

Chapter 5

Findings and Discussion: Theme in Workplace English Texts

The core research questions of the present study were outlined and discussed in detail in Chapter Three. At the most general level the research addresses the question:

1) What function does Theme perform in written workplace texts?

After an initial analysis of the data, subsequent and more focused questions were developed. These more specific questions were theoretically oriented and focused primarily on identifying the boundary between Theme and Rheme, and the issues arising from decisions in this respect. A discussion of these questions, providing the theoretical grounding for the study, is presented in Chapter Three. A detailed account of the methodology for investigating the questions and the procedures for analysing the data is presented in Chapter Four. In this chapter, the findings of the analyses of the data are provided and discussed.

As described in Chapter Three, within the unit of Theme, a distinction is made between textual, interpersonal and Subject/Theme. The most common (unmarked) order for these three types of Themes in a clause is textual[^]interpersonal[^]topical; the presentation of findings will follow this order. The fourth category of Theme discussed is extended Theme and the discussion is subdivided into extended Themes realised by a Circumstantial Adjunct and extended Themes realised by a hypotactic enhancing clause.

The findings related to textual and interpersonal Themes are reviewed in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 respectively. Topical Theme and particularly findings related to the choice of nominal groups realising Subject/Theme are examined in Section 5.3. Other topical Themes realised as part of an extended Theme, including Circumstantial Adjuncts and hypotactic enhancing clauses, are discussed in Section 5.4. A more qualitative approach where the discussion of the quantitative findings are framed in a qualitative manner by referring to the linguistic choices and meanings construed in three texts selected from the corpus is presented in Section 5.5. These sample texts provide a framework for the discussion of the findings, which are responding to the following research questions:

- 2) What are the similarities and differences in thematic choices in the memos, letters and reports?
- 3) How does extended Theme function in the texts?
- 4) What evidence is there that the choice of Theme is genre-related?

- 5) What linguistic resources are used to realise and construe interpersonal realisations through choice of Theme?

Concluding remarks related to the choice of Theme in the corpus texts are offered in Section 5.7. Throughout this chapter, the findings compare the lexico-grammatical features found in the Theme of the three text types, highlighting the way in which writers construe their position, viewpoint and the nature of their world of work through their choice of Theme.

5.1 Findings: Textual Themes

This section presents the findings related to the realisations of textual Theme in Conjunctive Adjuncts and conjunctions in the corpus letters, memos and reports. While a textual Theme is any combination of Conjunctive Adjunct, conjunction and/or relative (as pointed out in Section 3.4.1), Conjunctive Adjuncts and conjunctions are particularly significant as Theme since they are an important means for expressing logical links between the ideational content of the messages in a text and thereby helping the reader understand the text. In fact, we may say that they are crucial in the successful expression of meaning, and Martin and Rose (forthcoming) even argue that they are so important to the meaning that a discourse semantic system is needed for conjunctions. Thompson and Zhou (2000) argue that conjunctions are also inherently interpersonal as they explicitly express an opinion in relation to a previously stated proposition. Textual Themes such as *however*, *but*, *in addition* and *and* at the start of α clauses either tell the reader (or listener) that this message is contrary to the previous message, or that its meaning is additional. Thus, as suggested by Thompson and Zhou (2000), textual Themes provide both logical links between clauses and interpersonal assistance to help the reader interpret the meaning of the message.

Textual Themes are found in 311 (20.9%) of the 1,486 of the α clauses in the corpus. (A complete list of all textual Themes found in α clauses in the corpus can be found in Appendix IV.) There is little difference in the frequency of occurrence of textual Themes in the three text types, ranging from 19.3% in reports, to 23.4% in letters, and 22.0% in memos, as shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1 Frequency of occurrence of textual Themes by text type within the corpus

	Memo (<i>n</i> =504)	Letter (<i>n</i> =248)	Report (<i>n</i> =734)	Total (<i>n</i> =1,486)
Textual Themes	111 (22.0%)	58 (23.4%)	142 (19.3%)	311 (20.9%)

The data in this table and all subsequent tabulations stem from the same corpus. The data are based on a sample of authentic texts collected as part of the EWM and CPW projects (Davies and Forey, 1996; Nunan et al., 1996)

Based on the findings in Table 5.1, it seems as though there is a distinct uniformity in the frequency of the textual Theme even when compared to the differences in the number of α clauses in the three text types. Two textual Themes, *and* and *however*, occurred far more frequently than any other textual Theme. The conjunction *and* occurred 132 times (including *and* in the combinations *and also*, *and that*, etc., accounting for 42.4 % of all textual Themes realised by either a conjunction or a Conjunctive Adjunct) and the Conjunctive Adjunct *however* (including *however that*) and *but* occurred 34 and 29 times respectively (accounting for a total of 11.3% and 9.3% of all textual Themes realised by either a conjunction or a Conjunctive Adjunct).

The most interesting finding concerns the frequency of the semantic type to which a Conjunctive Adjunct or conjunction realising a textual Theme belongs. Adopting Halliday's (1994:49) categorisation of Conjunctive Adjuncts, as illustrated in Table 5.2, they have been divided into three groups (elaboration, extension and enhancement) and sub-divided into 14 semantic types. Conjunctions of similar meaning have been grouped together with Conjunctive Adjuncts, and their frequency is compared against the different types, as shown in Table 5.2.

The findings shown in Table 5.2 illustrate that the most common function of textual Themes is to signal an additive relationship, where the textual Theme is used to link a previous message with additional information. This frequently occurs in a text to link two paratactic clauses. Additive textual Themes occurred 47.6% (148 occurrences) of the time, realised by *and* (122 occurrences of only *and*, plus 10 other occurrences of *and also*, *and that*, *and then*, *and therefore*), *also* (8 occurrences), *in addition* (3 occurrences), *furthermore* (3 occurrences), and *on top of that* (1 occurrence).

Table 5.2 Frequency of occurrence of semantic types of Conjunctive Adjunct & conjunction realising a textual Theme

Type	No	%	Realisations in the corpus
I	appositive	20 (6.4%)	for example, that is, i.e.
	corrective	11 (3.5%)	or, nor
	dismissive	4 (1.3%)	notwithstanding the above, neither
	summative	6 (1.9%)	in short, thus
	verifactive	2 (0.6%)	in fact
II	additive	148 (47.6%)	and, and also, and that, and then, and therefore, also, in addition, furthermore, on top of that
	adversative	65 (20.9%)	however, but, though, conversely
	variative	2 (0.6%)	instead, alternatively
III	temporal	12 (3.9%)	firstly, first, finally, currently, in the meantime, since
	comparative	0 (0.0%)	whether, whereas, whether or not
	causal	28 (9.0%)	therefore, as a result, accordingly, hence, so, so that
	conditional	3 (1.0%)	as, otherwise
	concessive	3 (1.0%)	nevertheless, although, even so
	respective	7 (2.3%)	in the former, in that event, in the latter, in this respect
Total	311	100%	

(The percentages here are taken from $n=311$, the number of Conjunctive Adjuncts and conjunctions)

The second most frequent conjunction or Conjunctive Adjunct is an adversative relationship between clauses, with the textual Theme introducing a contrary point of view to that previously presented. Of the 65 instances of adversative textual Themes in the corpus, constituting 20.9% of all textual Themes, *however* (34 occurrences), *but* (29 occurrences) and *conversely* (1 occurrence) are the realisations of adversative textual Themes. Overall, the Type II semantic group of textual Themes, which includes additives, adversatives and variatives, is used to realise extension in 69.1% (215 occurrences) of all textual Themes, far outnumbering textual Themes realising Type I, enhancement (43 occurrences), and Type III, elaboration (53 occurrences). Enhancement and elaboration are realised by elements other than a textual Theme in the α clauses. This helps to explain the high frequency of occurrence of marked Theme realised by a hypotactic enhancing clause.

According to Field and Mee Oi (1992:22), the Conjunctive Adjuncts *and* and *however* are commonly found in the EAP writing of native and non-native English speakers, and adversatives tend to be used more frequently by native English speakers than non-native English speakers. Field and Mee Oi (1992) analysed a total of 96 scripts, 29 from Australian native English-speaking students and 67 from three different schools in Hong Kong. Moreover, Green et al. (2000:107) found that additive and causal conjunctions were more frequent than adversative conjunctions in a corpus of 600,000 words from non-native English-speaking freshmen students' academic writing, compared to a similar corpus of native English speakers' expository writing. The native English speakers' corpus of

600,000 words comprised three different corpora, LOB, BROWN and Cambridge Syndicate Examination corpus (Green et al., 2000:104). Green et al. only show the output of non-native English speakers' textual Themes (they use the term "thematized logical connectors" (Green et al., 2000:107)), which show that *and*, *also*, *because* and *therefore* were the most frequent textual Themes. The Conjunctive Adjunct *and* was the most popular in the present corpus and supports Green et al.'s findings. However, the use of the Conjunctive Adjunct *however* raises some interesting points. The Conjunctive Adjunct *however* was not even ranked in the top 26 of the textual Themes in Green et al.'s investigation. It could tentatively be suggested that there is a distinct difference in the textual Theme choices in workplace texts compared to academic writing. Another tentative link could be drawn between the native English speakers in Field and Mee Oi's (1992) study and the writers in the present study, who used adversative textual Themes more frequently than other textual Themes, regardless of text type.

5.2 Findings: Interpersonal Themes

Interpersonal Themes in written texts (that is, primarily monologic texts) are largely realised by Modal Adjuncts in thematic position (Halliday, 1994:338), whereas in spoken texts interpersonal Themes are commonly realised by Vocatives and markers of the mood of the clause, i.e. the Finite of the verb group and the elements fronted in interrogatives (*wh*-items, *do*, *be* and *have*). (A description of Modal Adjuncts is given in Section 3.4.1.) Halliday distinguishes between two types of Modal Adjunct, namely Comment Adjuncts and Mood Adjuncts. A Comment Adjunct provides "an attitude towards or comment on the exchange itself or the information being exchanged", while a Mood Adjunct "construes meanings closely related to those of the Finite" (Martin et al., 1997:63). However, the findings of the present study show that there is a distinct lack of Modal Adjuncts in the corpus texts.

Modal Adjuncts were found to realise interpersonal Theme in only 70 α clauses in the corpus of 1,486 α clauses, meaning that only 4.7% of all α clauses have an interpersonal Theme realised by a Modal Adjunct. There are seven Mood and 63 Comment Adjuncts found as Theme in the corpus, as shown in Table 5.3. This low frequency of occurrence compares with 20.9% (311 occurrences) of Conjunctive Adjuncts and conjunctions realising a textual Theme. However, despite their low frequency of occurrence, Modal Adjuncts are considered to be potentially important, as they are an explicit way for writers

to express their viewpoint. They were thus further analysed in terms of the distinction made by Halliday (1994:49) between Mood and Comment Adjuncts.

These two sub-types of Adjunct are discussed as ‘disjuncts’ by Quirk et al. (1985) and Thompson and Zhou (2000). Quirk et al. (1985), who work outside the SFL model, define disjuncts as a means for the writer to comment on the accompanying clause, through the use of *unfortunately* and *clearly*, for example. Thompson and Zhou (2000) argue that not only do disjuncts express interpersonal meaning but these items also share a role in signalling ideational meaning and that they thus function very similarly to Conjunctive Adjuncts. Modal Adjuncts found in the data are considered to include all the lexical items identified by Thompson and Zhou (2000) as disjuncts. Following Thompson and Zhou (2000), Modal Adjuncts are seen to perform two roles within a text: presenting the interpersonal viewpoint of the writer and signalling the intended meaning. In addition, as they are found in the Theme, they also play a textual role. The writer chooses to thematise these grammatical items thus giving ‘special status’ to the Modal Adjunct.

The Modal Adjuncts were assigned to categories following Halliday’s semantic types. As shown in Table 5.3, of the four different Mood Adjuncts ‘typicality’, ‘obviousness’, ‘probability’ and ‘usuality’, suggested by Halliday (1994:49), only ‘typicality’ and ‘obviousness’ are represented in the corpus.

