business settings. The overt way of suggesting a solution to the reader is obviously to make a request. In other words, making a request might be the overall purpose for sending business documents with

negative acts. So the writer sets aside the request, which is a sort of overall conclusion of the text, until later. Let us exemplify this claim through a problem-solution pattern and an opener-body-action closing pattern in authentic organizational communication data.

4.3.1. Persuasion in an indirect order

4.3.1.1. Problem-solution pattern as a persuasive technique

A persuasive request that casts the request as a problem-solution message is a kind of persuasive technique (see Koester (2000, 2006) for a problem-solution pattern in decision-making). The writer emphasizes the undesirable effects of a problem and explains how his solution will mitigate the problem. After identifying pressing needs, the writer explains how his solution will satisfy those needs, and help the audiences visualize the bright future if they adopt his solutions. Finally, the writer tells his audiences what actions he wants them to take. This is a motivational sequence. It is necessary to capture the audience's attention in the very beginning with a dynamic opening and to conclude with a call for action in which the writer clearly indicates what he wants from his audiences.

Persuasion using a problem-solution pattern originates from the study of argumentation, the process of argumentation, not the arguments produced in that process, in particular. Argumentation uses language to justify or refute a standpoint, with the aim of securing an agreement in views (van Eemeren et al. 2011). It falls within the class of devices known as 'repair mechanisms' and its function is to locate and resolve solutions (Jackson & Jacobs 1980). The following example may support this claim. It is correspondence regarding persuasion of contributing the reader's manuscript to the publication of OO linguistics.

(36)

Unit	Text	Function
1	As you know from our discussion last year and also from our Business meeting during the last OO conference, the publication of OO Linguistics, Vol. 15, due to appear in 2010, has been on hold, mainly for insufficient number of deserving articles. As the editor of the journal, I have decided that even if the publication is a bit delayed, it would be important to make sure that the quality of the journal is not compromised. I sincerely apologize for the delay, but at the same time, I hope and trust you all support me in this working philosophy.	Problem
2	I am sending you another call for manuscript, counting on your help in my effort to get best papers for OO Linguistics 15. I do want to issue OO Linguistics 15 sometime this year. If allowed, I do intend to keep the publication date as 2010 in spite of the delay. As you know, OO Linguistics is the oldest and consistently good-quality OO linguistics journal. I hope you can send an article of your own and/or ask your best students, past or present, and your colleagues to do the same.	Solution
3	I fully understand that many OO linguists, particularly those working toward the tenured full professorship, would be reluctant to submit a paper to OO Linguistics, as I understand that almost all OO university administrations would not recognize any publications that have appeared in the journals that are not indexed by △□ Research Foundation, A&H, SCI, and SSCI, among other prestigious high-ranking indexes, in measuring a person's scholarly achievement. While I consider this an admirable practice, which shows how much OO scholarship has progressed and the high standards that are required of OO faculty and researchers today, I also believe a good work will eventually be recognized, whether it is in the "right" pool or not.	Problem

4	In the meantime, I have been talking with an acquisition editor of a prestigious publishing company, who approached me about the possibility of their publishing our journal. I did not approach her; it was she who approached me on this, which proves OO Linguistics is internationally recognized, although it may not be by those in OO who evaluate the quality of academic publications. I am the first to admit, however, that, while I have given my utmost attention to the quality of the journal, its distribution effort has been close to none on my part and in general, too. If we do get published by a prestigious publishing house, the problem would be quite easily solved and the international community would be happy to have access to the journal. I should like to produce an excellent issue first before talking with the editor further and more concretely. If I can show her the past four excellent issues of our journal, her company might decide to take over its publication. Once we do that, then I am pretty sure it would not be difficult to apply for publication subsidy to various organizations promoting and supporting OO studies abroad. It seems that journals produced by the company may be asked to produce as many as four issues a year, but I think we could start with just one volume a year in the beginning and then increase the frequency later on. At any rate, if they do decide to take over the publication, I am sure there would be no problem in attracting top-quality OO linguistic papers and review articles to be included in the publication. However, we need to give it a push and produce one more excellent issue. Please help me and help the field of OO linguistics. We are at a juncture where we could truly aspire for excellence!	Solution
5	Thanking you in advance for any and all the help you could provide me. Please let me know if you have any questions.	Ending remark

In example 36, the writer starts with a description of a problem that the writer and the reader share in order to make a request in the form of a problem-solution message (see Jung's (2005) and Nickerson's (2000) analyses of a situation-problem-solution pattern in their corpora of Korean business correspondence and British business correspondence written by Dutch employees). In unit 1, objective bad news about a possibility of delaying publication of a journal serves the function to claim common ground to develop the writer's appeal to the request. Namely, not until the reader has been imposed by request does the message provide sufficient background information. To get the reader on the writer's side from the beginning, the writer starts his message with "objective/concrete" facts that readers can agree upon (i.e. insufficient number of deserving articles). Whatever the case, the form of problems that the writer chooses for his opening should engage his readers right away and get them to think along the lines that will lead to their approval of his request. Placing the bad news in the opening paragraph allows the writer to capture the reader's attention immediately and "shake" him/her into action (Lehman & DuFrene 2012: 105). The problem is followed by the recommended indirect pattern for requests in unit 2 ("I am sending you another call for manuscript") as a solution to the problem raised in unit 1. Another problem is preceded by the solution (which is a request) in unit 3. Although unit 3 serves the function of being a reason for a problem in unit 1, in fact it implies the meaning of a problem, as it shows a problematic trend of a certain academic context. A problem as a reason for request minimizes the force of a request in that the requested act is done in a *nonconventionally* indirect way. This is what Brown & Levinson (1987) call off-record strategy. Presumably, the reason is that the writer wants to make solidarity with the reader by using the 'potential grounder' statement, giving a reason as an indirect request. In this context, giving a reason for request is the writer's way of seeking agreement with the reader by justifying or excusing his request indirectly. The writer presupposes that the reader can figure out his real intent from the shared knowledge established between participants. On this occasion, persuasion seems to be up to the writer's access categories or receptivity (Harvard Business School Press 2005). That is, 'Is persuasion targeted at the right people?', 'Has the writer con-

centrated entirely on the final decision makers? (i.e. the individuals who can overlook individuals and who might influence them; influencers or opinion leaders). Since the writer's persuasive message is for multiple recipients whose majors may or may not be (in)directly relevant to OO linguistics, majority of audiences are likely to fall into one of the two categories of receptivity, neutral people (people understanding the writer's position, they do not favor his position but they are not actively opposed to), and uninterested people (people informed about his subject but do not care about it). Both neutral and uninterested people may not be actively opposed to the writer's position, but their lack of interest can be a barrier to successful persuasion.

In example 36, regardless of the possibility of rejection from peer requestees, the writer clearly specifies the requested action that needs to be taken by them through direct necessity statements, "We need to give it a push and produce one more excellent issue", in the end of unit 4. Furthermore, by overtly stating the requested action and referring to some component of the requested act in the foreground through 'need statements', the writer also tends to establish the common ground or invoke shared knowledge with the reader to seek agreement. That is, by using the 'component' strategy (component of the requested act: i.e. "one more excellent issue") formulated as 'need statements' to show its situational urgency, the writer tries to seek agreement with the reader to avoid rejection or minimize the possibility of rejection to his request.

4.3.1.2. Opener-body-action closing pattern in fundraising letters

Many fundraising letters also use the problem-solution pattern, making request(s) as solution(s) to problem(s). Since fundraising letters ask for contribution directly from the audience, they are known as direct marketing. Fundraising letters aim primarily at having the reader act (send a donation) and at secondly at building a good image of the fundraiser's organization. The sales persuasion pattern is highly up to how to organize fundraising messages. According to Bhatia (2004: 97), sales letters have a seven-move structure: 1. Establishing credentials; 2. Introducing the offer; 3. Offering incentives; 4. Enclosing documents; 5. Soliciting response; 6. Using pressure tactics; 7. Ending

politely. This move structure might be simplified as follows: 1. Opener (open the message by getting the audience's attention); 2. Body (provide reasons and details); 3. Action closing (end by telling the audience what to do).

The opening needs to gain attention. The writer has to make the reader determine what s/he will find compelling in the opening. It might be some statement that arouses curiosity, or it might be a statement offering or implying the reader's benefit. Following the opening, the appeal should be developed. The writer's task here should be a logical and orderly presentation of the reasoning s/he has selected. As with any argument intended to convince, the writer should convey the points with convincing details. Finally, the writer should follow the persuasion with the request. After the writer has done his/her persuasion, s/he should move to the action s/he seeks. S/he tries to prepare the reader for what s/he wants.

Let us explore the following fundraising letter together with the three part pattern in order to investigate the placement of the request. Example 37 is a university fund-raising letter.

(37)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I am delighted to report to you that this has been another year of many successes and memorable events for the University. The University's growing international reputation is the result of the contributions and commitment of a great many people, not least our active alumni community across the world. OO is very fortunate to have enjoyed the loyal support and generosity of its alumni throughout generations of benefactions. As we enter a new decade, the continued support of our alumni will be vital in ensuring that current and future generations of students, academic staff and researchers have the resources they need to build upon OO's heritage of intellectual achievement.	Establishing credentials

2	One particular area where there is an urgent need for support is in University scholarships and bursaries. It is a matter of concern and regret to all of us at the University that bright and capable students continue to find themselves obliged to turn down a place at OO due to financial constraints. Last year over 180 access bursaries were awarded to first year undergraduate students who were experiencing financial difficulties in taking up their place at the University. There were over 600 applications for these 180 bursaries.	Introducing the project
3	I write to ask you to join me in making a contribution to the 2010/2011 Access Bursary Fund. I am supporting a bursary because I believe that making it possible for the brightest students to benefit from the University education is a powerful thing I can do to support the University.	Using pressure tactics
4	OO has a proud history of private support and each and every gift, no matter how large or small, is incredibly worthwhile and greatly appreciated, and will make a difference to the future of your University. I understand that the big numbers that we sometimes talk about or read about may seem off-putting or intimidating, but if every graduate were to donate 50 pounds for example, some 6 million pounds would be raised, which would make a huge difference to future OO students for many years to come.	Offering incentives
5	If you are able, please join our growing donor community. You can make your contribution to the fund by completing the enclosed donation form and returning it to us at the address listed below, or you can make your gift online through our appeal website www.OOO Together, we can help ensure that the quality of OO's students, with their creativity, innovation, influence and global reach, remains unsurpassed.	Soliciting support

The opener of the above fundraising letter serves the function to motivate the audience to read the rest of the message and provide a reasonable transition to the body of the message. This fundraising letter begins by establishing credentials of the university by referring to its successful reputation in unit 1. It attempts to establish the university's credentials in terms of introducing renowned funding sources, "the loyal support and generosity of its alumni throughout generations of benefactions". The body of the message, starting from unit 2, introduces the project and provides the cause for which the funds are being raised. It includes stories about how the fundraising was developed, what the university has done, and about people who have used the fund or who need the university's help. Other parts of the body of the message are composed of units 3 and 4. In unit 3, the writer uses pressure tactics to encourage donations in terms of introducing the writer's private story about the donation (Bhatia 2004). The fundraising letter makes a statement of a central selling point (i.e. offering incentives) in unit 4 by saying that each donation "will make a difference to the future of your University / would make a huge difference to future OO students." Costs are mentioned near the end of the body and are connected to specific benefits. This fundraising message ends in unit 5 by telling the audience what and how to do. First, the message tells the audience what to do, "If you are able, please join our growing donor community." It might be better to avoid *if* ("If you are able") for making a request on this occasion, because it lacks positive emphasis and encourages the audience to say *no.* Second, it encourages the audience by making the action sound easy, "You can make your contribution to the fund by completing […], or you can make your gift online […]".