Table 5.3 Frequency of occurrence of semantic types of Modal Adjunct within the corpus

	Memos	Letters	Reports	Total	
Mood Adjunct					
typicality	2	1	1	4	(5.7%)
obviousness	2	-	1	3	(4.3%)
probability	-	-	-	-	-
usuality	-	-	-	-	-
Comment Adjunct					
opinion	2	1	-	3	(4.3%)
admission	-	-	-	-	-
persuasion	1	-	-	1	(1.4%)
entreaty	34	14	-	48	(68.6%)
presumption	-	-	-	-	-
desirability	2	1	2	5	(7.1%)
reservation	-	-	-	-	-
validation	1	-	1	2	(2.9%)
evaluation	1	-	3	4	(5.7%)
prediction	-	-	-	-	-
Total	45 (64.3%)	17 (24.3%)	8 (11.4%)	70	(100%)

(The percentages here are based on the number of Modal Adjuncts and not text type.)
(Modal Adjuncts, after Halliday, 1994:49, Table 3(3))

Generally, in the present corpus Modal Adjuncts are realised very infrequently, and when they are realised they construe meanings of ‘typicality’ and ‘obviousness’. There are only 4 (5.7%) realisations of typicality (i.e. *generally* and *originally*) and 3 (4.3%) of obviousness (i.e. *of course* and *clearly*).

Moreover, Mood Adjuncts are never used to talk about what is probable or usual. The absence of such Mood Adjuncts is a significant finding, as this means that perhaps other features are being used to express ‘probability’ or ‘usuality’, if in fact there are occasions where such interpersonal meanings are expressed.

There are nearly nine times as many Comment Adjuncts as there are Mood Adjuncts. However, Comment Adjuncts are still extremely limited in the data, with only 63 occurrences (4.2%) in the 1,486 α clauses. Comment Adjuncts such as ‘opinion’ (3 occurrences), i.e. *in my view*, *in my opinion*, ‘persuasion’ (1 occurrence), i.e. *very seriously*, ‘desirability’ (5 occurrences), i.e. *regrettably*, *unfortunately*, *fortunately*, validation (1 occurrence), i.e. *in general*, and ‘evaluation’ (4 occurrences), i.e. *more importantly*, are found in limited numbers in the present corpus. By far the most common realisation of a Comment Adjunct is ‘entreaty’. In the corpus, 68.6% of all Modal Adjuncts are realisations of ‘entreaty’. These realisations are construed by the Modal Adjuncts *please* and *kindly*, *I shall be grateful if* (the rationale for labelling this a Modal Adjunct is given in Section 4.4.5). By far the most frequent entreaty Adjunct was *please* with 40 occurrences or 83.3% of all entreaty Modal Adjuncts.

The entreaty Adjunct *please* was discussed in detail by informants who offered their interpretation of two memos (Section 8.1). The use of *please* was interpreted interpersonally in various ways: in a positive manner, i.e. as a polite request; in a negative manner, i.e. as a display of sarcasm; and in a formulaic manner having no real interpersonal content. Such interpretations of the term *please* would be difficult to discern unless the readers were asked for their interpretation. It is therefore suggested that *please* may not necessarily reflect its literal meaning nor enhance interpersonal relationships; in some instances *please* even construes negative interpersonal meanings. In other contexts, where used formulaically, it may be interpreted as an *empty* lexical item.

It is worth noting that entreaty Comment Adjuncts were not realised at all in the Theme of α clauses in reports. This finding is to be expected in a text type that is intended to be objective and mainly concerned with presenting ideational features. It suggests that the

writer of the report does not have the same need to include entreaty Modal Adjuncts in the manner usually adopted in memos or letters.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 5.3, among the 10 different categories of Comment Adjunct, there were no examples of Comment Adjuncts of ‘admission’, e.g. *to be honest, frankly*; ‘presumption’, e.g. *evidently, apparently*; ‘reservation’, e.g. *at first, tentatively*; and ‘prediction’, e.g. *surprisingly, as expected*. From the 14 different semantic types of Mood Adjunct, 6 (42.9%) are not realised at all in the 1,486 α clauses. This is a significant observation as it means that either such meanings are being realised by different linguistic resources or that they are not being realised at all in the Theme of these α clauses.

To summarise, Modal Adjuncts in Theme position were very limited in number (70 or 4.7%) and semantic type. The general absence of Modal Adjuncts suggests that either the writer is not prepared to explicitly express an interpersonal viewpoint through such choices or that other features are used to express the writer’s viewpoint in a more implicit manner. The findings suggest that features such as extended Theme and the choice of the Subject/Theme are key in construing interpersonal meaning within the Theme of the α clause. Extended Theme and its importance in the construal of interpersonal meaning is outlined below.

5.3 Findings: Subject/Theme

5.3.1 Unmarked Themes

Halliday states that the realisation of Theme by a Subject (simple Theme), or a Subject plus an interpersonal and/or textual Theme (multiple Theme) is classified as an unmarked Theme choice. As would be expected, the highest frequency of occurrence of Theme choices in the present corpus were unmarked Themes, and the majority of these were simple Themes.

As pointed out in Section 3.4.3, one type of topical Theme in the present study is identified as the Subject/Theme, the Subject of the α clause. If other topical Themes precede the Subject of the α clauses they are classified and referred to as marked Theme. They construe ideational meaning but are recognised as functioning to create a ‘marked meaning’, and together with the Subject/Theme constitute an extended Theme. As suggested by Martin and Rose (forthcoming), the choice of Subject/Theme is pertinent

because the writer may include evaluation within their choice of Subject. The choices for Subject/Theme are outlined in detail below.

5.3.2 Categories and identification of Subject/Themes

Every clause has a Subject/Theme even if it is an ellipsed Subject/Theme. In the present study, the initial analysis of the data indicated the need to establish both lexicogrammatical and semantic categories to identify the various types of Subject/Theme construed in the texts. The analytical system adopted for the purpose of analysing the types of Subject/Theme which emerged from the data is outlined in Sections 3.4.3 and 4.4.4. As noted previously in Section 4.4.8, the six semantic categories identified together with exemplification are:

- a) nominal groups, e.g. *the landlord, the specific assistance, the issue of off-air recording and housing managing video collections*. In order to simplify the discussion, all future references to lexical nominal groups will be to ‘nominal groups’ and although personal pronouns are also a nominal group they will be referred to as a separate category.
- b) personal pronouns, e.g. *I, you, we, he*
- c) ellipsed Subjects, e.g. *you* in [*will you*] (*See appendix 2*).
- d) referential items; as noted previously, refer to pronouns and demonstratives which are used with anaphoric or cataphoric reference, e.g. *it, this, that* (cf. Halliday, 1994:314)
- e) *wh*-questions, e.g. *how* and *what* in: *How can we best co-ordinate...? What are the expectations among project managers ...?*
- f) existential *there*; *there* is classified as a ‘pass’ option, as discussed in detail in Section 3.4.4.

The different types of Subject/Themes were counted, and the results are shown in Table 5.4:

Table 5.4 Frequency of occurrence of Subject/Theme in nominal groups by text type

	Memo (n=504)	Letter (n=248)	Report (n=734)	Total (n=1,486)
nominal groups	208 (41.3%)	131 (52.8%)	539 (73.4%)	878 (59.1%)
personal pronouns	152 (30.2%)	61 (24.6%)	33 (4.5%)	246 (16.6%)
ellipsed Subject	72 (14.3%)	38 (15.3%)	69 (9.4%)	179 (12.0%)
referential item	46 (9.1%)	10 (4.0%)	57 (7.8%)	113 (7.6%)
existential	19 (3.8%)	7 (2.8%)	31 (4.2%)	57 (3.8%)
wh-questions	7 (1.4%)	1 (0.4%)	5 (0.7%)	13 (0.9%)
Total	504 (100%)	248 (100%)	734 (100%)	1,486 (100%)

The most frequent choice for Subject/Theme across all text types was the nominal group (59.1%). This high frequency and the wide variation in the choice of nominal group led to a more detailed investigation of this particular type of Theme, discussed in Sections 5.3.5 and 5.3.6. The findings relate to the other five categories: personal pronouns, referential item, ellipsed Subjects, existential *there* and *wh*-questions are presented in brief.

5.3.4 The types of Subject/Theme found in the corpus

a) Personal pronouns

When analysing the personal pronouns there may be some confusion over the use of the personal pronoun *you*, as this could refer to *you* the individual reader or *you* a group of readers. A return to the text was necessary to establish the context in which the text was produced. For example, in Memo 13, clause 2, when the writer states *you should not delegate responsibility of your time sheets to somebody else*, it is understood from the context that the writer is talking to the *you*, ‘a group of people’. However, each recipient is also addressed to as *you* the individual reader. In some cases, as in Memo 13, the *you* is referring to more than one reader. The memo is addressed to a number of recipients and there are other textual clues in the memo to help the analyst reach this assessment. However, in Letter 4, clause complex 3, *May I suggest that you keep an eye out for a weekly publication called “Environmental Health News”*, it is clear that the *you* is one particular person as the letter is addressed to an individual and the writer, in an earlier Rheme, made a personal reference to *no suitable employment opportunities for you*, which is plainly a reference to an individual seeking employment. The personal pronoun *we* was

taken to always refer to more than one participant, as it was not possible to establish otherwise from the context.

As would be expected, personal pronouns were used far more frequently in memos and letters, 30.2% and 24.6%, respectively, compared with the personal pronouns found in reports (4.5%). In general, all personal pronouns were directly linked to ‘human participants’, for example:

Example 5.1

I intend to send the following note round tomorrow morning unless I hear otherwise from you [...] You might want to do the same for Cardiff.

Memo 1, clause complex 1 and clause 5

In Memo 1, clause complex 1, the *I* is the writer, a manager of one office, and in clause 5 the *you* is the reader, a manager in the Cardiff office.

The writer, in choosing a personal pronoun, has chosen a Theme which functions explicitly to construe an interpersonal relationship between the writer and intended reader. Ivanič and Simpson (1992) point out some of the consequences of such choices within an EAP context. They suggest that it is the convention in academic genres to avoid using personal pronouns. They argue that the use of the personal pronoun *I* in an academic essay is far more honest than using other implicit methods which hide the writer’s viewpoint. Moreover, Iedema (1995, 1997, 2000) suggests that writer viewpoint has become depersonalised and implicit in workplace texts. This notion of implicitness and honesty of writer viewpoint is something explored in depth in the thematic choices of the corpus. The findings show that personal pronouns are limited in the corpus. It is possible to suggest that generally the writer’s viewpoint remains present but is hidden through more objectified and implicit choices. Personal pronouns are more frequently found in memos and letters and there is a marked difference in the frequency of occurrence of personal pronouns in these two text types compared to reports.

To sum up, it appears that the *you* realised in the business texts identifies a particular readership, even if it is a multiple readership; those who the text is addressing are on the whole known to the writer. This is quite different to instantiations where the *you* is referring to a general readership, for example in a newspaper article, where *you* could be used to refer to the general public, e.g. *you can catch a cold in aeroplanes*.

b) Referential items

In memos and reports, the use of referential items reflected similar proportions of all clauses: 9.1% and 7.8% respectively. Referential items construe meaning through a cataphoric or anaphoric reference, for example:

Example 5.2

The equipment [[being used for off-air recording]] could be improved.
This could save staff time.

Report 3, clauses 64 & 65

In this example, the Theme of the second clause *this* is an anaphoric demonstrative referring to the whole of the process of *improving the equipment*, a type of text reference. The anaphoric pronoun is simply referring to previous information which is recoverable from the text.

Referential items did not occur as frequently in letters (4.0%) as in memos and reports. The reason for this may be that letters were generally far shorter than memos. On average there were 16.8, 11.3 and 73.4 independent clauses in memos, letters and reports respectively.

c) Ellipsed Subjects

In ellipsis, the “Subject, and often also the finite verb, is ‘understood’ from the context” (Halliday, 1994:63). Ellipsis is inherently interpersonal as the ellipsed Subject/Theme is “part of the listener/reader’s expectations” (Martin and Rose, forthcoming). In imperative clauses the ellipsed Subject/Theme is *you* the reader, and *you* are involved in some form of action or request. In imperative clauses the Subject and Finite are frequently ellipsed, as shown in Example 5.3:

Example 5.3

If you can see a better way or advise improvements	please	[you]	feel free to speak to me or Pete
marked Theme	interpersonal Theme	Subject/Theme	Rheme

Memo 4, clause complex 50

In Example 5.3 the personal pronoun *you* has been ellipsed. The ellipsed Subject/Theme *you* is being asked to perform some action – to *feel free to speak to me or Pete*, if they have any *advice*, etc.

Table 5.5 Frequency of occurrence of ellipsed Subject/Themes by text type

	Memo (n=504)	Letter (n=248)	Report (n=734)	Total (n=1,486)
imperative	42 (8.3%)	17 (6.9%)	7 (1.0%)	66 (4.4%)
declarative	30 (6.0%)	21 (8.5%)	62 (8.4%)	113 (7.6%)
total	72 (14.3%)	38 (15.3%)	69 (9.4%)	179 (12.0%)

The findings in Table 5.5 show that ellipsis occurred 179 times (12.0%) throughout the corpus. Table 5.5 also shows that in memos, ellipsis tended to occur more frequently in imperative clauses compared to declarative and interrogative clauses. However, it should be noted that a major distinction is that in imperative clauses the ellipsis is always an exophoric *you*, whereas in declarative clauses the ellipsed item could be a nominal group, or personal pronoun and is generally anaphoric.

The finding that ellipsis is more frequent in imperative clauses in memos and letters suggests that in memos and letters ellipsis is associated with requests for action, or giving an order, as shown in Example 5.3, *please feel free to speak to* (Memo 4, complex 50).

In reports, ellipsed Subject/Themes were more frequent in declarative α clauses (56 occurrences) than in imperative α clauses (7 occurrences). Example 5.4 presents an illustration of an ellipsed Subject/Theme in a declarative clause. The ellipsed items are shown by the use of square brackets, e.g. [*the adoption of these procedures*].

Example 5.4

The adoption of these procedures is part of our accreditation to BS 5750 and [the adoption of these procedures] must be maintained if we are to make the right product at the right time.

Memo 4, clause complex 3 and clause complex 4

As shown in Example 5.4, the Theme of clause complex 4 is the same as in the previous clause. There is one Theme and two branches from that Theme. The clause may be analysed as a whole structure, with one Theme or as two paratactic clauses with two Themes. In the present study the procedure followed is to analyse paratactic clauses as independent structures. In addition, ellipsis is commonly used in memos and letters to express thanks, for example:

Example 5.5

[I] Thank you for your co-operation.

Memo 4, clause 57

To summarise, ellipsis functions to construe interpersonal meanings regardless of whether it is realised in declarative, imperative or interrogative clauses.

d) Existential *there*

As shown in Table 5.4, for all three text types existential *there* as the Subject/Theme of the main clause was not a frequent choice. In the whole corpus only 57 (3.8%) Subject/Themes were existential *there*. In memos, letters and reports there were roughly equal proportions of realisations, 3.8%, 2.8% and 4.2%, respectively. As pointed out earlier in Section 3.4.4, *there* is viewed as a ‘pass’ option by the writer (Berry, 1995:66) as the Existent which the existential *there* is pointing to appears later in the clause. Due to the limited number of realisations and their function as a ‘pass option’, a more detailed analysis of existential Themes is not pursued further in the present study.

e) *Wh*-Subject/Theme

In all three text types, *wh*-Subject/Themes occurred on average in less than 1% (0.9%) of all α clauses, with only 13 realisations. When looking at the overall figures it is useful to keep in mind that seven of the *wh*-Subject/Themes occurred in one particular memo, Memo 6. *Wh*-interrogatives are clearly an indication that the writer is manipulating interaction. However, as interrogatives in thematic position are statistically insignificant they are not discussed further in the present study.

5.3.5 The types of nominal group realising Subject/Theme

In the data, nominal groups are the most frequently occurring and the most varied set of Subject/Theme. As shown in Table 5.4, 59.2% of all Subject/Themes were nominal groups. Based on the findings in Table 5.4, 73.6% (540 occurrences) of all Subject/Themes in reports are nominal groups. Reports tended to have a higher proportion of nominal groups as Subject/Theme compared with the proportion of the same feature found in memos (41.5%) and letters (52.8%). The proportion of personal pronouns realising the Subject/Theme in memos (30.6%), letters (24.6%) and reports (4.5%) was not as frequent as the nominal groups realised in these texts. Perhaps in reports the choice of Theme relies far more heavily on the topic and content of the report rather than reference to the writer (*I*,

we, Company X, etc.) and the intended reader (*you, etc.*) of the text. Nominal groups are therefore very influential as a point of departure in all text types and especially in reports.

The type of nominal group appearing in the text was extremely field dependent (field as part of register is discussed in Section 2.7). For example, in the case of Letter 19, which realises the field of property and the purchasing of property, the nominal groups for the Subject/Themes were related to this particular field, e.g. *both vendors and purchasers, the [[above mentioned]] properties, the properties, the purchase [[of above mentioned properties]]*; or as in Memo 13 (discussed below in Sections 7.2.3, 8.1 and 8.2), which is related to the completion of accurate time sheets, the Subject/Themes were: *time sheets, all columns and rows [of the time sheets], any incorrect or incomplete time sheets, etc.* However, the findings show that although there is an extensive range of nominal groups in memos, letters and reports, it is possible to suggest that a pattern does exist in the choice of the nominal group. As nominal groups are the most frequently occurring type of Subject/Theme and function as an influential and integral part of the Theme choice by embodying the main ideational content of the Theme, a more detailed investigation was conducted.

As noted in Section 4.4.8, the final categories were (1) ‘human participants’, (2) ‘material entities’ and (3) ‘concepts’ (the collated data can be found in Appendix V), and these categories were outlined in Section 4.4.9. To restate, the categories and subcategories are as follows:

- 1) Human Participant
 - i. *Human participant: personal reference*
 - ii. *Human participant: institutional reference*
- 2) Material Entities
 - i. *Products*
 - ii. *Documents*
 - iii. *Location: Place*
 - iv. *Location: Time*
 - v. *Action*
- 3) Concepts

5.3.6 Nominal groups chosen as Subject/Theme

Table 5.6 illustrates the frequency of occurrence for each of the categories of nominal group. The findings are discussed below.

Table 5.6 Frequency of occurrence of nominal groups as Subject/Theme

	Memo (n=504)	Letter (n=248)	Report (n=734)	Total (n=1,486)
Human Participants				
Personal reference	12	1	0	13
Institutional reference	27	44	143	214
Sub total	39 (7.7%)	45 (18.1%)	143 (19.5%)	227 (15.3%)
Material entities				
Product	69	39	174	282
Document	35	9	23	67
Location: Place	4	11	35	50
Location: Time	9	1	2	12
Action	23	4	29	56
Sub total	140 (27.8%)	64 (25.8%)	263 (35.8%)	467 (31.4%)
Concepts	29 (5.8%)	22 (8.9%)	133 (18.1%)	184 (12.4%)
Total	208 (41.3%)	131 (52.8%)	539 (73.4%)	878 (59.1%)

1) Human participants

In memos, letters and reports there were few realisations of personal references, 12, 1 and 0 occurrences respectively. Proportionally more of the human participant references in the letters were ‘institutional references’; only once in a letter is a ‘personal reference’ to someone’s name realised, as shown in Table 5.6. In the letters, the institutional references tended to concern the people either directly involved, i.e. the writer and the recipient (e.g. *the company*), or the topic of the letter (e.g. *the FA*), where the letter is a response to a complaint to the government about the Football Association (FA). However, in reports, ‘institutional references’ referring to human participants were external to the dialogue. The function of these types of human references was to identify an individual, external to the writer or recipient, who will be the topic of the discussion. In reports, 19.5% of the Subject/Themes were realised as ‘human participants’ at an institutional level.

Unlike reports, where there were no ‘personal references’, in memos people were referred to by name, as illustrated by Example 5.6:

Example 5.6

Andy Phillips, the Building Facility Manager, has agreed to be the BIC until the building closure. [...] It has been emphasised that Andy Phillips (0171 569 5214) must be the initial point of contact and then the BSCC. Andy is planning for a fire drill during the next few weeks.

Memo 11C, clause 5, clause complex 9 and clause 10

In Example 5.6, there are three different ‘personal references’ Subject/Themes. In clause complex 5, *Andy Phillips, the Building Facility Manager* is introduced by the individual’s given and family names and by job title. In clause complex 9, his name and telephone number are included, and then in clause 10 the writer moves to a more informal style and refers to *Andy* by his first name only. The contextual factors undoubtedly influence linguistic choices, for example memos are generally internal texts which are sent and received within an organisation and letters generally are sent to clients outside of the organisation. In addition, perhaps in memos, ‘personal references’ are used because certain people are being named as people to contact or to carry out some form of action. Naming someone saves confusion as the directive or instruction is referring to a named party who should carry out the action. The writer knows to whom the memo will be addressed and is able to refer to the participant(s) involved. The participant(s) receiving the memo may all know each other and the use of proper nouns identifies individuals within a group. In addition, it may also help develop a better relationship with the reader if the memo is personalised.

2) Material entities

This was by far the most frequent realisation of a nominal group as a Subject/Theme was ‘material entities’ (31.4%). This is quite a difference when compared to ‘human participants’, 15.3%, and ‘concepts’, 12.4%. The choice of ‘material entities’ was quite varied and five different groups were identified: products, documents, location: place, location: time and action.

- i. *Products* - In the present study, nominal groups referring to ‘products’ were more numerous in reports than in memos or letters. In reports, 263 (35.8%) of all thematic choices of Subject/Theme were ‘material entities’. Of these Subject/Theme choices 173 realisations were of a ‘product’ as a nominal group (32.3% of all nominal groups in reports). Therefore, a large percentage of all Subject/Themes in reports realise a ‘product’ and the point of departure for many of the α clauses in the reports is therefore concrete. By contrast, there were fewer nominal group ‘products’ in letters (39 occurrences) and in memos (69 occurrences). The social context influencing the construction of the texts will play a role in the choices of Subject/Theme. As noted above, memos are generally internal as opposed to letters and to some extent reports which are frequently intended for readers outside of the organisation. Therefore, in reports, for instance, the focus is not on staff but on the product which is the topic of

discussion in the report. This perhaps illustrates the possibility that although the concrete ‘product’ is important, it is not the only choice for the Theme of the α clauses.

- ii. *Documents* - In memos, letters and reports there were 35 (16.8%), 9 (6.8%) and 23 (4.3%) realisations of nominal groups referring to documents, respectively. Such realisations function according to Devitt (1991), to construct a dialogue or intertextuality with other texts. She points out that all the texts, in her study of accounting texts, “refer to one another, draw from one another, create the purpose for one another” (Devitt, 1991:336). For example, in a memo or a letter there are a number of intertextual references to other documents or issues which are part of the history of the text. The findings support Devitt (1991) as memos and letters are seen to be dialogic: they request action or information; a response to the request is frequently required; and a reference to a previous or related document may help substantiate the request. This may help to understand the higher proportion of realisations of this feature in memos and letters compared to reports. In addition, as suggested by Iedema (1995), the reference to a previous document is a means of legitimising the directive of the text.
- iii. & iv. *Location: Place & Time* – Nominal groups referring to time were not numerous in memos (9 occurrences), letters (1 occurrence) or reports (2 occurrences). Location: place nominal groups were also very infrequent in memos (4 occurrences). However, in both letters (11 occurrences) and reports (35 occurrences), the frequency of occurrence was a little higher. To reiterate, this may be related to contextual factors such as memos being issued within a confined time and space where such nominal groups may not be required as the time frame and places of references may be jointly understood by readers. Moreover, this is perhaps an outworking of the subject matter of the particular texts found in the corpus. Three of the longer letters in the corpus, Letters 18, 19, and 20, were concerned with issues relating to property and were responsible for the number of location: place Subject/Themes. Five of the nominal groups that occurred in the entire corpus of reports were realised by a Subject/Theme of location: place. However, the majority of these location: place Subject/Themes (42.3%) were found in Report 7, which is a report written by the Hong Kong Housing Authority in relation to an audit review on the provision and utilisation of space in the head office. Based on the field of this report, a reader would expect to find nominal

groups of location: place. Reports 1, 3 and 9 are also closely related to a field where a building or space of some sort is commonly the topic for discussion. The fact that there appears to be a certain pattern in the type of location: place and time Themes would extend Davies's (1997) work in this area. Davies' findings relate to a mixed corpus of 14 texts and she suggests that location: place and time Themes are more likely to be found in gardening texts and other specific genres. The type of Subject/Theme can perhaps be used as an indicator of genre type.