In sum, grant-seekers must conduct research on a potential donor first and make sure whether they are addressing their fundraising letter to the right person. It is of importance to get to the point and make their case or project on fundraising activities early. Grant-seekers should explain their organizational effort, such as project and/or need (what problem are they trying to solve; what need are they trying to fulfill; what are they trying to help with; all the benefits they provide and the needs they tackle), near the beginning of a fundraising letter. This is because a fundraising letter should take readers to the action of the cause. After opening fundraising letters by describing the

dramatic scene, grant-seekers should finish the fundraising letter by asking readers to participate through donating money or a gift and so on (see example 14 as an example of lack of what the writer is talking, what s/he is asking of (e.g. what s/he is raising funds for; how much s/he needs; how much s/he will request from donors and why, and how s/he will use the fund, etc)).

4.3.2. Persuasion in a direct order

From the preceding discussion, the general plan for persuasive requests can be summarized as follows: 1. Open with words that gain attention; 2. Develop the appeal using persuasive language; 3. Make the request clearly at the end of the message. Unlike skillful persuasion in an indirect order, the weaker business letter begins with the request. Example 38 is an email to persuade the reader to join the presidential election of OO Association. It illustrates that although directives flow predominantly from high status to low status people, communication does not necessarily flow in a downward direction. A description of how to read the candidates' biographic information in unit 1 is given in the very beginning of the text even before a common ground for a direct request in unit 2 is established between the interactants. Although the description is not opposed to the reader's wishes or expectations, the direct beginning realized by requests is unlikely to get a positive reaction to the writer's request.

Some mechanical devices (underscore, color, font, italics, boldface) give emphasis to content. Boldface type in the following example leads the reader to concentrate on relatively less important information (i.e. email address; password; Elections). Likewise, although repetition is a communication device to emphasize important information (e.g. a link to cast ballot; deadline for election), the writer repeats pieces of highly optional information in the beginning of unit 1 ("to read the biographic information for this year's candidates") and the end of the unit ("see a link to a pdf file with information about each of our candidates"). This finding clarifies that this example violates the very beginning step of major activities in planning the message (Rentz et al 2012): 1. Determining goals; 2. Analyzing your au-

dience; 3. Gathering information; 4. Analyzing and organizing the information; 5. Choosing a form, channel, and format. Since business writing is largely performed in response to a certain situation, one of the main writing planning tasks is to figure out what the writer wants the most to be done about that situation.

(38)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Please go to the OOO website at www.OOO to read the biographic information for this year's candidates. This information can be found under the Members Only section. Simply click on the log in button near the top right of the page. Using your **email address** and **password,** log in to the Members Only section. Select **Elections** from the left side bar. There you will see a link to a pdf file with information about each of our candidates.	Way to read the biographic information
2	Please complete your ballot by April 30, 2011.	Request

4.4. The reciprocal nature of politeness strategies and the strength of persuasion

Politeness is of crucial importance to perform a goal-oriented activity, such as business. For example, politeness plays a crucial role in looking for a buyer, making the buyer respond favorably to sales letters, or having the buyer purchase the product for sale. If a seller is not polite to a buyer, the buyer is unlikely to react in a favorable way to what the seller requests. Politeness may help both parties build trust and respect in order to maintain long-term business relationships. In this respect, it is seen as a necessary avenue for establishing a productive business atmosphere. In addition, it may serve the important function of han-

dling negotiation-processes and managing conflicts successfully. Therefore, politeness seems of vital importance in business settings to achieve a goal successfully.

In this respect, over the last few decades, (in)directness has been one of the most popular cognitive values across cultures in studies on cross-cultural business communication (Gesteland, 1999; Hofstede, 1994). In particular, it becomes a crucial (non-)linguistic feature or convention for politeness. Since directness is characterized as intrinsically face threatening or impoliteness, it is necessary to be indirect for politeness purposes (Brown & Levinson 1987). In other words, indirectness has been defined as a set of politeness strategies used to avoid or minimize imposition on the hearer and to create solidarity between interactants. Because of its seminal feature affecting politeness phenomena, the notion of "face" has been addressed by several scholars. According to Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998), face is concerned with people's sense of worth, dignity, honour, reputation, respect and competence. Goffman (1967: 5) defines face as the positive social value a person effectively claims during a particular contact, and an image of self delineated by specific social attributes. The management of face is the management of face sensitivity. Face sensitivity is most frequently affected by the positive social values that people associate with their various self-aspects. Spencer-Oatey (2005: 103) builds on Goffman's face and conceptualizes *identity face* that is situation-specific in that it is saved or lost in specific interactional encounters. She further links linguistic analysis with work on self-aspects and positive social values carried out in social psychology (Schwartz 1992), where a distinction between individual (self-definition as a unique individual) and collective (self-definition as a group member) identity is made. Following this claim, Spencer-Oatey (2005: 99) further develops two superordinate principles. First, according to the *equity principle*, people are entitled to personal consideration from others and entitled to be treated equally. This principle helps to uphold people's individual construals of self and it includes the belief that people should not be imposed on. Second, in contrast to the equity principle, the *association principle* defines that people are entitled to an association with others (Spencer-Oatey 2005). It has three components: involvement (the principle that people have in-

volvement with others), empathy (the belief that people should share appropriate concerns and feelings with others), and respect (the belief that people should show proper amounts of respect for others).

Major politeness scholars (Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, and Brown & Levinson 1987) have carried out research on the realization of politeness strategies in making face-threatening messages more implicit or less explicit. Among those, Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness is one of the most well-known research studies on strategic politeness. The concepts of positive and negative face are essential in their theory. Positive face is defined as wants to be desirable to others, while negative face is defined as wants not to be impeded by others. Lim and Bowers (1991) extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of positive face. According to Lim and Bowers (1991), positive face combines two different human face needs: the need to be included (i.e. fellowship face) and the need to be respected (i.e. competence face). Brown & Levinson call certain kinds of acts 'the face-threatening acts (FTAs)' that challenge face wants. Some acts (e.g. request, order) impose on the hearer's negative face by showing that the speaker gets the hearer to do something. Other acts (e.g. disagreement, complaint) threaten the hearer's positive face by indicating that the speaker does not share the hearer's wants.

Let us investigate how politeness strategies play a role in persuasion. Example 39 is a chief-editor's request for reviewing another research article submitted to the Journal of OO.

(39)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I'm sorry to bother you again but I wondered if it would be at all possible for you to do another manuscript review for the special issue of the Journal of OO?	Request
2	I realise you are probably very busy but	A source of the audience's objection
3	we are desperate to get a couple of final papers reviewed.	Emotional appeal
4	We would ideally like the review within a couple of weeks.	Showing the writer's wish

The primary purpose of a persuasive message is to have the audience act (promptly) (Locker & Kienzler 2009). The writer identifies the specific action she wants with hedges in unit 1. Hedges are politeness strategies for minimizing the force of FTAs. Hedges act as mitigators to make utterances sound less coercive or less offensive. Hedges express low certainty or less commitment about what the speaker is saying ('an epistemic function of hedges') in order that the speaker keeps an appropriate degree of distance, or reduces the threat to the hearer ('an affective function of hedges'), thereby weakening the force of his assertion, which can be an FTA (Hyland 2000). As Hyland (2000) claims, by diminishing certainty in his propositions through hedges, hedges also convey the writer's modesty and respect for the reader's opinion. Namely, besides communicating ideas, hedges also function as a medium to signal the writer's attitude to the reader. By showing the uncertainty of the writer's proposition through hedges, he denigrates himself and shows respect for other's opinion. Hedges include: (1) the quantitative hedge 'just', 'a little', (2) the delimiter particle 'only', (3) the *if*-clause expression 'if then', (4) the quotative suffix 'it's said that', (5) dubitative words 'I think', 'seems like', and (6) lexical hedges such as 'pitiably', 'unfortunately', 'unavoidably' and 'regrettably'.

In example 39, the writer's request for review is mitigated by an apology for a possible interruption ("I'm sorry to bother you"), a dubitative hedging device ("I wondered"), and checking a possibility for an indirect request ("if it would be at all possible…"). The mitigating devices (i.e. apology; a dubitative word) exemplify the writer's hesitation in making a request in order to minimize the size of her interruption on the reader. The communication strategy of checking a possibility also plays a role in buffering an imposition in request. Ironically a booster is also used simultaneously with the strategy in unit 1 (i.e. "at all").

Contrary to hedges, boosters are devices for intensifying the force of speech acts. By putting stress on what the reader wants or needs rather than just noticing them, the writer tends to highlight common ground and build up solidarity, so that the reader's facewant to be associated with is met. This claim goes hand in hand with the

remark made by Hyland (2000). He mentions the function of boosters in dealing with scientific letters as follows:

> Boosters (e.g. *clearly, obviously, of course*) allow writers to express their certainty in what they say and to *mark involvement and solidarity* with their audience, stressing shared information, group membership and direct engagement with readers (Hyland 2000: 87, emphasis given).

Boosters are composed of the words for exaggerations and emphatics. The writer exaggerates interest with the reader to convey the idea that the reader's wants or goals are also shared with the writer by choosing words at the extremes, for example, 'enormous', 'outstanding', 'optimum', 'eternal', 'unchanging', and so on. By exaggerating some want, goal, or value of the reader, the writer can save the reader's positive face through explicitly stating his high interest in the reader. Moreover, emphatics (e.g. 'very'; 'really'; 'precisely'; 'definitely') also play a role in strengthening interpersonal solidarity by assuming common ground with the reader. A booster, *at all*, in unit 1 is used to emphasize the size of possibility of another review. Namely, the writer tries to maximize a possibility of reviewing another article in order to allow the reader to think twice on her request. Boosting the size of a possibility expects more chances to receive a positive answer from the reader.