- v. *Action* - Nominalisation reflecting 'action' was more common in memos (23 occurrences) and reports (29 occurrences) than it was in letters (4 occurrences). The findings from the data suggest that the nominalisation of 'actions' in the Subject/Theme in the memos is associated to some extent with commands and directives. Nominalisation is used to realise certain things that are expected to be done, whereas the reason for choosing an 'action' as the Subject/Theme in reports is because reports are dealing with synthesising actions which have taken place or suggesting future actions. Letters, by contrast, are related to responses to or requests for information, and there is far less need to use a nominalised 'action' as the Theme.

The findings show that the nominal group of 'action' offered the opportunity for the writer to express some form of evaluation. For example, *the entrance of experienced quality market players* (Report 6, clause 100), the action is realised by the phrase *the entrance*. The evaluation is construed in the form of post-modification where *of experienced quality market players* is used to indicate that the writer believes that there is a positive side to the *new players*. Or in another example, *the possibility of re-negotiating existing contracts* (Report 4, clause complex 79), the modal operator *possibility* is used to express a form of evaluation. In all instantiations of 'actions', the nominal group is "packaged" in a way, which constructs a particular view and a particular representation of an action in a manner that appears on the surface to be more objective and conclusive. Evaluative terminology additional to the lexical items referring to the action can emphasise the writer's viewpoint.

3) Concepts

The nominal group 'concepts' does not predominate in the proportion of occurrences. The present study argues that these 'concept' Themes perform an important function by enabling the writer to make references within the text to meaningful issues, and to capture

concisely some of the ideas, information and concepts which are pivotal to the intended message.

For example, in Example 5.7, there are three Themes that would be classified as ‘concepts’, these being *the most controversial changes*, *the proposed change* and *this issue* (all shown in bold type in the extract).

Example 5.7

Adjustments to implementation details

The most controversial changes have actually been in the area of fine-tuning details such as the denial of export refunds for pre-1994 foreign investment enterprises, the general reduction of VAT refund rates for exporters and the utilisation of input VAT in respect of 1994 opening stocks.

For the purpose of curbing duty evasion arrangements, there was a proposal that the importation of materials by certain export-orientated joint ventures would be dutiable in the first place at the time of import and then the duty collected would be refunded at the time of export. Such imports have been treated as bonded goods.

The proposed change would have put a lot of pressure on the cash flow for the running of such businesses. Fortunately **this issue** has been resolved satisfactorily.

Report 6, clause / clause complexes 45-50

The three nominal groups classified as ‘concepts’ all share the same characteristic, which is that in only a small number of words, through the use of nominalisation in the first two instantiations, they manage to condense a great deal of information. For example, the nominal group *the most controversial changes*, the choice of the adjective *most* signal a particular viewpoint on behalf of the writer. The writer is suggesting that one or more of the changes is particularly *controversial*. In this example, perhaps the writer is expressing the viewpoint of others, which is especially likely to be the case since, almost by definition, controversy requires multiple parties to dispute or debate particular points of view.

In the second of these Subject/Themes, *the proposed change*, the verb *to propose* has been converted to a participle and the changes are realised in a way that summarises the details found in the previous clause. The final Subject/Theme from this example is another method of ‘packaging’ a great deal of information in a small number of lexical items, where *this issue* includes a demonstrative reference. The term *this* is used as a reference to mean in full *this issue [of the proposed change]*. In addition, this Subject/Theme is preceded by a Modal Adjunct *fortunately* which directly represents the viewpoint of the author.

The complete analysis of Subject/Theme in this extract would be as follows:

Table 5.7 Analysis of Theme in Report 6, α clauses 45-50

	textual Theme	marked Theme	interpersonal Theme	Subject/Theme	
45				The most controversial changes	have actually been in the area of fine-tuning details such as the denial of export refunds for pre-1994 foreign investment enterprises, the general reduction of VAT refund rates for exporters and the utilisation of input VAT in respect of 1994 opening stocks.
46		For the purpose of curbing duty evasion arrangements,	there was a proposal that	the importation of materials by certain export orientated joint ventures	would be dutiable in the first place at the time of import
47	and then			the duty [[collected]]	would be refunded at the time of export.
48				Such imports	have been treated as bonded goods.
49				The proposed change	would have put a lot of pressure on the cash flow for the running of such businesses.
50			Fortunately	this issue	has been resolved satisfactorily.

The two Themes in this example which are not ‘concepts’ function in a different manner. In clause complex 47, the extended Theme is comprised of a Circumstantial Adjunct, *For the purpose of curbing duty evasion arrangements*, and a projecting existential Theme, *there was a proposal that*. The Circumstantial Adjunct is one of cause: reason, and it is establishing why a certain proposal was suggested. The use of the existential *there* as Theme in this instance is distancing the writer from making the proposal in the projecting clause *there was a proposal that* (projection is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six). In clause 48 *such imports* is a ‘product’ where the demonstrative *such* is summarising the detailed description of the type of *imports* referred to in the previous Themes and Rhemes.

To summarise, the ‘concept’ Subject/Themes in Table 5.7 move from a Subject/Themes of *controversial changes*, to one particular *proposed change*, to a more factual reference *this issue*, to New information in the Rheme revealing that everything has been *resolved*.

The writer at different points uses specific lexico-grammatical choices to construe their viewpoint or indeed the organisation's viewpoint, e.g. the use of the Modal Adjunct *fortunately*, and the use of *most controversial* to classify the changes. Projection and Circumstantial Adjunct in Theme position helps to legitimise the action which is being suggested. It could be argued that *the changes* are concrete phenomena. However, at no point in the Theme or in the text is the *change* or the *issue* specified in a clear and congruent manner. It is therefore suggested that the writer has chosen to use nominalisation and vague terminology to present a situation where information is presented in an 'expert' manner as Given information and the precise details have not been stated.

From a simple count of Subject/Themes it is easy to demonstrate that the most frequent form for Subject/Themes are nominal groups. However, a simple count tells very little about the way in which the Subject/Theme, or in this instance how the Subject/Theme as a nominal group, functions within the context of the text. A more qualitative interpretation of the findings is presented in the Discussion Section. The analysis to this point suggests that:

- different patterns in the choice of Subject/Theme are likely to be realised in memos, letters and reports
- 'material entities' are the most common choice for a nominal group realised as Subject/Theme
- the writer has the opportunity to construe their viewpoint in the choice of Subject/Theme and in particular through the choice of the nominal group
- 'concepts' as a category of nominal groups function to capture a great deal of information in a short space. They are perhaps characteristic of written genres found in workplace texts

Finally the analysis indicates that it is possible to recognise and identify the type of Subject/Theme realised in the three text types. It is thought that applying Martin's appraisal system (1997, 2000b) to a closer analysis of the choice of nominal group realising Subject/Theme would reveal evaluative judgement encoded in the choice of the nominal group.

In many instances, the Subject/Theme was not the only element which realised the Theme. To a limited extent a textual and/or interpersonal Theme, or a marked Theme, preceded the Subject/Theme. The following section, Section 5.4, discusses extended

Themes, which contains more than one topical (ideational) Theme. Many of these extended Themes appear to be implicitly marking a form of interpersonal meaning.

5.4 Findings: Extended Themes

The category of extended Theme, outlined in Section 3.5, is identified by combining Halliday's (1994) marked Theme and the Subject/Theme (Subject) of the main clause. Martin and Rose (forthcoming) also recognise Theme in the same manner since "the most common choice for the Theme of a clause is the Subject. Ideational meaning that comes before the Subject is referred to as **marked Theme**, and has a different discourse function from the ordinary Subject/Theme" (bold in orig.). A marked Theme is realised as Complement, Circumstantial Adjunct or a hypotactic enhancing clause occurring in initial position. The unmarked part of the Theme choice is realised by the Subject of the main clause plus any optional textual or interpersonal Theme which precedes the Subject. The extended Theme choices found in the data have been collated in Appendix III and VI. In these appendices, the marked part of the Theme is found in the left-hand column, and the unmarked Theme in the middle column followed by the Rheme.

In the present study, 489 occurrences (32.9%) of all Themes were extended Themes, which means that there were nearly one and a half times as many extended Themes as there were textual Themes (textual Themes occurred 311 (20.9%) times). Table 5.8 illustrates the types of extended Themes found in the corpus.

Table 5.8 Frequency of occurrence of extended Theme by text type

	Memo (<i>n</i> =504)	Letter (<i>n</i> =248)	Report (<i>n</i> =734)	Total (<i>n</i> =1,486)
Circumstantial Adjuncts	55 (10.9%)	20 (8.1%)	92 (12.5%)	167 (11.2%)
Hypotactic Enhancing Clauses	43 (8.5%)	35 (14.1%)	41 (5.6%)	119 (8.0%)
Projecting clauses	49 (9.7%)	42 (12.9%)	112 (15.3%)	203 (13.7%)
Total Number	147 (29.1%)	97 (39.1%)	245 (33.4%)	489 (32.9%)

The findings show that the two most frequent expressions of extended Theme took the form of projection and Circumstantial Adjuncts. As projection seems to incorporate interpersonal meaning, it is dealt with separately in Chapter Six. In the data there were only two examples of Complement as Theme and due to the limited number, no further discussion of Complement as marked Theme will be pursued. The following discussion focuses on

the choice of extended Themes realised by Circumstantial Adjuncts or hypotactic enhancing clauses in initial position plus the Subject of the main clause.

5.4.1 Circumstantial Adjuncts in initial position

There were 489 extended Themes in the corpus, representing 32.9% of all clauses in the three text types. Of these, 167 (34.2%, over one third of all extended Themes) were realised by Circumstantial Adjuncts in an initial position. In some instances an extended Theme incorporated more than one Circumstantial Adjunct. In the calculation of the number of extended Themes, each extended Theme was counted only once regardless of the number of Circumstantial Adjuncts present. For example, in Example 5.8 although there are two Circumstantial Adjuncts it constitutes one extended Theme.

Example 5.8

Further to our meeting on Friday morning,	regarding your Reuter Services	I	am pleased to enclose a quote for Reuter Financial Television
Circumstance: matter	Circumstantial Adjunct: matter	Subject/Theme	Rheme
extended Theme			

Letter 11, clause 1

In calculating the frequency of occurrence of extended Themes, if the extended Theme was a hypotactic enhancing clause or projecting clause which included a Circumstantial Adjunct, the extended Theme was only counted once as an extended Theme. In such instances, the clause complex was coded as either a hypotactic enhancing or projecting clause because the Circumstantial Adjunct was seen to construe ideational meaning as part of the hypotactic enhancing or projecting clause, as shown in Example 5.9:

Example 5.9

I noted however that	in other government departments,	this 10% additional space	was applicable only to cellular offices but not open-plan offices.
projecting clause	Circumstantial Adjunct location: place	Subject/Theme	Rheme
Extended Theme			

Report 7, clause complex 35

Example 5.9 is a clause complex where the extended Theme is realised by a projecting clause, Circumstantial Adjunct and the Subject/Theme. In the calculations Example 5.8 would be counted as having one extended Theme realised by three Circumstantial Adjuncts; similarly, Example 5.9 would also be counted as having one extended Theme

realised by a projecting clause, a textual Theme, *however*, and a Circumstantial Adjunct. However, when calculating the type and frequency of Circumstantial Adjuncts, each Circumstantial Adjunct was counted separately, e.g. Example 5.8 has one extended Theme, but two Circumstantial Adjuncts. This explains why the total number of Circumstantial Adjuncts in Tables 5.8 and 5.9 are different.

Davies (1994, 1997), as pointed out in Section 3.2.3, proposes three basic Contextual Frames, all of which were applicable to the data of the present study. The three types of Contextual Frames she introduces are interactive, organisational and topical. Davies adds that the choice of Contextual Frame as Theme is closely related to the genre, which she demonstrates with 14 extracts from different texts (see Section 3.5.1). It appears from the findings in the present study that there is a great deal of consistency in the choice of Theme in the workplace corpus. For example, in relation to the extended Theme choices in the present corpus where the writer selects a Circumstantial Adjunct as marked Theme, it appears that, on the whole, Circumstantial Adjuncts will be related to real world events. The Circumstantial Adjunct is establishing the background for what is to come, contextualising what has happened and/or reminding the reader of past events. The findings would, therefore, support Davies's view that the choices are driven by genre-specific motivations. The choice of Circumstantial Adjunct as marked Theme in most cases performed an 'informational' function, providing contextual information related to the time, the matter or the situation within which the latter information should be contextualised. Of the 169 Circumstantial Adjuncts marked Theme choices, none were organisational marked Themes.

It seems that the writers included in the workplace corpus were using options other than Circumstantial Adjuncts to realise interpersonal and organisational Themes. Table 5.9 shows the frequency of occurrence of Circumstantial Adjuncts construing the marked Theme choices. As shown in Table 5.8, a similar proportion of Circumstantial Adjuncts in the Theme occurred in all memos (8.1%), letters (10.9%) and reports (12.5%). An average of 11.4% of all the 1,486 α clauses incorporated a Circumstantial Adjunct as part of its Theme. The table below shows the types of Circumstantial Adjunct realised in the corpus and compares frequency of occurrence across text type and type of Circumstantial Adjunct.

Table 5.9 Frequency of occurrence of Circumstantial Adjuncts realising Theme by Circumstantial Adjunct type

Circumstantial Adjunct	Memo (n=55)	Letter (n=20)	Report (n=94)	Total (n=169)
Location				
- time	18	3	37	58 (34.3%)
- place	4	1	3	8 (4.7%)
Extent				
- time	1	1	8	10 (5.9%)
- space	-	-	-	- -
Manner				
- means	-	-	1	1 (0.6%)
- quality	7	1	8	16 (9.5%)
- comparison	-	-	-	-
Cause				
- reason	4	-	6	10 (5.9%)
- purpose	3	2	2	7 (4.1%)
- behalf	2	2	4	8 (4.7%)
Contingency				
- condition	6	1	5	12 (7.1%)
- concession	-	-	-	- -
- default	-	-	-	- -
Accompaniment				
- comitative	-	-	1	1 (0.6%)
- additive	4	-	-	4 (2.4%)
Role				
- guise	-	-	-	- -
- product	-	-	-	- -
Matter	3	8	13	24 (14.2%)
Angle	3	1	6	10 (5.9%)
Total	55 (32.5%)	20 (11.8%)	92 (54.4%)	169 (100%)

(The percentages here are based on the number of Circumstantial Adjuncts and not text type.)

The function of many of the Circumstantial Adjuncts in thematic position appears to be to focus the discussion on real-world entities. In doing this the writers tend to refer to previous events by selecting a Circumstantial Adjunct of location: time. These were the most common of the Circumstantial Adjuncts found in the data. Of the 169 Circumstantial Adjuncts identified as marked Theme, Circumstances of location: time comprise more than one third (34.3%), as shown in Table 5.9.

Examples of Circumstances of location: time are: *at that time, this year, on 14th July, currently, as at the balance sheet date, during this period*, etc. These Circumstantial Adjuncts seem to assist the reader by making a reference to information about these events which has been previously shared. Along with the Subject/Theme, they offer additional ideational information, contextualising and establishing what will follow in the rest of the clause or clause complex.

The second most frequently occurring Circumstantial Adjunct is *matter*. This occurs 24 times in the corpus (14.2% of all Circumstantial Adjuncts found in initial position). Again this realisation, like most of the Circumstantial Adjuncts chosen, is making reference to a real-world event which represents some shared knowledge between the writer and intended reader. As shown in Table 5.9, Circumstances of angle, of cause: reason and of quality are also instantiations where the writer chooses to select a Circumstantial Adjunct as part of the extended Theme. At this point it must be remembered that the present corpus consists of 1,486 α clauses, so the frequency of a particular Circumstance is still quite low when compared to the overall corpus. However, when focusing particularly on extended Theme and looking at the type of extended Theme realised in the texts, the type of Circumstantial Adjunct becomes relevant.

It is interesting to note that in the total corpus there were no Circumstantial Adjuncts of extent: space, manner: comparison, contingency: concession, contingency: default, role: guise or role: product found as part of an extended Theme (examples of each Circumstantial Adjunct are given in Table 3.4).

In letters especially, Circumstantial Adjuncts tended to appear as the macro Theme which introduced the letter. In five letters, a Circumstantial Adjunct of *matter* was found in a macro-Theme position (Martin, 1992a). These particular Circumstances were only found as part of the macro-Theme of three memos and two reports. However, what is interesting in the findings relates to the fact that often there was more than one Circumstantial Adjunct realising the macro-Theme, as shown in Example 5.10:

Example 5.10

Further to our meeting on Thursday,	regarding your Reuter Services	I	am pleased to send you a Client Order Form for the 7 position Dealing 2000 service.
Circumstance: matter	Circumstance: matter	Subject/Theme	Rheme
extended Theme			

Letter 9, clause complex 1

The implication of such Theme choices is that a tremendous amount of contextual information is provided before moving onto the Subject/Theme. As would be expected, the findings suggest that Circumstantial Adjuncts in an initial position tend to take on a highly ideational role. They function to introduce or remind the reader of relevant information and perhaps even shared information.

5.4.2 Hypotactic enhancing clauses in initial position

As discussed in detail in the previous chapter, a hypotactic clause cannot ‘stand alone’; it only makes sense when read with its accompanying independent clause. Placing a hypotactic clause in initial position is a ‘motivated’ Theme choice. The writer, whether consciously or subconsciously, chooses to emphasise the dependent clause by increasing its status and placing it first.

Hypotactic enhancing clauses in Theme position occurred less frequently than projecting clauses or Circumstantial Adjuncts. The extended Themes identified in the corpus can be found in Appendix III. As shown in Table 5.8, 119 of the 489 extended Theme choices were hypotactic enhancing clauses (this proportionally equals 24.3%), whereas 167 (34.2%) were Circumstantial Adjuncts, and 203 (41.5%) projecting clauses. In the analysis, a distinction was drawn between Finite and non-finite realisations. The reason for this was that throughout this study, grammatical choices have been taken as the entry point to understanding the meanings made. Therefore, as there is a distinct grammatical difference between Finite and non-finite clauses, analysing the data in this manner was thought to be a means of shedding light on some of the choices being made. The following section will discuss these findings in more detail.

Halliday’s (1994) description of the principal markers involved in identifying hypotactic enhancing clauses was used in analysing the present data (Halliday, 1994:237, Table 7(7)). The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10 Frequency of occurrence of hypotactic enhancing clauses by type

	Memo (n=54)	Letter (n=34)	Report (n=38)	Total (n=126)
temporal:				
- same time: extent	-	-	3	3 (2.5%)
- same time: point	2	2	1	5 (4.2%)
- same time: spread	-	-	-	-
- different time: later	1	1	1	3 (2.5%)
- different time: earlier	-	3	-	3 (2.5%)
spatial :				
- same place: extent	-	-	-	-
- same place: point	1	-	-	1 (0.8%)
- same place: spread	-	-	-	-
manner	-	3	5	8 (6.7%)
means	1	-	-	1 (0.8%)
comparison	-	-	3	3 (2.5%)
causal: conditional				
- cause: reason	12	6	10	28 (23.5%)
- cause: purpose	8	9	8	25 (21.0%)
- condition: positive	15	9	7	31 (26.1%)
- condition: negative	-	1	-	1 (0.8%)
- condition: concessive	3	1	3	7 (5.9%)
total	43 (36.1%)	35 (29.4%)	41 (34.5%)	119 (100%)

(The percentages here are based on the number of hypotactic enhancing clauses)

Hypotactic enhancing clauses acting as part of Theme occurred in the corpus on 119 occasions (81 Finite and 38 non-finite realisations). There seems to be little parity in the proportional amount of realisations of hypotactic enhancing clauses in the memos, letters and reports. In a proportionate sense, letters have far fewer hypotactic enhancing clauses acting as part of Theme than either memos or reports. Perhaps one reason for this is that the brevity of letters.

There were no spatial hypotactic enhancing clauses in Theme position in the corpus. The most frequent of the hypotactic enhancing clauses in thematic position were conditional: positive clauses (generally, a Finite clause where *if* introduced the dependent clause), accounting for 26.1% of the hypotactic enhancing clauses, as in Example 5.11:

Example 5.11

If you agree to the above arrangements,	I	will contact the banks and start to work on all formalities like seeking Board's approval, appointing a lawyer, giving the mandate, applying for Hong Kong Monetary Authority's approval, rating on the issue, documentation etc.
β clause conditional: positive	Subject/ Theme	Rheme
extended Theme		

Memo 24, clause complex 20

All except one of the conditional: possessive clauses were introduced with something other than *if*. Generally these clauses, like the cause: reason hypotactic enhancing clauses, are used to legitimise an action/decision which is introduced in the Rheme or elsewhere in the text.

The second most frequently occurring type of a hypotactic enhancing clause is cause: reason. There were 28 realisations of cause: reason in the data, accounting for 23.5% of hypotactic enhancing clauses. The writer typically uses this linguistic feature to legitimise and present the reason for a certain action, as illustrated by the following example:

Example 5.12

In the event of the contract being terminated by either party,	Universal	will not buy back the original stockholding, but will invoice the original quantities at the costs ruling on the date of termination.
β clause condition: positive	Subject/ Theme	Rheme
extended Theme		

Letter 14, clause complex 8

In this example, as in many others, the reason for an action or a decision is presented as an introduction to what action/decision will be taken. This is very similar to Iedema's (1995) generic stage of 'legitimation'. The writer is legitimising, or justifying, taking an action and, as such, chooses in certain instances to legitimise their action by using a hypotactic enhancing clause.

However, unlike the findings for circumstances, where there were no Circumstantial Adjuncts used to realise conditional: concessive meanings, hypotactic enhancing clauses were used construe this type of meaning in 5.9% of all hypotactic enhancing clauses, as in Example 5.13:

Example 5.13

Whatever strategy is decided upon,	the effective and efficient management of video collections	has to be considered.
β clause conditional: concessive	Subject/ Theme	Rheme
extended Theme		

Report 3, clause complex 101

In this example, the hypotactic enhancing clause is acting in a restrictive manner where the β clause is stating something that is the case *despite* (or *in spite of*) a particular situation (Halliday, 1994:237).

In analysing the distinction between Finite and non-finite clauses, the findings show that non-finite clauses tend to be used more frequently than Finite clauses to realise hypotactic enhancing clauses of cause: purpose. The total number of both Finite and non-finite clauses realising cause: purpose, as shown in Table 5.10, was 25, of which 17 occurrences are realised by a non-finite clause. Therefore, although the information contained is ideational, it is functioning, to a limited extent, in an interpersonal manner to legitimise what will follow.

5.5 Discussion

In the findings above a detailed description of the choice of Theme across the corpus of memos, letters and report has been presented. In discussing these findings the arguments presented will draw upon the collated findings from the corpus, exemplified by three selected texts used to illustrate particular points. This discussion is presented in two parts: the first part introduces the selected texts (a memo, a letter and an extract from a report) which will be used to illustrate particular arguments. The second part will respond to the research question posed at the beginning of the present chapter and will supplement the arguments with evidence both from the selected texts and the rest of the corpus.

5.5.1 Texts used as a basis for discussion

The first text, Memo 15, on the topic of wastepaper disposal, was sent from a manager in an accounting firm to all staff. Iedema (1995) suggests that every memo has a nucleus: a command or statement requiring compliance. The command represents the purpose for writing the memo. The command in Memo 15 is that if staff throw confidential paper away they need *to make sure [they] ... rip it up so that it cannot be read.*

Text 5.1, Memo 15

To: All Personnel, AA & AC, Hong Kong
 From: Jane Woods, Hong Kong
 Date: March 25, 1995
 Subject: Paper Recycling/Confidential Information

Currently, many of you are throwing your waste paper in the garbage cans. This garbage is then picked up by the cleaners and thrown out. However, much of this waste paper may contain confidential information about our clients that should not be thrown out in readable form (e.g. photocopies of draft tax returns, working paper file memos, etc.) Though there are shredders on all the floors, not everyone uses them.

It is very important that our clients' information remain confidential. If you throw paper of that nature away, make sure you rip it up so that it cannot be read. Alternatively, we have arranged for a confidential shredding and recycling company to pick up paper waste each Monday afternoon. Though this service has been in place for a while, I do not think that you are aware of it. Here is how it works.