If the writer is asking for something that requires time, money, or physical effort, the audience is likely to have few objections. Unit 2 shows a source of the reader's possible objection. The writer is likely to be most aware of the reader's "objective" concern such as time in order to create solidarity with the reader. It is another effort to minimize a possible refusal to the writer's request from the reader. After showing empathy in unit 2 ("I realise you are probably very busy"), the writer appeals to the reader's emotion for persuasion in unit 3, "we are desperate…". Although scientific and/or logical appeals generally work for persuasion, emotional appeals can also be intense depending on situations.

This text ends with unit 4, showing the writer's wish. On the one hand, unit 4 can be objective information, if it is only to show the deadline for review, "within a couple of weeks". On the other hand, it

may also be subjective information for a (nonconventionally indirect) request through simply showing her wish (see also 4.3.1.1 for the example of nonconventionally indirect request). The use of adverb "ideally" supports the claim that unit 4 is a request. It serves the function to minimize the size of request. Namely, although the writer firmly sets the deadline, "within a couple of weeks (*in principle*)", the ideal deadline is *negotiable* upon request. Accordingly, the adverb plays a role in troubleshooting a source of a possible obstacle (i.e. time) to the request mentioned in unit 2. In example 39, consequently, the writer makes efforts to establish common ground and build up solidarity with the reader for successful persuasion in terms of using a variety of politeness strategies throughout the text.

Nevertheless, this example denotes lack of strength of persuasion. It is pertaining to the issues of arguments and credibility (Locker & Kienzler 2009). First, argument refers to the reasons or logic the writer offers. In this example, the writer's reason for asking the reader for another review may not be as strong, and the benefits for the reader may not be as certain. Second, credibility is the audience's response to the writer as the source of the message. Among three major sources of credibility in workplace, expertise, image, and relationships (Locker & Kienzler 2009), relationships may make argument in this persuasion less credible, as both parties have huge social distance (in fact, the writer's email request for a review is the first contact to the reader). The fact of how the writer can have the audience's contact information is even uncertain, so that it decreases credibility of the writer's persuasion on this occasion. The more reliable the relationships have been made between the two, the more likely the audience is to follow the writer's request.

4.5. Business apology

In business documents, an apology is made normally when we are at fault. In other words, no (explicit) apology is necessary when we are

not at fault. It is because the phrases for apologies are generally interpreted to mean the sorry person is accepting blame or responsibility. If we are in the situation of making an apology, it might be better do it early, sincerely with a correction of the situation. There are pros and cons in the case of apology for image restoration. Apology can be interpreted as an acknowledgement of the agent's or his/her organization's fault in causing trouble, so that the extent of the problem can possibly appear bigger than what it actually is. However, a sincere apology made by a manager may be generally a proper and efficient method of image restoration to show 'responsible leadership' (Baum 2006). It may go hand in hand with the remark that "a company at fault is most persuasive when it *admits* that fault and apologies" (Benoit & Czerwinski 1997: 53, emphasis given).

In general, apology has two types. One is authentic apology, apology made to a complainer. The other one is pseudo-apology, apology made to mitigate tone of a negative or sensitive message.

4.5.1. Authentic apology

In this contemporary world, customers are highly demanding better quality of service or product from business organizations. This trend may support the claim that proper complaint management is of crucial importance for continuing business successfully. The threat of damaged reputation requires organizations to engage with concept of *reputation repair* to restore the face of the organization by presenting a convincing account of organizational actions that persuade and legitimate (Argenti 2008). Authentic apology can be made to neutralize the argumentative force of the initial charges of organizational wrongdoing. It is the speech of defense in response to public criticism and accusation (Hearit 1994, 1996, 2006). It is one of the well-known strategies for complaint management.

Scholars have attempted to articulate the strategies that apologists draw from formulating their responses (Ware & Linkugel 1973; Brummett 1980; Coombs 1995; Hearit 1994, 1996, 2006). The fullest form of the apologetic strategies may come from Benoit's (1995, 1997) work articulated through image repair theory, which focuses on

what a firm says when faced with a crisis (see Jung (2008) for the use of image restoration strategies for crisis management). Business organizations have face, which is public self-image (Brown & Levinson 1987), like people. If they lose their face, they have an inclination to restore it. Organizations losing their face organize image repair strategies, the dialog between the organization and its publics after the negative occurrence designed to minimize damage to the image of the organization. To restore image may be an effort to "restoring the confidence of key publics, which means communicating a return to normal business" (Fearn-Banks 2002: 12). This is the fundamental idea for the theory of image restoration (Benoit 1995; Benoit & Czerwinski 1997).

The theory of image repair introduces five superstrategies with twelve substrategies of image restoration: 1. The accused denies the offensive act (denial); the accused simply denies committing the offensive action (simple denial); the accused shifts the blame to someone else or something else (shift the blame). 2. The accused evades responsibility (evasion of responsibility); the accused claims that the offensive action was merely a response to another's act (provocation); the accused cites a lack of information about or control over important elements of the situation (defeasibility); the accused says that the offensive action occurred by accident (accident); the accused suggests that the offensive behavior was done with good intention (good intention). 3. The accused reduces offensiveness (reduction of offensiveness); the accused strengthens the audience's positive opinion of the accused by stressing good traits (bolstering); the accused attempts to downplay the extent of the damage (minimization); the accused distinguishes the act from other similar but more offensive actions (differentiation); the accused places the act in a more favorable context (transcendence); the accused uses a counterattack against an accuser or opponent (attack accuser); the accused reimburses the victim with goods, services, or money to help mitigate the negative feeling arising from the act (compensation). 4. Corrective action: the accused promises to correct/prevent the problem. 5. Mortification: the accused confesses and begs forgiveness. These overall strategies can be summarized as *Avoidance* statement (e.g. shift the blame; evasion of respon-

sibility; reduction of offensiveness) and *Accommodative* statement (e.g. compensation; corrective action; mortification).

The key to understanding image repair discourse is to consider the nature of an accusation that demands responses from the accused for proper choices of image restoration strategies. According to Benoit (1997; 178), an accusation or an attack has two components: (1) the accused is held responsible for an action, and (2) the act is considered offensive. Since each audience's interests, wants, and goals are diverse, corporations must address audiences in a different manner and sequence. Now let us exemplify the claim that the proper understanding of the nature of accusation is a key to image repair discourse in terms of examining how dichotomized apologetic strategies are realized in business correspondence.

Example 40 is a sales manager's letter of apology for a staff's poor service in OO store. The manager starts his message with thanking including identification of the problem, its background or history. Before introducing solutions to the problem, the manager emphasizes his company's usual high standards of service in order to restore their image. Organizations try to protect themselves exclusively from external stakeholders by developing images that are consistent with the core values of the organizational cultures. This image repair discourse may also aim to avoid their fault in terms of setting "unusual" poor service apart from their company or its usual high standard service. It is a strategy of denial realized by setting a company and a problem apart. Concretely speaking, it is an effort to save corporate face or image by stressing a gentle image through making distance between company's high standard of service and the problem caused this time.

Although no apology is made at the beginning of the text, solutions are given in the middle of the text. In unit 3, the manager explains the solutions to the problem, to reprimand the staff and the expression of the staff's regret. Another solution is given as a "tangible" compensation to the problem as a token of an apology. From the perspective of crisis management, compensation refers to forms of financial returns and tangible services and benefits stakeholders receive as part of a stakeholder's relationships (Milkovich & Newman 2005). The main benefits, which are ways of solving the problem, should meet the accuser's expectations. If the elements of the main benefits in

the text, to reprimand the staff, expression of the staff's regret, and provision of a gift voucher, are not outweighed by the main benefit favored by the audience, they are additional negative elements causing more serious troubles.

(40)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Thank you for your letter of 12 June regarding the poor service you received when you visited our store recently.	Thanking
2	The incident was most unlike our usual high standards of service and courtesy.	Emphasizing the agent's high standard of service
3	The member of staff who was rude to you has been reprimanded; he also expresses his regret. I am enclosing a gift voucher for £40 which you may use at any OO store	Giving solutions
4	If I can be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.	Showing willingness to provide assistance

Let us explicate example 41. Despite its similarity to the above example's paragraph structure, extra paragraphs make it different from example 40. First, an apparent apology is made in unit 2. Besides the authentic apology, an indirect apology is made in unit 4 through admitting the company's fault. Although the above example does not describe the problem (i.e. reason for poor service), example 41 provides its reason in unit 6. Although this unit superficially seems to accommodate the company's fault by providing a reason for causing a trouble, its function is to serve the function to evade its fault. Unlike simple denial of accusation, the writer tries to shift blame to the staff in charge. This corresponds to Hearit's (1994) notion of 'scapegoating' (transfer guilt to another). A variety of image restoration strategies in a single example exemplify that the theory of image restoration has a tendency to focus on types of strategies without in-depth consideration of the harmonization between different strategies. Alongside apology and solution, the use of the scapegoating strategy may support this claim. Apology and solution show acknowledgement of the company's responsibility. Nevertheless, the strategy of scapegoating

makes us cast doubt on how much the company admits its responsibility for the problem. The text ends with a solution in unit 7. Despite its inherently accommodation-oriented characteristic, this strategy plays a role in the avoidance of the company's fault. Although we can see in unit 7 that a delivery has currently been completed, it is uncertain whether the accuser will favor the solution, as the delivery of the goods is already behind the schedule. If the delay or problem is long or large, it may be good to ask the customer whether s/he wants to confirm the original plan or make a different arrangement.

(41)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Thank you very much for your letter of 13 January, concerning the delay in sending the goods you ordered on 10 December.	Thanking
2	I am very sorry that we have inconvenienced you in this way.	Apology
3	We always try to send goods within the period stipulated in our advertising.	Emphasizing the agent's high standard of service
4	However, on this occasion we failed to meet that objective.	Accommodating the company's fault
5	I hope you will accept the enclosed small gift as a token of our sincere regret that you did not receive the goods by the expected date.	Providing compensation
6	The delay in sending was caused by the fact that the person in charge was on holiday.	Reason for poor service
7	I recognize that this is no adequate excuse, but you should by now have received the items you ordered and I hope they meet your requirements.	Giving a solution
8	If there is anything further I can do to ensure that you are entirely happy now with our service, please contact me.	Showing willingness to provide assistance

The following example is a customer service manager's letter of apology for damaging the customer's parcel. The manager starts his message with referring to the post office's fault, "the enclosed item has been damaged whilst in our care", "a small fraction of the items we handle suffer some accidental damage", with an apology. After de-

scribing a problem in unit 1, the writer gives information about communication channels for further inquiry about the damaged parcel. The writer admits his company's fault in units 1 and 3, including an authentic apology. Although sincere apologies go hand in hand with efforts to rectify the problem, this message seems avoidance-oriented to the accidental damage. A subordinate clause in unit 2, "If you think any of the contents are missing or damaged" may make the reader confused, as the content structure is not parallel (i.e. accommodating fault in causing damage in unit 1 → asking the reader of whether the contents are damaged in unit 2). Furthermore, communication channels provided in unit 2 violate *you*-attitude. In unit 2, the writer offers customer service center's phone number for inquiry about the damaged parcel. It might be a proper procedure to provide a phone number first in order to negotiate a solution to the problem, before offering a solution or compensation. However, since the reader needs to pay for a phone call for inquiry ("all calls are charged at local rate"), he is unlikely to call, unless the damage is big. Likewise, the writer gives an extra communication channel for further inquiry, such as the title of a brochure in unit 2. It is unlikely for the reader to check the brochure kept in a post office, unless the damage is serious. In this respect, to provide communication channels as solutions is seen as inactive management of the customer's complaint, rather than as a sincere effort to solve the problem.

(42)

Unit	Text	Function
1	I am sorry that the enclosed item has been damaged whilst in our care. Despite our best endeavours a small fraction of the items we handle suffer some accidental damage.	Giving unwelcome news
2	If you think any of the contents are missing or damaged, or have any other enquiry regarding this item, please contact us on 0345 000000 (all calls are charged at local rate). For more information please refer to OO	Giving information for inquiry

	Mail's Code of Practice booklet 'We want to help you', your guide to our service standards.	
3	Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused.	Apology

Example 43 is the letter of postmaster's apology for the loss of parcel. As in unit 1 of example 42, "despite our best endeavours", the postmaster tries to show the post office's usual efforts and high standard of service in unit 2 for the maintenance of corporate face before describing a problem. After this image restoration discourse, the writer provides a reason for refusal to the reader's request for tracking back the parcel. Reasons or rationales for refusal can act to reduce the force of the face-threatening speech act (cf. Condon 2001; Glover 2000; Trosborg 1995). As supportive statements, plausible reasons are 'external modifications' because they modify the force of refusal within their immediate context without being placed within a refusal (Faerch and Kasper 1989). When supportive reasons given by the writer are understandable and reasonable to the reader, they act as mitigators. Therefore, in making a refusal, the action can be assessed for its underlying motive or reason for politeness purposes. In this respect, proposing proper and overwhelming reasons for making a refusal to the reader seems productive and reasonable to mitigate the force of refusal. By providing evidence, the writer may also be able to "justify his/her accusation or reprimand so that it appears *convincing*" (Trosborg 1995: 329, emphasis in the original). Therefore, the writer also saves his own face by justifying his unavoidable rejection through his explicit explanation of difficult situations incurring the refusal and the implication that he has made every effort to avoid the refusal of the reader's request. If the accused has done everything he can and when a delay or problem is due to circumstances beyond his control, it may be appropriate to include an explanation so the reader knows he was not negligent. It is of interest to see that the term of "exception" is repeated (i.e. *exceptionally* in unit 7 and *exception* twice in unit 8). The writer explains company's regulations in units 6 and 8 about payment made to lost items to boost the tone of "exception". The reason for highlighting the word "exception" is seen as an effort to enhance the

reader's face. Namely, the writer tries to give the reader a special treatment by emphasizing that the reader is special enough to violate his company's regulation (i.e. "Although payment is not normally made…" in unit 6). The heavy use of *I* subject has to do with the repetition of "exception". The private tone realized by the use of *I* subject boosts the tone of "exception". Unlike typical business writing as a self-effacing genre, this message is *I*-oriented (*I*-subject in units 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10). The heavy use of *I* is seen as an effort to restore distance between interlocutors, because it makes this message sound private and personal. In principle, the content of a confidential message is shared between the writer and the reader (e.g. giving a special treatment exclusively to the reader).

Despite those image restoration strategies, a promise to correct or prevent the same problem is made nowhere in the text. The accused should promise to correct/prevent the problem or provide concrete solutions using corrective action, which is an essential part of the apology (Benoit 1995). In this respect, the corrective action can be interpreted as an obligatory move, a topic unit of texts determined by their communicative purposes (Swales 1990), in the letter of apology. On the other hand, the corrective action can be an indirect form of apology in that it also implies the meaning or token of apology.

(43)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Thank you for your enquiry of 12 March 2001 from which I am sorry to learn of the loss of a packet.	Thanking
2	I should begin by explaining that although we do all we reasonably can to ensure the safety of Airmail and Surface items in the course of transit,	Showing high standard of service
3	it is often not possible to say precisely how or why an individual item has gone astray. This is due to the large number of overseas letters and packets which we handle on a daily basis and the fact that we are unable to keep an individual record of such items at any stage of their journey in the post.	Reason for refusal

4	I have therefore been unable to make detailed enquiries about the item on this occasion.	Refusal
5	I can assure you we are most concerned when any loss occurs and I have passed the details of your enquiry to our Investigation Service who record all reports of items that have not been delivered safely.	Showing empathy
6	Although payment is not normally made for items sent overseas unless we know that the loss occurred whilst the item was in the care of the OO Post Office,	Explaining company's regulation
7	exceptionally I enclose a cheque for £12.64, which also includes the postage you paid.	Compensation
8	I should explain that before we make payment we normally have to see a certificate of posting. I have made an exception in this instance but would suggest that you ask for a certificate in future as we may not be able to make an exception again.	Explaining company's regulation
9	I would like to thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and	Thanking
10	I trust you will accept my apologies for the obvious concern and inconvenience you have been caused.	Apology
11	If you require any further advice about the services we provide, please do not hesitate to contact us on 0845 0000 000 and we will be happy to help.	Giving contact information for inquiry

4.5.2. Pseudo-apology

A pseudo-apology serves a mitigating function in negative messages. The apology in this case is not a normal or authentic apology (e.g. an apology made to a complainer), but a so-called 'pseudo-apology' functioning only to mitigate the force of face-threats. For example, the apology can be a device to reduce the damage to the reader's face by

avoiding facing a direct confrontation with the reader in a refusal. In this case the apology can compensate the apologee for refusal by causing damage to the apologizer's face because the apologizer denigrates him/herself by apology.

Example 44 is a letter of refusal to the reader's job application. It includes a pseudo-apology or "nonapology apology" (Hearit 1994) as a mitigator for refusal in unit 4. In unit 4, the writer apologizes for rejecting the reader's job application. The writer's objection to the reader's application must threaten the reader's facewants to avoid distance. Thus in this case, the apology functions as a way of reducing the damage to the reader's face by avoiding a direct confrontation. Unit 4 supports the view that an 'apology' can sometimes function as a hedging device depending on context. Apology in unit 4 is also used in juxtaposition to another hedging device, or token agreement, to mitigate the force of the writer's refusal even more. A token agreement (i.e. *yes but*) is a device or a feature of mitigation to feign agreement with the reader by camouflaging direct disagreement. Therefore, the writer may soften the illocutionary force of disagreement through a token agreement with the writer. A token agreement is precisely applicable to what Dow (1999: 95) calls 'veiled compliments', in that it includes praise and dispraise together in one sentence to mitigate disagreement, as in this example. Although the compliment is syntactically subordinate to disagreement, the writer can soften the force of his/her disagreement by placing the compliment before disagreement. This is consistent with Hyland's (2000: 55) findings: "The full illocutionary force of specific criticisms was frequently assuaged by the juxtaposition of polar comments in *praise-criticism pairs*" (emphasis in the original).

(44)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Thank you very much for your interest in the faculty positions we have advertised.	Thanking
2	To date, we have received well over 100 applications. As you can imagine, there has been a great variety of interest and potential from a pool of highly qualified applicants.	Explaining the state of job applications

3	The search committee has been working diligently in processing these folders, reading materials and attempting to match applicants' interests and abilities with the needs of the School in teaching, research and service.	Showing procedure of screening
4	I am sorry to inform you at this point that, although we were impressed with your credentials and abilities,	Token agreement
5	we do not foresee a need for someone with your specific interests and potential at this time,	Reason for refusal
6	and will not be asking you for an interview this year.	Refusal
7	We wanted to let you know as soon as a decision had been made, so that you were not left guessing about a potential interview as the academic year progresses.	Explaining a reason for the fast delivery of outcome
8	Please note that this decision was not simply a reflection of your teaching or research record, but was also our best estimate as to the match between your interests and the School needs.	Reason for refusal
9	We greatly appreciate the patience and care you put into your application, and want to thank you for your interest in our program.	Ending remark

A reason for refusal is preceded by a refusal with a pseudo-apology. The reason in unit 5 can be used as adequate groundwork or support for more direct disagreement or refusal (cf. Trosborg 1995). Following the reason, a direct refusal is made in unit 6. Again a reason for refusal is given in unit 8. It is of interest to see that the same reason for refusal is repeated ("to match applicants' interest and abilities with the needs of the School" in unit 3; "we do not foresee a need for someone with your specific interests and potential" in unit 5; "our best estimate as to the match between your interests and the School needs" in unit 8). Repetition in example 44 is seen as an effort to save the reader's (positive) face in terms of emphasizing that only the reason for refusal is no match between his academic interest and the School needs.

4.6. Summary

This chapter has explored the *you*-attitude, offering credibility, and image restoration discourse, in order to investigate tone control practices. First, the *you*-attitude was explicated through five tone control devices, "Emphasize the audience's primary interest", "Neither show your emotions nor assume the audience's feelings", "Use *you* in positive messages", "Don't use *you* in negative messages", and "Emphasize the positive to hide the negative". Despite their grammatical acceptability, lack of *you*-attitude sentences does not properly meet the audience's facewants (not) to keep a distance from the writer.

Second, this chapter has illustrated the function of credibility in promotional genres and persuasive messages. On the one hand, it has argued that message structures can play an important role in offering credibility. For example, a mature, professional, or businesslike tone can be adopted through a three-part pattern in cover letter writing, introduction-body-ending. On the other hand, a variety of reasons also serve the function of offering credibility. This chapter has exemplified that sufficient reason, evidence for the applicant's qualification in cover letter writing and reasons for persuasions and promotions realized in the forms of problem-solution pattern and opener-body-action closing play essential roles in maximizing the writer's credibility.