There are large green garbage bags located in the following locations on the floors:

- 23rd Floor Next to the main conference room
 Next to the Copier machine near Accounts
- 24th Floor Utility Room - Opposite to Filing Room
 Utility Room - Opposite to Typing Pool
 Printing Area - Next to Mr. James Foster's Office
- 25th Floor Library
 Staff Area - Opposite to Mr. Y. H. Lum's Office

These bags are in bins/boxes with the words "Recycling Box" written on them. You may put your confidential waste paper in these bins. This paper will not be picked up by the cleaners. Every Monday afternoon, representatives from the recycling company will come to our office. One of our Administrative Assistants will accompany this person through our offices to collect the garbage from the recycling bins. These bags will be sealed before leaving the building to ensure the confidentiality of the information.

We encourage you to use these bins to help us to be more environmentally conscious.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Jane Woods

An analysis of the Themes in α clauses (illustrated in Table 5.11) indicates that there are six extended Themes in the 18 α clause/clause complex text.

Table 5.11 Extended Theme in Memo 15

	Extended Theme		Rheme
	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme	
1.	Currently,	many of you	are throwing your waste paper in the garbage cans.
2.		This garbage	is then picked up by the cleaners and thrown out.
3.		However, much of this waste paper	may contain confidential information about our clients that should not be thrown out in readable form (e.g. photocopies of draft tax returns,

ASPECTS OF THEME AND THEIR ROLE IN WORKPLACE TEXTS

		Extended Theme	
		Marked Theme	Subject/Theme
			Rheme
			working paper file memos, etc.)
4.	Though there are shredders on all the floors,	not everyone	uses them.
5.	It is very important that	our client's information	remain confidential.
6.	If you throw paper of that nature away, make sure	you	rip it up so that it cannot be read.
7.		Alternatively, we	have arranged for a confidential shredding and recycling company to pick up paper waste each Monday afternoon.
8.	Though this service has been in place for a while, I do not think that	you	are aware of it.
9.		Here	is how it works.
10.		There	are large green garbage bags located in the following locations on the floors: 23rd Floor Next to the main conference room Next to the Copier machine near Accounts 24th Floor Utility Room - Opposite to Filing Room Utility Room - Opposite to Typing Pool Printing Area - Next to Mr. James Foster's Office 25th Floor Library Staff Area - Opposite to Mr. Y. H. Lum's Office
11.		These bags	are in bins/boxes with the words "Recycling Box" written on them.
12.		You	may put your confidential waste paper in these bins.
13.		This paper	will <u>not</u> be picked up by the cleaners.
14.	Every Monday afternoon,	representatives from the recycling company	will come to our office.
15.		One of our Administrative Assistants	will accompany this person through our offices to collect the garbage from the recycling bins.
16.		These bags	will be sealed before leaving the building to ensure the confidentiality the information.
17.		We	encourage you to use these bins to help us to be more environmentally conscious.
18.		[I]	Thank you for your co-operation.

The analysis of Memo 15 demonstrates that although there are limited interpersonal Themes and no Modal Adjuncts, the writer's viewpoint nevertheless emerges. The writer construes a viewpoint through choices in the construction of Theme. This is realised not

only through linguistic features such as the use of personal pronouns, but also through the use of Conjunctive Adjuncts as part of a textual Theme and through the construction of extended Themes. These features will be discussed in detail below.

The second text is Letter 11. The purpose of this letter is to provide a quote to a client. During the EWM study, the interviewees indicated that they considered this to be a standard letter to a client (Davies and Forey, 1996). In Letter 11, there are seven α clauses and four have extended Themes. These extended Themes, as in Memo 15 above, are being used to highlight the relevant points of the letter and to add what Davies (1994) would call 'informing Contextual Frames'.

Text 5.2, Letter 11

Further to our meeting on Friday morning regarding your Reuter Services, I am pleased to enclose a quote for Reuter Financial Television and an upgrade of your current Reuter Terminal.

As requested we have removed your graphics package and two additional British Telecom lines. The cost saving per month is as follows:

	\$pm
1 x Graphics Forex	270.00
2 x BT Analogue line @ 66.31	132.62
TOTAL	392.62

Current credit notes total \$523.83 and an additional credit of \$270 will be forwarded for April.

To replace the existing Reuter Terminal with an upgraded PC and Reuter Financial Television the monthly cost will be \$380, which will represent a saving of \$22.62 per month. There is an additional once off installation charge of \$600.

If you would like to go ahead with this proposal I would be grateful if you could sign and return the enclosed Client Order Form.

In general, extended Themes are found more frequently in the letters, where 39.1% of Themes are extended Themes, compared to 32.9% in the full corpus (as shown in Table 5.8). Extended Themes tend to occur in the initial clause of a letter and thus perform an important function as a macro-Theme in contextualising the material world which is the focus of the letter, e.g. *further to our meeting, regarding your Reuter Services* and reference to other intertextual information, e.g. *on Friday morning*. An analysis of α clauses is presented in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Extended Theme in Letter 11

Extended Theme											
cl	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme	Rheme								
	Further to our meeting on Friday morning regarding your Reuter Services,	I	am pleased to enclose a quote for Reuter Financial Television and an upgrade of your current Reuter Terminal.								
1.	As requested	we	have removed your graphics package and two additional British Telecom lines.								
2.		The cost saving per month	is as follows: <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 x Graphics Forex</td> <td style="text-align: right;">270</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 x BT Analogue line @ 66.31</td> <td style="text-align: right;">132.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">TOTAL \$932.62</td> </tr> </table>		\$pm	1 x Graphics Forex	270	2 x BT Analogue line @ 66.31	132.62		TOTAL \$932.62
	\$pm										
1 x Graphics Forex	270										
2 x BT Analogue line @ 66.31	132.62										
	TOTAL \$932.62										
3.		Current credit notes	total \$523.83								
4.		and an additional credit of \$270	will be forwarded for April.								
5.	To replace the existing Reuter Terminal with an upgraded PC and Reuter Financial Television	the monthly cost	will be \$380, which will represent a saving of \$22.62 per month.								
6.		There	is an additional once off installation charge of \$600.								
7.	If you would like to go ahead with this proposal	I would be grateful if you	could sign and return the enclosed Client Order Form.								

The third text, Text 5.3, is an extract from Report 6. For reasons of space, only an extract and a brief interpretation of findings are given. The complete report and analysis can be found in Appendix II. Report 6 is a public report produced by one of the “Big Five” accounting firms. Its final production looks very professional and suggests that the document was well edited before being printed. It is a report about the tax situation in China and is comprised of 127 α clauses. The text was produced in the period leading up to the handover of Hong Kong from British colonial rule to China, when the financial situation in what is now the Hong Kong SAR, and the People’s Republic of China, was uncertain. The report has an air of optimism, for example, *even so this bold move was commendable* (clause complex 6), and *foreign investors will be attracted to China if they can operate in an efficient environment to yield profits and not just because of tax savings* (clause complex 13). It encourages investment and paints a positive picture of a situation that was, at that point in history, unpredictable if not volatile. The reason for the positive outlook is that the accounting firm can directly profit from the situation, by encouraging investment in China.

Text 5.3, Report 6 (Extract)

China Tax Report

Tax Reform in the People's Republic of China

IMPLICATIONS OF CURRENT TAX CHANGES IN CHINA FOR FOREIGN INVESTORS

Is China's tax policy really capricious? How should foreign businesses navigate themselves through the changes?

Let's take a look at the recent changes and their effect on the foreign business community in the immediate future and in the long run.

The Changes

In January 1994, China started its massive programme of tax reform as part of an overall economic restructuring. The reform package was only half-baked when it was launched. Even so this bold move was commendable because it required a lot of courage for the government to take on the challenge and face the implementation difficulties. Against this background subsequent changes were bound to occur in the light of experience.

Changes in the China tax system are now taking place on all fronts: from long-term policy, legislation and administration to the fine-tuning adjustments of practical details.

Policy changes

It has been the policy of China to use tax incentives to attract foreign investment. Recently, this policy has been under reconsideration.

The principal argument for a change in this policy is that both foreign and domestic enterprises should be conducting their businesses on a level playing field, and giving special incentive to a selected group of market players is inconsistent with fair trade. Another argument is that China's tax environment is only a part of the overall investment climate comprising the effectiveness of infrastructure, labour force, management resources, market functions and government agencies.

Foreign investors will be attracted to China if they can operate in an efficient environment to yield profits and not just because of tax savings. To foster such an environment requires strong government support and spending, and hence matching revenue programme.

Measures reflecting this change include the gradual elimination of import exemptions for foreign investment enterprises and processing trades. Also, incentives available to foreign investors in the special economic zones may be phased out; however, the speculation that foreign enterprise income tax incentives may also be abolished has been denied by PRC officials. This does not mean, however, that such incentives will remain indefinitely in the future.

While the above measures may be harmful to foreign investors in the short run, some other measures will certainly be welcome in the long run. For example, the PRC has announced a significant cut of import duties across the board by about 3 per cent in conjunction with a policy of trade liberalisation for foreign businesses. In two years' time, the government intends to lower the weighted average of the duty rate to 15 per cent. It is also understood that the proposed reduction in duty rate will be coming along with the cancellation of certain duty privileges being enjoyed by some domestic enterprises. Thus they are levelling the playing field, at least at the point of importation of goods.

Legislative changes

Regarding legislative changes, a new regime of individual income tax is under active consideration. The tax authorities are aiming at a unified system of taxation for individuals, as opposed to the present schedular system. It was contemplated that the change could be effected in 1996, but now it may have to be postponed to 1997.

With respect to corporate taxation, the unification of the two enterprise income tax systems applicable to foreign and domestic businesses has long been overdue but there is no sign of immediate change.

Some new taxes mentioned when the tax reform package was proposed, such as Estate Duty, Gift Tax and Securities Tax, will be enacted, although no specific time table for their enactment has been announced.

Also under consideration is the expansion of the charging scope of the value added tax (VAT) system to include the value of services now within the scope of business tax. Business tax is a local tax, whereas VAT is a shared tax, a source of revenue which is under central government control but is shared with the local governments.

Analysis of the Report, showing clauses and clause complexes, is presented in Table 5.13:

Table 5.13 Extended Theme in Report 6

Extended Theme		Rheme
cl	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme
1.	Is	China's tax policy
2.	How should	foreign businesses
3.	Let'	[u]s
<u>The Changes</u>		
4.	In January 1994,	China
5.		The reform package
6.		Even so this bold move
7.	Against this background	subsequent changes
8.		Changes in the China tax system
<u>Policy changes</u>		
9.		It
10.	Recently,	this policy
11.		The principal argument for a change in this policy
12.		Another argument

Extended Theme		Rheme
cl	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme
13.		Foreign investors
14.		[[To foster such an environment]]
15.		Measures [[reflecting this change]]
16.		Also, incentives available to foreign investors in the special economic zones
17.	however, the speculation that	foreign enterprise income tax incentives may also be abolished
18.	This does not mean, however, that	such incentives
19.	While the above measures may be harmful to foreign investors in the short run,	some other measures
20.		For example, the PRC
21.	In two years' time,	the government
22.	It is also understood that	the proposed reduction in duty rate
23.		Thus they
Legislative changes		
24.	Regarding legislative changes,	a new regime of individual income tax
25.		The tax authorities
26.	It was contemplated that	the change
27.	but now	it
28.	With respect to corporate taxation,	the unification of the two enterprise income tax systems applicable to foreign and domestic businesses
29.		but there
30.		Some new taxes [[mentioned when the tax reform packages was proposed, such as Estate Duty, Gift Tax and Securities Tax,]]
31.		Also under consideration

	Extended Theme		Rheme
cl	Marked Theme	Subject/Theme	
32.		Business tax	is a local tax, whereas VAT is a shared tax, a source of revenue which is under central government control but is shared with the local governments.

The Theme choices found in Memo 15, Letter 11 and Report 6 are discussed in what follows.

5.5.2 Responding to the research questions

It is now possible to return to the questions driving the research and respond to them on the basis of the findings from the analyses. The responses overlap to some extent, for example, issues related to the choice of an extended Theme are also relevant in the discussion of generic constraints. In order to minimise repetition, each response will focus on one particular feature.