Third, this chapter has investigated complaint management discourse. Special attention has been paid to corporate image restoration strategies in response to the customer's complaint. A variety of complaint management writing samples has illustrated the dynamic realization of the two statements (accommodation-statement; avoidance-statement) for corporate image restoration purposes. This chapter has also exemplified the claim that the proper understanding of the nature of accusation is a key to image repair discourse. This claim illustrates that attention has to be paid to the perlocutionary force for proper complaint management.

5. Context-sensitive business writing

Chapter 5 investigates the (non)-realization of communication strategies and to a lesser extent paragraph structures used by individuals in organizations (e.g. which types of communication strategies are used?; how do they create solidarity with the reader?; how do they keep appropriate distance thereby avoiding face-threats and mitigate their assertiveness in face-threats?; how do they restore their image?).

As Yli-Jokipii (1994) points out, there are dimensions or aspects of business communication other than the linguistic dimension. For example, the corporate dimension includes social context factors. The social context factors describe the situational context in which language is used. These social context factors are group knowledge shared among individuals in a particular context, such as the workplace. For example, the knowledge that medium selection is dependent on different types of tasks (i.e. electronic form for internal communication and print form for external communication) is shared among business professionals in any given company. Since the linguistic and corporate dimensions operate simultaneously, it seems problematic to consider them separately. Writers take context factors into consideration in choosing appropriate communication strategies.

This chapter argues for whether these contextual factors always affect the choice of communication strategies in a *conventional* or *automatic* way. Namely, it exemplifies whether there are any exceptions to the conventional patterns of communication strategy distribution. For example, whether or not the task routine influences the form of the directives. Routine directives are less face-threatening and do not need to be mitigated as much as non-routine ones (Harris 2003). Also most models of organizational life see the workplace as a setting governed not by hot emotion but logic and rationality (Miller 2012). Business professionals manage conflict and change by thinking *logically* about what is best for the company, make a *logical* choice to maximize gains and minimize losses during decision-making. Howev-

er, emotion is a central point of organizational life both in terms of interaction with customers, clients and/or in-group members of the organization (see Kramer & Hess (2002) for the perceived rules governing emotional life in an organization and Scott & Myers (2005) for strategies for managing emotions in highly stressful jobs). As Lopes & Salovey (2004) claim, emotional skills are of crucial importance for collaborative tasks in the workplace (see also Sigmar et al. (2012) for the pedagogical argument for the incorporation of social and emotional skills training into the business communication curriculum). Emotion plays an important role even in business or organizational writing practices. For example, a fundraising letter sets a scene to pull directly on the reader's emotions and it will be more likely to take the form of action (see examples 14 and 37). As another counterexample to the conventional knowledge of business writing, repetition can be considered in conjunction with the maxims of clarity and brevity. Chapter three of the study has illustrated that clarity is the most essential maxim for the good practice of English business writing and it is realized by short or simple vocabulary, phrase, sentence, and/or paragraph. Given this claim, repetition can go by the name of redundancy. Namely, the repetition of old information may violate the maxim of brevity, so that it may make the text less clear and not coherent. However, the use of repetition can support the claim that clarity does not always call for brevity. Let us exemplify the dynamic interface between clarity and brevity through repetition. Example 45 is an invitation email to the meeting of the OO in Japan. The sentence for invitation ("Hope you can go" in unit 2) is repeated in unit 6 ("Hope you can come") after the explanations of location of the meeting, participation fees, and the application procedure of attending the meeting. As clarified in sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2, repetition is likely to come up here in a positive sense. As for positive politeness, the invitation is repeated (see 4.1.3. for the *you*-attitude in positive messages). We can have a positive label for repetition when it has a certain purpose (a positive sense, in particular). After the invitation in example 45, the acceptance to the invitation is made by the reader. The invitee, however, was unable to attend the meeting, and the reason for being absent from the meeting is given in example 46.

(45)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Hi, here is the info. http://www.OO.or.jp	Information about the meeting
2	Hope you can go.	Invitation
3	Very easy from OO. Just get off at OO station. The office is above the station.	Way of access to the meeting
4	The fee is very low for this event - even for members. But do not worry about it,	Explanation of participation fees
5	just let me know if you can go for sure, and then I will send OO staff your name so that you can attend.	Application procedure of attending the meeting
4	Hope you can come.	Invitation

(46)

I might have been too optimistic about the location of the meeting's venue.

Honestly, I've been there today. A problem was to find a room for the lecture. I tried to find it without any signal about the lecture room inside the bldg for around 30 mins from 6:20. I saw some kind of lecture on 3rd floor but, unlike the program of OO event on-line, it started before 6:30 and I couldn't see you inside the room through the window. Anyway, after being exhausted to find the room, i came back home.

Sincerely hope you could understand this situation.

Example 47 is a response to example 46. The main purpose of the text is an apology for the lack of on-line information about the meeting. This positive politeness, an apology, is repeated three times to recover social distance created from the delivery of unwelcome news given in example 46. Although clarity is a goal for standard business writing and it calls for brevity in principle, this claim cannot be equally applicable, depending on situations. In example 47, repetition is used in

order to deliver the key information, (sincere) apology, in a clear and coherent manner.

(47)

Unit	Text	Function
1	The event was on the 21st floor, started at 6:30. The info about what floor it was on was not on the website.	Reason for apology
2	I am very sorry - I assumed all the info about location was there. I am very sorry you had to waste your time like that.	Apology
3	I should have given you my TEL. For future reference, my TEL is OO-OOOO.	Corrective action
4	I hope you'll consider attending future events. I will let you know.	Invitation
5	Really sorry once again for the incomplete information.	Apology

Consequently, this chapter pays special attention to the claim that good business writing practices are highly context-sensitive. It analyzes texts as *social interaction* (Nystrand 1987; Hyland 2000). Good organizational writing does not begin with an act of assertion (what the writer thinks about his/her subject) but an act of listening (what others think). Writing well means *engaging* the voices of others. In this aspect, writing is a "conversational" act (Graff & Birkenstein 2010). This approach leads us to see writing as an "engagement" in a social process. Namely, textual meanings and styles can be "socially mediated" and influenced by the contextual or situational knowledge which writers and readers *share* in their discourse communities. In this respect, an objective of organizational writing is achieved by mutual agreement upon contextual or situational knowledge between interactants. This claim might go side by side with Hyland's (2000) notion of "acceptability conditions", statements incorporating an awareness of interpersonal factors principally in persuasion. In persuasive writing a writer not only wants his/her words to be understood (an illocutionary effect in speech-act terms), but also to *be accepted* (a

perlocutionary effect, or reader action). This claim raises the issue of relative or relational nature of communicative phenomena. Similarly, discourse-functional grammarians (e.g. Chafe 1994, among many others) employ a conceptual tool such as 'information flow' to describe dynamic nature of communication. Since the writer takes the reader's needs into account when producing discourse, the mental state of the reader must be taken into account. Accordingly, this chapter attempts to emphasize reader orientation in organizational communication research in that the reader's expectations about persuasion need to be met for communicative success. It examines the claim that communicative behaviour needs to be relational work. In other words, it also investigates the organizational members' perceptions or judgments of communicative behaviours (Spencer-Oatey 2008), in terms of the addressee's definition of (in)directness. Relative features of determining the proper amount of information will also be discussed from the reader's perspective.

5.1. Directness in negative face-threatening acts

As exemplified in chapter 4, a number of research findings support the indirect organization of negative messages in business (Arnold & Soskis 1977; Shelby & Reinsch 1995; Jansen & Janssen 2011). Arnold & Soskis (1977) promote the benefits of the indirect approach as an alternative way to organize rejection letters to job applicants. Shelby and Reinsch (1995: 320-322) likewise see the merits of indirect organizations as "important message cues to reader response" and indicate that "an indirect organizational scheme was positively associated with message effectiveness" in negative messages. Jansen and Janssen (2011: 36) promote the advantages of the indirect approach as "more comprehensible and agreeable and its writer as more competent and empathic" through conducting experiments with the order of the explanation and negative news decision in various types of negative news messages. Their experiment leads to conclude that "explanation-

first order contributes to better customer relations than does the decision-first order" (Jansen & Janssen 2011: 59) and helps readers maintain a positive self-image in the face of a rejection (see Creelman (2012) for a comprehensive historical review of research concerning the most effective methods of composing negative business messages).

Despite the scholarly evidence supporting the use of the indirect approach in negative messages, as Locker (1999) argues that buffers are not always appropriate, this chapter contests the use of the indirect structure to make a request (Salerno 1988; Limaye 1988). It is unexpected to follow the advice commonly presented in business textbooks, with the majority written *indirectly* (Bovee & Thill 2012; Guffey & Loewy 2010; Shwom & Snyder 2012). The relativity of (in)directness will be exemplified through three conditions (sociality rights and obligations, common ground established by a negative, and differentiation) in order to *justify* negative messages with a direct tone.

5.1.1. Sociality rights and obligations

An interruptive feature of request takes indirectness into consideration as a natural tone (see 4.4). The following example, however, exemplifies that a direct tone can also be acceptable, depending on situations. Example 48 is a business memo meant to ask the reader to bring his software purchased with research funds (i.e. *kenkyuhi*) for confirmation. This memo starts with a pre-request for a future authentic request in terms of mentioning about a wish the person in charge makes (i.e. "OO *san* (Mr. OO) would like to confirm your software"). This pre-request also serves the function of being a reason for the request. Following this pre-request, the writer gives a more objective and authentic reason for the request (i.e. university regulation: "because it was purchased with *kenkyuhi*"). This memo ends with a request (unit 2). An indirect modal, *could*, is used for the request. It implies the meaning of the writer's uncertainty about the reader's acceptance of the request, so that the tone in the request becomes weaker. Likewise, the request was made under such a condition for saving the reader's negative face as "when you have time." The writer tends to provide the

reader with flexibility of time in bringing the software to respect the reader's situation. Here an interesting question can be asked, "is the writer's indirect request really essential?". This question originates from one of the rapport management components, *sociality rights* and *obligations*.

(48)

Unit	Text	Function
1	OO-*san* would like to confirm your software because it was purchased with your *Kenkyu-hi*.	Reason for request
2	Could you bring your Office software to our office when you have time?	Request

Rapport management (Spencer-Oatey 2008) is related to one of the key functions of communication, the management of social relations (i.e. the relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people). It is concerned with the management of harmony-disharmony between people in interaction. Spencer-Oatey (2008) uses the term (im)politeness as an umbrella term for all kinds of expressions indexing evaluative meaning with positive, negative or neutral connotations. This conceptualization is in line with Locher's (2004) and Locher and Watts' (2005) "relational work" in that it does not only refer to linguistic politeness, but is meant to cover the entire spectrum of interpersonal behavior.

According to Spencer-Oatey (2008), rapport management comprises three components: (1) the management of face; (2) the management of sociality rights and obligations; (3) the management of interactional goals. People's perceptions and judgment of rapport can be looked at in the light of the three components. Based on the components, interactants make dynamic judgments about whether their rapport has been enhanced, maintained, or damaged in interaction. Therefore, a pre-requisite for maintaining positive rapport is for the participants to perceive and be aware of the components and the expectations related to them.

Among the three components, the component of *sociality rights* and *obligations* is pertaining to the normative aspect of communica-

tion behaviours. The key to understanding face enhancing or threatening behaviour is to be primarily aware of the interactants' behavioural conventions and expectations. People's judgments on the appropriateness of behaviour are based on their expectations, and they tend to develop social or behavioural expectations with their perceived *sociality rights* and *obligations*. In this respect, *sociality rights* and *obligations* involve the management of social or behavioural expectancies. Spencer-Oatey (2008: 13, emphasis in the original) defines social expectancies as "fundamental social *entitlements* that a person effectively claims for him/herself in his/her interactions with others". Unless the social or behaviour expectations are fulfilled, interactional rapport may be affected. That is, when people threaten our *sociality rights* and *obligations*, they disturb our sense of social entitlement.

The interactants' behavioural conventions and expectations are usually derived from normative behaviour. Normative behaviours are unmarked behaviours in a given societal and organizational context and they have a social indexing function (see Watts 2003). Since normative behaviours are typically contextually based, they vary according to a wide range of contextual variables. This also means that outgroup members are unlikely to have such behavioural knowledge that would serve as a basis for normative behaviours. Accordingly, these *sociality rights* and *obligations* become a standard to make a clear distinction between in-group and out-group members in a given societal or organizational context.

Following the description of *sociality rights* and *obligations*, the proper tone for the requested behaviour can be determined. Let us get back to example 48 to exemplify this claim. In example 48, the reader "must" bring his software, because he purchased it using research funds offered by his affiliation. To confirm the materials purchased with research funds is part of his organization's regulation. In this respect, the reader has an *obligation* to bring the software to the office concerned for confirmation whereas the writer has a *right* to ask the reader to bring it. Accordingly, the writer's *direct* request on this occasion should be acceptable and understandable to the reader. The indirect request involved in the situation of *sociality rights & obligations* may be marked.

5.1.2. A negative as a common ground

One of the strongest applications of shared knowledge is to establish a common ground with the reader. If the writer initially expresses opinions held in common with the reader, s/he will be more likely to change the readers' opinions on other issues. By claiming a common ground, therefore, the writer can increase his/her chance of persuading the reader of his/her main point. The best common grounds are specific. Often a negative – a problem the audience is supposed to solve – makes a good common ground (see also 4.4.1. for the problem-solution pattern in persuasive messages). In example 49, for example, the writer reminds the reader of such knowledge shared with the reader as the highly urgent situations before requests. The writer gives a reason for the request in unit 2 and the reason sounds an urgent matter. Unless there is an immediate troubleshooting, it seems that the stakeholders will be in trouble. This illustrates a direct request. A direct request does not contain benefits and does not need to overcome objectives: it simply asks for what is needed (Locker & Kienzler 2009). In unit 3, making a direct request is up to mutual agreement or establishment of a common ground between interactants. In case the reader properly understands this emergency situation and agrees how much the situation is serious, a direct request is unmarked. This claim may go along well with Pufahl Bax's (1986) study of university offices that, in emergency situations, mitigated directives were more likely to fail than direct ones, as they were more likely to be misinterpreted, and that direct requests were likely to be more easily understandable and acceptable. To present the request directly enables the writer to expect quick agreement, to save the audience's time.

(49)

Unit	Text	Function
1	The following note is related to OO issue in Peru. This is the same issue I forwarded to you on 03 August related to OO setup for the new fiscal year.	Topic sentence
2	The countries in Latin America are very concerned because there is not much time	Reason for request

	left before the end of the fiscal year to make changes in OO.	
3	Can you help clarify the necessary steps to solve the problems?	Request

5.1.3. Dynamic perceptions of (in)directness

As reviewed in section 4.4, one of the most representative approaches to strategic politeness is Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, which claims that the exact limits for personal territories are universal. In other words, the limits for personal territories would be equally applicable among interactants representing different cultural backgrounds and native languages. Brown and Levinson have a tendency to adopt a politeness research approach from the "local" perspective through which they highlight user-oriented politeness strategies without paying much attention to the hearer's perception or judgment on politeness. Consequently, the issue of relativity of politeness phenomena has been raised as a pitfall of Brown and Levinson's strategic politeness. It seems that the notion of politeness in Brown and Levinson's work is rather a description of linguistic strategies to mitigate face-threatening acts than, in fact, politeness. This claim supports the major argument by the post-modern politeness researchers that politeness should not be regarded as speaker-oriented, i.e. that speakers are polite for realizing their personal goals (Locher 2004; Locher and Watts 2005). These researchers argue for the dynamic nature of politeness suggesting that politeness should emphasize hearer-orientation in that the hearer's expectations about politeness need to be met for communicative success. In this respect, appropriateness of (in)directness may also link to the issue of the addressee's perception or judgment of (in)directness.

Jung (2010a, 2012) examines dynamic perceptions of (in)directness in international business communication. He tries to address a major research question of how (in)directness is judged and evaluated with particular reference to the notion of *differentiation*. He claims through the realization of (in)directness that English as a lingua franca in business is affected by culture but an exception can be made

in cases where a *differentiation* situation is involved. In this respect, he proposes a new implication for politeness research in international business and argues the claim that 'shared knowledge' between international businesspeople is essential for business success (Louhiala-Salminen 2009; Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta 2009; Kameda 2000). That is, his study illustrates that shared knowledge between international businesspeople is not necessarily of vital importance for business success and communication competency does not always enable us to avoid communicative mistakes. His exemplification is based on the following interview with a Finnish manager revealing an interesting aspect related to channel choice in intercultural business communication. It provides certain functions of social conventions that enabled us to determine normative politeness in intercultural business encounters.

(50) Korean employees are direct. Whenever they need, they call us to discuss business matters. […] Phone calls might be disturbing our job. However, to make clear each stage of a job can make business more successful at last, because it minimizes miscommunication between the two.

Spencer-Oatey (2005: 97) makes a distinction between "prescribed behaviour" and "proscribed behaviour" in order to explain people's norms or values about behaviours. Prescribed behaviour is behaviour that people are obliged to produce because it is a legal or social obligation, whereas proscribed behaviour is behaviour that is prohibited legally or socially. According to example 50, the use of telephone for business could be described as "prescribed behaviour" in the Korean end and "proscribed behaviour" in the Finnish end. In international business encounters the choice of communication channel seems linked to facework. As the Finnish employee mentions in example 50, a Korean employee's directness in business activities may threaten a Finnish employee's negative face wants not to be interrupted, so that it is likely to arise a possible conflict. However, we can see that the Finnish employee manages this possible conflict situation fundamentally through *differentiation* (e.g. clear understanding of differences, acceptance of other's positions as 'legitimate', interpreting behavior in terms of its causes) (Jung 2010a: 14). Jung (2010a) clarifies that a

Finnish employee *accommodates differences* (i.e. differentiation) of Asian employees to achieve the benefits of *differentiation* and to make a smooth transition to *integration* (Fisher & Ury 1981; Pruitt & Carnevale 1993). As remarked by the Finnish manager ("to make clear each stage of a job can make business more successful at last, because it minimizes miscommunication between the two"), *differentiation* can be a crucial benefit to achieve 'transactional goals' (i.e. to avoid miscommunication, leading to eventual business success) based on the proper management of 'interactional goals' in the workplace (Spencer-Oatey 2008). In *differentiation*, parties raise conflict issues and spend time and energy clarifying positions, pursuing the reasons behind the positions, and acknowledging their differences. The process of acknowledgment of their differences (i.e. *negotiation*, *concession*, or *compromise*) is of crucial importance to make a process to *integration*. And then parties begin to acknowledge common ground and move to solidarity-enhancement (to improve the harmony of the relationship). Jung (2010a) claims that the Finnish employee's interview data shows that the process of his *differentiation* links to *concession* (neither *negotiation* nor *compromise*) in that the Korean employee has no shared knowledge about the Finnish employee's preference of communication channels. In this respect, the Finnish employee does not judge or evaluate the Korean employee's possible interruption negatively or impolitely, but does consider it as "unmarked rudeness" (Terkourafi 2008), similarly to the findings by Culpeper (1996) concerning the acceptability of unmarked rudeness in specific contexts. Jung and Louhiala-Salminen (2012) also suggest that these should be times when a face-threat can be appropriate and this nonconventional business knowledge may become one of the crucial components comprising business politeness, as Schnurr et al. (2008: 212, emphasis is given) asserted:

> impolite behaviours [...] are not truly impolite but reflect the shared knowledge and values of group, and […] have the effect and intention of *reinforcing solidarity* among group members.

5.2. Determination of the amount of information

To control the amount of information, the writer should think about what the readers know and what they need to know. S/he needs to ask him-/herself the following three sets of questions (Munter 2011): how much background information do they need? (i.e. what do they already know about the topic?; how much of the technical language do they understand?); How much new information do they need? (i.e. what do they need to learn about the topic?; how much detail and evidence do they need?); What are their expectations and preferences? (i.e. what do they expect or prefer in terms of style, standard length and format preference?). The following example (business memo from the accommodation office to ask the reader of paying accommodation fees by direct debit) fails to meet all the requirements to answer the questions.

(51)

Unit	Text	Function
1	On checking our records we find that you have **NOT** submitted a Direct Debit Mandate for payment of your accommodation fees.	Problem
2	Please complete the attached Direct Debit Mandate and return to the above address by **Wednesday 14th November 2001**.	Request
3	**Late payment may mean that you may lose your entitlement to pay the concessionary fee quoted on your lease and you may be charged the full rate, which will be 5% greater than the annual concessionary rate.**	Negative consequence

First, high background needs. Explanation is a crucial aspect of negative messages. The explanation should describe the problem clearly and unemotionally while not placing blame (Carter 2012). Nevertheless, the writer uses three visuals, boldface, capital letter, and underlining, to emphasize a negation: **NOT**, in unit 1. These emphatic de-

vices for the negation make objective information become subjective, as unit 1 sounds like a complaint to the reader.