5.5.3 What are the similarities and differences in thematic choices in the memos, letters and reports?

With respect to thematic choices, there are a number of common features across the three text types. The most obvious is the strong connection between the choice of Theme and material entities within the workplace. Through thematic choices the workplace is construed primarily as a place of ideational meaning: a world of ‘things’ and ‘activity’.

In all three text types, the writers most commonly choose a nominal group as Subject/Theme, with a ‘material entity’ being more frequently used than a ‘human participant’, as illustrated in Report 6.

Table 5.14 Nominal groups in Report 6 (extract)

Human participants	Material entities	Concepts
China Foreign investors the PRC the government The tax authorities the government	foreign businesses The reform package Business tax the proposed reduction in duty rate a new regime of individual income tax Some new taxes [[mentioned when the tax reform packages was proposed, such as Estate Duty, Gift Tax and Securities Tax,]] incentives available to foreign investors in the special economic zones	China’s tax policy this bold move subsequent changes Changes in the China tax system under consideration this policy Another argument such incentives Measures [[reflecting this change]] foreign enterprise income tax incentives the change The principal argument for a change in this policy the focus

Human participants	Material entities	Concepts
	the unification of the two enterprise income tax systems applicable to foreign and domestic businesses	some other measures These two key changes the tax administration focus Some measures in this respect The tax administration focus in 1994

The material entities include nominal groups of ‘product’, e.g. *the reform package*, VAT, and ‘action’, e.g. *the unification of the two enterprise income tax systems applicable to foreign and domestic businesses*. These nominal groups of ‘action’ encapsulate detailed information in a short space, where there has been a proposal to reduce the duty rate, and the two tax systems which are applicable to foreign and domestic business have been unified. The nominal group *the proposed reduction in duty rate* is an example of nominalisation. As Halliday (1994) points out, in nominalisation the nominal group is changed into an incongruent presentation of information where the verb has become a noun. For example, the congruent form would be *it has been proposed that the duty rate be reduced* or alternatively, depending on how you unpacked this information, the congruent form could be *the reduction in duty rate has been proposed*. However, by realising the information in a more objectified form, the verb *reduce* becomes a noun, viz. *reduction rate*. Nominalisation presents information in what would appear to be a more objective form and is, according to Halliday (1994), Martin (2000a) and Unsworth (2000) a mark of prestige and power. Through nominalisation the writer is able to present a great deal of information through the Subject/Theme and to include their viewpoint by pointing out the uncertainty of the proposal.

The use of nominalisation, or ‘demodulation’ as Iedema (1995, 1997, 1999, 2000) calls it, raises many concerns which should be incorporated into pedagogy. As Brown and Herndl (1986) point out, based on their findings teachers training clients in the workplace discouraged their students from using nominalisation. However, the employees viewed nominalisation as an integral part of workplace written communication. The students believed that it raised the level of comprehension in the text, as nominalisation is a complex packaging of information. This non-congruent form of information is far more complex for the reader to unpack than a congruent message (Martin, 2000a). In addition, nominalisation reinforces the status quo of hierarchy as the language reflects the status, knowledge and power of the writer and the reader. Nominalisation conspires “to construe reality in certain ways” (Unsworth, 2000:255). The ‘agency’ or modal responsibility of the

clause is translated from a congruent into a non-congruent form and processes are realised as nominal groups instead of verbs (Halliday, 1994; Iedema, 1995, 1997; Martin 2000a). Nominalisation presents information as objective and is a “radical retexturing” of information (Martin, 2000a:294). As argued by Iedema (2000), this is one method used to suppress the negotiability of a text. For example, in memos, which although written are frequently equated with a more spoken-like form (similar to Gimenez’s (2000) argument, although he is referring to e-mails), the congruent form tends to predominate; the language in such texts is less objectified and less definite and issues can be negotiated. In contrast, in more formalised written texts such as reports, information becomes less negotiable as a means of projecting decisions, representing the outcomes and formalising the company’s position.

The ‘concept’, realised as a nominal groups shown in Table 5.14, appear to construe vagueness and speculation. The purpose of the report appears to be to discuss the future ‘concepts’ and potential benefits in an unknown situation and the use of ‘concept’ nominal groups helps to achieve this goal. It seems as though the writer wants to attract, or ‘hook’ the reader’s attention into taking the first step to discuss the matter further and that using Themes such as *changes*, *environment speculation* and *reform package* serve as the required ‘hook’ without providing the exact details.

Another major area where similarities are noted is the use of Theme to construe interpersonal meaning. In the workplace, according to Iedema (1995, 1997, 1999, 2000), interpersonal features construed through the choice of Theme are used to depersonalise issues. The findings in the present study support Iedema’s argument that in many cases thematic choices tend to be presented in non-negotiable representations of meaning, i.e. the choice of Theme becomes factual and permanently inscribed as part of workplace practice. Iedema’s (1995, 1997, 1999, 2000) argument is that demodulation occurs where the human participant is suppressed in the realisation of the choice of Theme (see Section 2.8.2). Thus, the choice of Theme becomes more related to institutional practices and material needs. Although Theme was used to construe interpersonal meaning, the use and range of human participants within the Theme choice is limited. Human participants are more frequent in memos than in letters and reports. However, even though human participants are limited, there are a range of other choices, more depersonalised ones such as thematised comment, which are used to realise writer viewpoint and interpersonal meaning. The findings show that as the text types move from what appears to be a more

dialogic form memos) to a more written-like form (reports), there is an increase in the depersonalising of Theme choices. The number of personal pronouns tends to decrease from memos (29.7%) to letters (24.2%) and reports (4.6%). In memos the interlocutors are frequently in close contact or at least known to each other. This is in contrast to letters, which although often considered to be dialogic in the workplace, are written to parties external to the organisation therefore formality or distance is typically maintained. As suggested by Iedema, “the interactional manoeuvring and the power relational struggles are excluded” as the text moves more to a written non-negotiable form (Iedema, 1999:58). While personal pronouns do not occur frequently in reports, other more implicit linguistic features, such as projecting clauses acting as Theme, appear to be construing the interpersonal meaning.

To some extent, this move from the personalised (human) to the depersonalised (inanimate material objects) in the choice of Theme reflects the findings of Iedema (1998, 2000), and Davies et al. (1999), who argue that complexity and the ability to control linguistic resources increases as one moves up the promotional ladder. Davies et al. (1999) reach this position based on the way in which the informants talked about the role of writing in the workplace. Iedema’s (1995, 1997) position is arrived at through a lexicogrammatical analysis and data collected during an ethnographic study. Both Davies and Iedema highlight the fact that there are a number of implicit linguistic resources which need to be made explicit, and the present study corroborates this position. A number of lexicogrammatical choices illustrate the prominence of ideational and interpersonal meaning construed the choice of Theme.

5.5.4 How does extended Theme function in the texts?

Extended Theme appears to be performing a ‘special’ role in that it is used at important stages in the text Davies (1988, 1994, 1997), which is supported by the work of Martin, (1992a), Martin and Rose, (forthcoming), argues that extended Themes function to foreground three ways of meaning, namely ideational (informing), interpersonal (interactive), and textual (organisational).

The findings suggest that informational extended Themes dominated choices of textual and interpersonal Themes. Informing Themes are realised by thematic choices where Circumstantial Adjuncts and hypotactic enhancing clauses are found in initial position. In general, Circumstantial Adjuncts and hypotactic enhancing clauses predominantly realised

informational and interpersonal meanings. There is only one extended Theme explicitly functioning in an organising manner.

Circumstantial Adjuncts realising an extended Theme, in many cases, appear to draw upon intertextual references to previous information. Devitt (1991) believes that such intertextual references are common in workplace text. For example, in the initial clause complex of Letter 11 there is a clustering of ideational content: two Circumstantial Adjuncts are realised before we reach the Subject of the main clause. The Circumstantial Adjuncts contextualise past events and state the point of the letter. There are two Circumstantial Adjuncts of matter *further to our meeting on Friday morning* and *regarding your Reuter Services*. Matter is the most frequent Circumstantial Adjunct found in letters (8 occurrences (40% of all Circumstantial Adjuncts in letters), as shown in Table 5.9.

Informing contextual frames are also realised through hypotactic enhancing clauses. In a number of clause complexes there is a clustering, or heavy loading, of ideational information in the Theme. This is achieved through hypotactic enhancing clauses which frequently function to legitimise the information introduced in the Rheme. This clustering or front loading of information constructs densely packed information which may present difficulties in the deconstruction for novice readers.

Extended Themes also construe interpersonal meaning. The findings suggest that extended Themes occur at key stages in the text to foreground writer viewpoints. The three extended Themes found in Text 5.1, Memo 15 are a conditional hypotactic enhancing clause and two projecting clauses: *though there are shredders on all floors; if you throw paper of that nature away; though this service has been in place for a while*. They are used to augment the negative foundation and effects of the action. The reader is placed in a position of assumed wrong-doing in these instances. Through the choice of extended Themes the writer emphasises that the errors being made are errors that could be avoided, and is thus construing interpersonal meaning in this respect.

Interpersonal meaning in extended Themes is also construed by hypotactic enhancing clauses. Projection was the most frequent extended Theme found in letters, and is discussed in detail in Chapter Six. A proportion (approximately one third of all clausal: conditional β clauses) are introduced by *if* clauses, where the writer or reader is involved in some way in the outcome of an action, e.g. *if you haven't heard from us by 4 July* (Letter 8, clause complex 19), *if I can be of any other assistance to you* (Letter 3, clause complex 8).

Most of the hypotactic enhancing causal: conditional β clauses construe interpersonal action and reaction on behalf of the writer or reader. Other conditional hypotactic enhancing clauses establish a reason or purpose which was used to rationalise or justify the following ideational content.

Hypotactic enhancing clauses are sometimes found in initial position, as they legitimise or even justify the ideational content to follow (Iedema, 1995). As shown in Table 5.12, there are two conditional hypotactic enhancing clauses which function to provide the reason for removing the graphics package – *as requested* – and the future action to be taken by the reader *if you would like to go ahead with this proposal*. This latter example is a hypotactic enhancing clause of condition: positive, where the onus for future action is laid clearly on the intended reader. Both of these hypotactic enhancing clauses incorporate action on behalf of the recipient: the action of asking for the graphics package to be removed and the action the recipient should take in order to go ahead with the proposal. They develop the ongoing dialogic relationship between the writer and intended reader, and thus realise a degree of interpersonal meaning. The hypotactic enhancing non-finite clause of condition: purpose *to replace the existing Reuter Terminal with an upgraded PC and Reuter Financial Television* contextualises and justifies the cost of the package.

The hypotactic enhancing clause realising the extended Theme in Text 5.3, *while the above measures may be harmful to foreign investors in the short run* (Report 6, clause complex 19), also appears to be adding to this notion of ‘cajoling’ and ‘persuading’. It represents ‘bad’ news followed by ‘good’ news, and the circumstance of *in the short run* appears to be enticing the reader into wanting to know what the ‘long-term’ effects/benefits will be.

As noted previously, there were no extended Themes which explicitly realised an organisational function. However, the findings suggest that other features are acting to organise the text. For example, in Report 6 it is possible to argue that some of the extended Themes, although not explicitly signalling an organising function, are in fact assisting in the organisation of ideational content. In total in Report 6, there are nine Circumstantial Adjuncts of location: time in Theme position (clause/clause complexes 4, 10, 21, 27, 34, 66, 105, 108 and 113). The examples of time in Text 5.3, *in January 1994*, *recently* and *in two years’ time*, help organise the message chronologically. They signal a change in focus and highlight the specific period which is relevant for the ideational information. As noted previously, Davies (1994) argues that the type of contextual frame realised reflects some of

the constraints of the genre. It is possible, therefore, based on the findings to argue that in memos, letters and reports the distinct lack of organisational contextual frames reflects generic constraints.

The lack of organising contextual frames suggest that the writer is depending on other linguistic features to structure and organise the message. Due to the relative size of many memos, letters and reports (on average the memos, letters and reports included 16.8, 11.3 and 73.4 number of clauses respectively) a reader may not necessarily expect to see organising units as part of the Theme choice. The generic structure of a memo, letter or report plays a major role in organising a text. The opening heading or title, frequently referred to as *Subject* in memos, or highlighted by the use of *Re:* in letters, organises the text through intertextual references and places the text within an historical and contextual framework by referring to other features or actions. For example, in Letter 5, where the opening title is *Re: Consultation on Spent Battery Collection*, the heading makes reference to a previous consultation. This information is then used to contextualise and organise the ideational content of the text to follow. If the analysis were of longer texts, such as academic research articles, academic books and novels, then the findings might be very different.