Second, high information needs. The writer needs to provide sufficient evidence, statistics, data, and other material credible to the reader. When the writer must give bad news to the reader, s/he needs to be clear, but s/he also needs to maintain goodwill. Example 51 illustrates one basic pattern for negative messages. Placement of the bad news in the beginning of the text may make it more likely that the reader will read the letter, because directness here may alarm the reader. However, this example clearly upsets the reader with its abrupt announcement. The reader may not be prepared to receive the negative message, because he does not understand the reasons behind the negative news (e.g. reason for choosing a particular payment channel). When the writer has a reason that the audience will understand and accept, s/he should give the reason before bad news. Limaye (1997: 38) observes that the presence of an explanation is a moral issue, insisting on the moral obligation of writers to provide an explanation, arguing that offering the reader both general and specific reasons is not an option but an "ethical imperative." Likewise, Johnson and Indvik (1992) have reached a similar conclusion that the value of presenting a *reasoned* explanation is seen as a contribution to a positive interpretation of the negative news. They also emphasize that explanations indicating external environmental factors as the cause of the negative news are perceived more positively by the reader than those linking the negative news to an action taken by the recipient.

Third, high motivation needs. We can motivate through audience benefits, bt stressing "what is good for them?", for example, thus pointing out tangible benefits. We can offer tangible benefits to our audience, or emphasize the audience's value (e.g. profits, savings, product discounts). Although unit 3 seems a reader's benefit, it is far from it. This is because of the issue of parallel structure. Parallel structure puts words, phrases, or clauses in the same grammatical and logical form (Locker & Kienzler 2009). The above example is not logically parallel. Although the writer mentions his main concern of the correspondence, payment method (i.e. direct debit), in units 1 and 2, he suddenly introduces another topic irrelevant to the main subject of the text in unit 3, payment speed (i.e. "Late payment may mean that…").

There are inconsistencies in the argument. Inconsistencies make an argument hard to follow, leaving the reader uncertain about what the writer is trying to persuade him/her to believe. Since the main purpose of the text regards the choice of payment method, the negative consequence as a pressure strategy in unit 3 is unlikely to be persuasive to the reader, in case the reader keeps paying the accommodation fees in time by payment channels other than direct debit.

Despite its similarity to example 51, example 52 encompasses an authentic benefit, so that it is seen as a problem-solution-benefit structure for persuasion (see also 4.3.1.1 for the benefits of the problem-solution pattern in persuasion). After presenting the problem, the writer has to present the solution to remedy the problem. The writer's solution is a mixture of laying out his recommendation and showing how it will remove the problems the writer cited earlier. Furthermore, he needs to show the benefits of adopting his solution and/or the disadvantages of not accepting the solution, if possible. In the following example, the writer uses a negative approach, the disadvantages of not accepting the solution ("If payment is not received or if no satisfactory explanation is given, you will lose your entitlement…"). It is a typical method to suggest that if the writer's recommendation or solution is not accepted, undesirable consequences should occur. Thus, the problem-solution-benefit form organized in the following example first proves the existence of a problem, supplies a remedy to that problem, and then projects negative consequences if the recommendation is not accepted. Unlike example 51, alongside a problem, a remedy to the problem is supplied, in the form of *options* of payment methods, 'direct debit' or 'credit card' in unit 1. Namely, solutions are suggested as options, "If payment is not received or if no satisfactory explanation for non-payment by direct debit is given", in the negative consequence of unit 3. The options help the reader feel the negative consequence to be a benefit to the reader.

(52)

Unit	Text	Function
1	On checking our records we find that you have **STILL NOT** submitted a Direct Debit or Termly Credit Card Form for payment of	Problem

	your accommodation fees despite our previous reminder.	
2	Unless you do so within the next **7 days** I will assume that you do not wish to pay your fees in installments and must ask you to make full payment **immediately**.	Request
3	If payment is **not** received or if no satisfactory explanation for non-payment by direct debit is given, you will lose your entitlement to pay the concessionary fee quoted on your lease and you will be charged the full rate, which will be 5% greater than the annual concessionary rate.	Negative consequence

Example 53 also violates the *you*-attitude in the control of amount of information. This business e-mail is a response to the reader's complaint about poor service in OO airport. A customer service officer of the airport begins his email with thanking in unit 1. Appreciation is made on the use of its service. Since this message is in response to the reader's complaint, however, he first needs to show his gratitude for the reader's inquiry about OO airport's complaint management, instead. In spite of the accommodation of its fault, "because it took your sisters longer than expected to complete international arrival procedures at immigration, baggage hall and the customs", the writer only expresses his regret to get to know the reader's bad news in unit 2, even without a sincere apology for poor service. Even though a reason for bad service is given in unit 2, the officer does not admit OO airport's fault causing a trouble without providing acceptable reason(s) for the avoidance of its fault in unit 3 (see 4.5.1 for accommodation and/or avoidance strategy in complaint management). This investigation illustrates that types of reason for face management should be determined to meet the reader's expectations. Namely, the reason for avoidance should be primarily clarified, as the reader is awaiting active complaint management from OO airport. In this respect, although a reason for bad service in unit 2 plays a role in accommodating OO airport's fault, it is far from what the reader expects, possibly compensation with a sincere apology. Since agreement is sought in unit 4 before common ground is fully established, this seeking agreement

move is likely to threaten the reader's facewant not to be imposed on. Lastly, this example does not include contact information for further inquiry (e.g. name of the person in charge; his contact information, etc.).

(53)

Unit	Text	Function
1	Firstly we would like to express our gratitude for you and your sisters visiting OO Airport on 30th September 2012 despite the bad weather caused by a Typhoon.	Thanking
2	We are sorry to hear that you and your sisters could not take a limousine bus from the airport as you planned	Showing regret
3	because it took your sisters longer than expected to complete international arrival procedures at immigration, baggage hall and the customs	Reason for causing a trouble
4	However, we are afraid to inform you that we, OO Airport, are not held responsible for any loss or inconvenience caused as a result of above.	Avoidance of fault
5	Your understanding is much appreciated and thank you again for taking the time to give us your comments.	Seeking agreement
6	It is great pleasure for us to welcome you and your sisters at OO Airport again in near future.	Ending remark

5.3. Summary

This chapter has investigated three conditions (sociality rights and obligations; a negative as a common ground; differentiation) in order to justify the use of the direct approach in negative/sensitive messages.

Every aspect of a communication strategy is greatly influenced by values and norms. Knowing these norms and values can go a long way toward increasing our rapport and credibility. People's judgments on the appropriateness of behaviour are based on their expectations, and they tend to develop social or behavioural expectations with their perceived *sociality rights* and *obligations*. Social norm-based shared knowledge, such as *sociality rights* and *obligations*, is of vital importance to allow us to justify direct request. Direct request can also be justified in cases where a *differentiation* situation is involved. *Differentiation* supports the claim that directness is not necessarily characterized intrinsically as impoliteness.

One of the strongest applications of shared knowledge is to establish a common ground with the reader. For example, this chapter claims that a negative makes a good common ground for persuading the reader of the writer's main point. It also exemplifies that the writer should deliver information about what the readers need and want to know (to control the amount of information, in particular). Emphasis has been given to the reasons behind the negative messages as contributions to positive interpretations of the messages.

6. Concluding remarks

The present study has conducted an initial investigation into a variety of writing practices realized by members of specific organizational groups. It has concentrated on how everyday language use accomplishes work and relationships.

This perspective comes up with Alvesson and Karreman's (2000) conception of little 'd' and big 'D' discourse. Little 'd' *d*iscourse represents the textual form of communication, while big 'D' *D*iscourse represents its meaning potentials. On the one hand, little 'd' *d*iscourse refers to talk and text in local social interaction. Studies of this type of discourse focus on detailed language in use and talk-in-interaction in specific social contexts. From the tradition of sociolinguistic research, for instance, little 'd' *d*iscourse pays attention to linguistic practices, such as the use of pronouns, passive transformation, nominalization, in order to understand the meaning and interpretation of these linguistic features and the constitutive effects of their use. It also seeks to understand how tones are controlled when sensitive, persuasive, and promotional messages are exchanged internally and externally. Given this research perspective, this study has also exemplified that particular objectives of messages significantly affect the choice of rhetoric and its strategic language devices as discussed in chapter 4.

However, this may not be necessarily consistent with the case involving the perlocutionary force as demonstrated in chapter 5. This exception can be made in big 'D' *D*iscourse. Big 'D' discourse, *D*iscourse, refers to culturally 'standardized ways of referring to/constituting a certain type of phenomenon' (Alvesson & Karreman 2000: 1134). *D*iscourse is historically formed by myriad local discourses, contingencies, and cultural assumptions that shape social reality (Foucault 1980). It focuses on how it offers linguistic resources for social interaction as it produces its constituting *effects*. It refers to the 'orders of discourse' – the 'totality of discursive practices of an

institution, and relationships between them' (Fairclough 1993: 135). Given the claim, this study has adopted a meaning-centered perspective seeing communication as the 'creation and maintenance of symbolic systems' (Mumby 1988). It equates communication to human interaction, referring to sequenced interrelated acts, the context they create, and the meanings formed at a relational level in linguistic forms. It claims that communication is referred to as the interactional context. This claim illustrates that text and context should be assigned a prominent role in the analysis of professional genres. Interrelationships between text and context focus primarily on text-external properties, viewed as interdiscursive in nature (Bhatia 2010). Interdiscursivity is an important role in appropriation of text-external resources across organizational business writing practices. Text-external sources, as mentioned in chapter 5, include the conventions that constrain generic constructs and organizational practices. Interdiscursivity is the function of appropriation of generic resources, primarily contextual in nature. It focuses on distinctive relationships between and across organizational practices and organizational cultures. This study argues that interdiscursivity is central to our understanding of the dynamics of organizational genres, which are used in professional, institutional, and workplace contexts. Interdiscursivity underpins the importance of context in genre theory. It refers to innovative attempts to create a variety of forms of mixing constructs in appropriating genres. Since the text is made possible by a combination of a very complex and dynamic range of resources, we should explore multiple discourses that play a significant role in forming specific discursive practices in organizational writing. This study argues for a critical study of discursive features of organizational writing by focusing on interdiscursivity. The interdiscursive nature of professional communication makes us rethink the definition of business communication.

6.1. Rethinking the definition of business communication

The major aim of this book is to introduce the readers to some of the central premises and concepts in organizational writing and to provide a set of critical text analysis to assist them in getting started in analyzing social interaction. This book has exemplified a variety of definitions of business communication. On the one hand, the following definition may clarify that conventional rules and tips for business writing are important:

> the scholarly study of the use, adaptation and creation of languages, *symbols* and *signs* to conduct activities that satisfy human needs and wants by providing goods and services for private profit (Reinsch 1996:28, emphasis is mine).

For example, the variety in the use of hedged directives accounts for the considerable attention to how directives have been perceived or interpreted by the reader. General patterns of communication strategies in English, which produce lists of conventional forms, are useful and beneficial for standard business writing illustrated in numerous English business writing textbooks (see also chapter 3).

On the other hand, this book also illustrates that we should relax our commitment to the rules or tips for business writing but take context into consideration. In our rapidly changing world, simple formulas realized by business communication strategies are unlikely to work. In dynamic situations, not to freeze our thinking by avoiding sticking to a few simple communication rules is of crucial importance for efficient communication. This illustration might be supported by the following context-dependent definitions of business communication:

> Not a mere skill-based approach, but a coherent, *knowledge-producing* field (Graham & Thralls 1998:7, emphasis is mine).

> Should not be a conventional/automatic discipline to adapt to our rapidly changing contemporary business world (Jung 2010b).

For example, hedges can be used preferably by subordinates as efficient persuasive tactics to get superiors to do something or as mitigators to minimize the force of FTAs in business context. However, the interpretation of hedges can be different depending on a given context. Hedges cannot be politeness strategies if they are overused between intimates or if they are used in paying a compliment. Also, if hedges do not make readers respond more positively, then we have little reason for mandating hedges as the standard opener for negative messages (Locker 1999). In this respect, it might be pedagogically beneficial if business communication textbooks show how hedges are used in social appropriate circumstances (e.g. who should say what to whom; how and when to say it, and so on), instead of producing simple lists of hedges (Flowerdew 1998; Upton and Connor 2001).

Consequently, before conventionalizing a certain communication style to apply it to business communication, it is necessary to properly consider 'appropriateness' (i.e. suitable communication *in a given situation*) (Canale and Swain 1980; Cortazzi and Jin 1999; Hymes 1972; Leech 1983) to improve business communication skills. This shows the importance of Leech's 'sociopragmatics' (Leech, 1983) in that what is appropriate behavior is determined in a context or culture. That is, we need competencies beyond grammatical competence to make sense of the use of communication strategies. In these cases, we should have more than Chomskyan 'linguistic competence' to communicate efficiently in a given context. In other words, Hymesian 'communicative competence' is necessary to make sense of appropriateness of language use in particular situations (Judd, 1999).

6.2. Pedagogical implications

To consciously evaluate our writing, we must become more conscious of reading behaviors. This skillful requirement for development of our writing skills demands *critical reading*. Critical reading is a highly reflective skill requiring the reader to gain some distance from the text

s/he is reading. Critical reading has been an important precursor to critical writing (i.e. academic writing) for pedagogical purposes. Critical reading skills provide an opportunity for "active" as opposed to "passive" learning (Sigmar et al. 2012: 306). We must read and discuss texts in a number of ways to write better. The key is this: do not read looking only or primarily for information; do read looking for ways of thinking about the subject matter. In order to write our own analysis of the subject, we need to do a careful critical reading of the sources and to use them critically to make our own argument. The term 'argument' means using reasons to support a point of view. In more detail, it means the carefully constructed rationale for the inquiry, and for the place of its results within the academic arena (Cottrell 2011). This will explain why the writer considers that *why* s/he writes was the most appropriate text, *why* it was worth writing in that particular way. The reader needs to look for the rationale for the selection and interpretation of the evidence presented, and the rationale for the construction of the argument (Cottrell 2011).

The reader may need to ask some interpretative questions about the sources (e.g. Are there inconsistencies in the argument? Could the evidence be interpreted differently?). And then the reader will need to record the reasons for the writer's claims. This is the function of note taking in critical reading. Marginal notes on assumptions, anything that is taken for granted in the presentation of an argument, should be jotted down, as writing while reading aids our memory in many ways. By developing a habit of reading and writing in conjunction, both skills may improve. Practice in note taking helps the reader be more specific and precise in noting what is good writing and what is not. In great detail, critical reading skills through note taking bring numerous benefits, including improved observation; more focused reading; improved ability to identify the key points in a text; improved ability to respond to the appropriate points in a message (Cottrell 2011). The following dedication may be required: attention to detail (noting small clues that shed light on the overall clue); identifying textual pattern (paragraph structures); taking different perspectives (looking at the same information from different perspectives). It can be helpful for the reader to use a template to record the information that the writer argues. The reader can devise his/her own list of information s/he

wants to collect at the initial reading stage (e.g. a sample note taking of example 54 in table 5).

(54)

7October 2011 Dear colleague The 124th regular meeting of OO, scheduled to take place on Monday 17 October, has been cancelled owing to the illness of Professor OO, OO University, Germany

Unit	Text	Function
1	The 124th regular meeting of OO, scheduled to take place on Monday 17 October, has been cancelled	Giving bad news
2	owing to the illness of Professor OO, OO University, Germany	Reason for bad news
Note	• The central claims or purpose of the text	A business memorandum for delivering information about cancellation of a guest speech in a regular meeting
	• What audience is the text written for?	Potential audiences for the lecture
	• How the text is organized?	The writing assumes a causal connection: giving a reason as supporting evidence indispensable to bad news. In this respect, this text is pyramid-structured.
	• Does the line of reasoning make sense? Why does the writer reveal in public the potential presenter's highly "personal" reason for cancellation of her presentation? Might there be other explanations apart from the one proposed? Are there any hidden assumptions that need to be questioned?	The reason for cancellation of the presentation may threaten the potential speaker's face as it should be a private matter only shared between inside parties. Nevertheless, the writer intends to reveal the reason in public. It may make the audience assume that the speaker may be a physically serious condition. On the other hand, this inevitable reason for cancellation may be strategically given to the audience to save the organizing party's face. This reason sounds a kind of *rationalizations* (reasons presented after a decision or action), rather than *justifica-*

		tions (reasons presented in public before an action is taken, a policy is implemented, or an issue is resolved) (Conrad & Poole 2012: 256).
	• Why does the writer inform the audience of this unwelcome news much earlier (7 October) than the presentation date (17 October)?	The fact that this cancellation has been decided more than ten days before actual presentation makes the reader assume that the speaker is really sick, as her sickness is unlikely to be recovered well in advance. Accordingly, giving an overwhelming reason and fast delivery of the bad news are likely to serve the function to seek agreement with the audience. Authentic seeking agreement device is not used in the end of the text though (e.g. I hope you will understand this situation).
	• Is *the 124th regular meeting of OO* in unit 1 a subject proper enough to attract the reader's attention?	More recognizable subject to the reader might be the title of the presentation with the presenter's name (e.g. Prof. OO's presentation titled OO has been cancelled).
	• Is appropriate tone used in giving bad news?	A passive voice is used for less assertiveness in giving bad news. Additional mitigating devices may make its tone more formal and indirect (e.g. *We must inform you that* …)
	• Is amount of information appropriate in the text?	After cancellation of the presentation this time, are they going to reschedule it? Information about contact person and his/her contact information will be helpful for further inquiry.

Table 5. A sample note taking

6.3 Further research

The present study has conducted an initial investigation into some aspects of the use of language in business and institutional writing. There is, of course, much more involved in, and to be learned from, the analysis of organizational writing. The following suggestions may be made as guidelines for future research.

1. The study of organizational communication is the study of how people use language to manage their practical tasks, and to perform the professional activities associated with their participation in business or institutional contexts. It focuses specifically on linguistic resources at various levels – lexical, syntactic, rhetorical, etc – which are all mobilized to achieve the communicative purposes of organizations. Since the actions participants in organizational interactions are performing are very likely to illustrate the specific employment or management of the linguistic resources across the organization, the linguistic practices to be found in business and institutional settings might be exclusive to such contexts. In this respect, one of the principal objectives of research pertaining to organizational communication is to show a given linguistic practice or pattern specially characterized in a given setting (Drew & Sorjonen 2011). Accordingly, the research on the interplay between ordinary mundane social interaction and workplace and/or institutional interactions (e.g. see Maynard (2003) for account of the delivery of bad news in everyday and clinical settings) should be meaningful. Also more cases of situations might offer more reliable knowledge on organizational writing.
2. Besides the contextual factors I have examined in the present study, further issue of investigation could concern other variables affecting organizational communication styles (e.g. power; distance; gender; age; work experience; organizational culture, etc). In particular, 'the size of imposition' and culture seem to be important variables in dealing with the speech act of request in that research has shown that the degree of imposition and

culture play significant roles in making a request and in its response behavior (Holtgraves and Yang, 1992). Although, in general, a request is not imposing on other's freedom of action or territory in non-Western culture, in cases where it causes a certain level or degree of face threat or embarrassment to the addressee, regardless of whether participants are intimates, it may be an imposition. In this respect, in-depth inter-cultural studies on the use of BELF in performing speech acts are needed based on the present research partly undertaken from a cross-cultural communication perspective. An extensive discussion on the impact of culture in BELF encounters has been made (Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005; Rogerson-Revell 2007, among many others). It shows that BELF partners are aware of the underlying communication differences between them that could be attributable to culture. In other words, these studies claim that writers communicating from the perspective of their own cultural background tend to use the communication strategies associated with that culture even if they are communicating in a language other than their own native language. Nevertheless, there are still few studies that have looked in a systematic way at the role played by different aspects of culture in BELF communication (Gerritsen and Nickerson 2009). Studies of cultural differences in communication strategies in BELF encounters can give background knowledge that might enable us to avoid the miscommunication labeled as 'pragmalinguistic failure' (e.g. the use of ritual greetings) and 'sociopragmatic failure' (e.g. to make a request to pay a compliment) (Thomas 1983) in inter-cultural communication situations, and thereby to facilitate inter-cultural communication. Furthermore, this background knowledge may play a significant role in the conduct of business contacts or negotiations, and the handling of conflicts in inter-cultural business organizational settings.

3. Although the data of the study is composed of various types of speech acts, immediate turns of interaction have not been examined. This suggests that investigating immediate speech act exchanges could provide further information about whether the reader's reaction to the prior communication may be different

based on the realization of particular communication strategies made by the opposite party in prior correspondence (i.e. whether or not the reader uses the same type or the equal amount of communication strategies in their response to the writer).

4. The rapid innovation of communication technologies demands more systematic and diachronic study across organizational written genres to examine genre evolution. Genres represent a dynamic movement in relation to sociocultural contexts and "*change over time* in response to their user's sociocognitive needs" (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995: 4, emphasis given). Although the present study is synchronic, it may also be interesting to see the change in trends of using communication strategies depending on the different periods during which the texts were written and thereby different management techniques.

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