The findings support Stainton (1993), Davies (1994, 1997), Goatly (1995), Thompson (1996) and Martin and Rose (forthcoming) that marked Themes are important as they function to signal meaningful points in the development of the text. In addition, the present study argues that the writer, through their choice of Theme and in particular their choice of Subject/Theme, Conjunctive Adjuncts, hypotactic enhancing clauses and Circumstantial Adjuncts as part of Theme or extended Theme, is able to either pack the front of a clause / clause complex with ideational meaning or present an 'angle'/viewpoint for the intended reader. Such information relating to the patterns and range of thematic choices would be an invaluable asset with which to inform pedagogy.

5.5.5 What evidence is there that the choice of Theme is genre-related?

Much of the discussion presented above is directly relevant to this question since many of the similarities and differences noted provide evidence that Theme and genre are related. For example, the dominance of extended Themes supports Davies's (1997:62) contention that Circumstantial Adjuncts reflect genres. Davies illustrates her argument with reference to a gardening book where the dominant Circumstantial Adjunct is one of extent: location.

The Circumstantial Adjuncts guides the reader around the garden and refers to specific features in the garden. Circumstances of time are frequently used in history textbooks to structure the discourse in the correct chronological time, e.g. *when the Europeans arrived in 1788, in 1790, in 1794, in 1797, in that year, and by 1801* (Coffin, 1997:204). The findings provide evidence that the dominant Circumstantial Adjunct found in the three text types is location: time.

Generic constraints also affect the choice of textual and interpersonal Themes. Interpersonal Themes are limited in number; indeed, there was a distinct absence of such Themes, which is a significant finding. It is argued that explicit interpersonal realisations are not the norm and are not expected in the text types memos, letters and reports.

The findings relating to textual Theme also reflect generic conventions. They occur at a consistent frequency across the three text types, and the range of realisations is also relatively consistent. The findings related to textual Themes were representational and were based on all textual Themes found in Appendix II. Adversative and additive textual Themes are common, while other textual Themes are not. Such results could be compared to other genres. For example, the textual Themes in workplace texts could be compared to Field and Mee Oi's (1992) findings relating to textual Theme choices in academic texts. However, Field and Mee Oi's focus is not differences in Theme choices, but a comparison of native and non-native English speakers. It seems likely, however, that the similarity in the frequency and range of textual Themes in the three text types is more indicative of genre than of the variable 'speaker', i.e. native vs. non-native speaker. This suggestion is supported by the findings of Green et al. (2000), who focus on the variation of textual Themes found in native English speakers' academic English texts. In the workplace texts of the present study, *however* was by far the second most common textual Theme; in the academic texts the Conjunctive Adjunct *however* was not in the top 26 textual Themes. This perhaps reflects generic constraints, and indicates that students' academic texts require a certain type of textual Theme, whereas workplace texts require another.

5.5.6 What linguistic resources are used to realise and construe interpersonal realisations through choice of Theme?

It has been established that the choice of Theme is the starting point for the message. Thus, the power, status, identity and ideational meaning constructed through the choice of Theme are crucial considerations for those involved in producing workplace texts. The linguistic

resources used to construe the interpersonal in the Theme are crucial features which should be understood by those wishing to project competent control of the ideational and interpersonal factors of a text. As pointed out by Davies et al. (1999), at times logical thought is correlated with the ability to write well. In addition, Davies et al. (1999) report that the ability to write well is also directly linked with promotion and reputation. As argued by Brown and Herndl (1986), in a workplace ‘good’ writers are explicitly identified as such by their colleagues and superiors. Thus, there are strong implications that a ‘good’ writer requires the control of skills which construct the coherence of message, the interpersonal and ideational meanings construed through the choice of Theme. Becoming a good writer involves understanding many different issues. One of the main concerns is the ability to express an appropriate tenor. In addition, the writer should be able to convince and persuade the reader through the manner in which the message is structured and the construal of the intended meaning of the message. In establishing the tenor, the hierarchical relationship of reader and writer is in part strongly dependent on the choice of Theme. One factor which influences the intended meaning of the message is the way in which the logical connections between clauses are established. Textual Themes are one means for influencing the intended message.

The hierarchical relationship constructed through the choice of Theme can perform different functions. The writer can construct a dyadic relationship of unequal or equal power depending on the choice of Theme. For example, the interpersonal message construed in Memo 15 is very different from that of Report 6. Hierarchy and the manipulation of status and power are illustrated by the Subject/Theme choices in Memo 15. The recurrent Themes throughout the text are *waste paper*, *you* and *we*. The *we* used in this memo is not an inclusive *we* as it represents either *we* the management or *we* the company. Whichever instantiation is correct, the *we* acts to demonstrate some form of hierarchy, i.e. *many of you*, the recipients, have been making an error and *we*, the company / management, have made arrangements to deal with this problem. Memo 15 is representative of the full corpus of 30 memos in the frequency of personal pronouns realising the Subject/Theme with 27.3%. In the full corpus of memos, personal pronouns, such as *you*, *I* or *we* make up 29.7% of all Subject/Themes found in memos. In Table 5.11, clause complex 6, an imperative with a personal pronoun, realises the Theme *make sure you*. As stated previously, this is the explicit Command at the heart of the text, and an explicit realisation of power and status.

In addition to the hierarchical stance of the writer in Memo 15, the writer's status and evaluation is also expressed by the use of the Numeratives *many* and *much* in the Theme choices *many of you* and *much waste paper*. The Numerative emphasises evaluation on behalf of the writer: it indicates that there is more than one member of staff involved and that a lot of the information inscribed on the paper is confidential. Also the negative polarisation of *not everyone* adds a negative evaluation of the staff.

However, the writer in Report 6 is construing a very different interpersonally friendly relationship. The first three α clauses are comprised of two interrogatives and an imperative. In all ten reports (734 α clauses), there are only five (0.7%) realisations where a *wh*-interrogative is found in Theme position. Imperatives and interrogatives are inherently interpersonal as they involve the reader in the dialogue or suggest some form of action the reader should take. In this instance the reader is being asked to think about the topic *is China's tax policy really capricious? How should foreign business navigate themselves through the changes?* The reader is here consciously invited to predict the content of what will follow in the report. Then, as if the writer is holding the business partner's hand, the writer follows these questions with an imperative *let's take a look at the recent changes and their effects*. Tadros (1985) points out that the writer does not simply present facts, but rather through a varied choice of resources presents the material in a manner that "tries to persuade, cajole, convince and win the reader to his side" (Tadros, 1985:63). Persuasion and cajolery appear to be the function of the first three Themes in Report 6. In addition, in these first few α clauses, the writer is establishing a non-hierarchical, friendly but knowledgeable, dyadic relationship where the writer is 'convincing' and 'persuading' the reader that they can help the reader understand and perhaps be successful in business in China.

In Text 5.1, the textual Theme, the Conjunctive Adjuncts *however*, was used to highlight action that staff need to improve. For example, to paraphrase, *waste paper is being thrown out by you, however, confidential paper has been thrown away in an incorrect form, we provide services and facilities to deal with this paper though the proper procedure is not followed by all*. The Conjunctive Adjuncts act as pivotal points to link the proactive behaviour of the company to the poor behaviour of the staff. Thus, following Thompson and Zhou (2000), although the Conjunctive Adjuncts are ideational in nature, they create interpersonal meaning by signalling how the ideational content related to the "company's procedures and services" and "bad action" should be interpreted. Following Thompson and

Zhou (2000), the present study asserts that Conjunctive Adjuncts along with Modal Adjuncts contribute to what Thompson and Zhou, referring to terms used by Bakhtin, believe are the “dialogic overtones of a text” (Thompson and Zhou, 2000:140). Modal Adjuncts contribute to the text in an ideational, interpersonal and textual manner, and Conjunctive Adjuncts offer logical connections between clauses, which help the reader interpret the intended meaning. Textual Themes explicitly represent the writer’s viewpoint as well as link the clause to a previous or following clause. The findings support Matthiessen (1995), Thompson and Zhou (2000) and Martin and Rose (forthcoming) who suggest that textual Themes do far more than simply structure a text. Textual Themes are seen to create “interactive negotiation between the writer and reader, rather than simply reflect objective logical relations between propositions” (Thompson and Zhou, 2000:140). In addition, as pointed out by Matthiessen (1995:20), the textual metafunction is seen to create interpersonal meaning by providing a medium wherein the interpersonal and ideational can be understood by the reader and writer.

The Theme of the α clauses is crucial in representing the ‘angle’ of the intended meaning (Martin, 1992b; Fries, 1995c). The findings lend strong support to the proposition that interpersonal meanings are realised in part by Theme. Excluding the explicit markers of interpersonal Theme, i.e. Modal Adjuncts, personal pronouns, interrogatives and Vocatives, a number of other specific features are also identified as thematising interpersonal meaning. The choice of nominal group is seen to include some form of evaluation on behalf of the writer and is thus recognised as realising the interpersonal. Certain nominal groups also incorporate some form of nominalisation and, as pointed out by Halliday (1994:353), the use of nominalisation is seen to demonstrate “a mark of prestige or power” where the writer ‘packages’ information into a non-congruent form. In addition, interpersonal meaning is identified in the three different types of extended Theme found in the corpus, namely Circumstantial Adjuncts, hypotactic enhancing clauses and projecting clauses.

An understanding of the generic conventions and a manipulation of appropriate choices of Theme in the workplace text, it is argued, will affect the interpretation by the reader and thus their perception and understanding of the field and tenor of the text. The specific linguistic resources that a good writer needs to understand and manipulate include the use of textual Themes, extended Themes, nominal groups and nominalisation. The ability to construe meaning which stabilises the workplace and reinforces the “control and

procedure” through written texts without alienating the intended reader is a skill which is highly regarded by many (Iedema, 1998, 1999, 2000).

5.6 Concluding remarks

In drawing a conclusion to this chapter, the discussion reverts to the initial general research question introduced in Chapter Three:

What function does Theme perform in the workplace texts?

The findings reflect Iedema (1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000) and Fairclough’s (1992) argument that the language of the workplace emphasises depersonalisation. Moreover, the choice of Theme emulates this position and construes notions of status, identity, and power alongside the textual role of organising the message. However, even within this ‘depersonalised’ context, it seems that writers of workplace texts encode their viewpoint by using implicit methods such as Subject/Theme and extended Theme. One way for evaluation to be introduced in the choice of Subject/Theme was through the use of nominalisation. Nominalisation created an environment in which the writer could construe a particular viewpoint.

Extended Theme allows the analyst to consider everything preceding the Subject of the main clause as Theme and reveals interesting insights which expose the loading of ideational features in the initial part of the clause/clause complex. The loading of ideational information emphasises, contextualises, and rationalises the need for the workplace to be construed through material, depersonalised terms. Some of the informants indicate that they prefer to receive depersonalised messages, as this allows them to act and respond to matters in a professional and formal manner (as discussed further in Chapter Eight).

Extended Theme appears to signal an important stage in the text and frames interpersonal meaning. The analysis has revealed that extended Theme is a useful resource. It can be used to reveal the way in which the writer highlights certain features in the text. The findings suggest that extended Theme is used to realise certain interpersonal meanings. Circumstantial Adjuncts in the text are used to frame shared experiences or some reference to past events or times. In this manner they are construing ‘shared’ meanings, and it is argued that although their main function is ideational, they also incorporate some element of interpersonal meaning. Hypotactic enhancing clauses in an initial position frequently

legitimise, through a conditional clause, the information in the main clause. The conditional element in a hypotactic enhancing clause is, to some extent, also viewed as functioning to restrict or define a situation and in some cases this is directly linked to the reader's actions. Theme choice is seen to play a key role in constructing and stabilising the status quo of the workplace. Therefore, in a number of ways the choice of Theme is found to be crucial not only as a tool for organising the message, but also for realising the ideational and interpersonal features of a text.

The most frequent and perhaps the most explicitly interpersonal extended Theme is projection. The following chapter will study the form and function realised by projection in the English workplace texts.