

ICLLCE 2015-87 Chitchanok Naksawat

An ESP Genre Analysis of Business Scam Emails

Chitchanok Naksawat*

Department of Languages, King Monkut's University of Technology North Bangkok,
1518 Phiboonsongkram Road, Bangsue, Bangsue, Bangkok 10800 Thailand
Songyut Akkakoson

Department of Languages, King Monkut's University of Technology North Bangkok,
1518 Phiboonsongkram Road, Bangsue, Bangsue, Bangkok 10800 Thailand

*Corresponding Author: Cnaksawat@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Genre analysis has long provided pedagogical implications for ESP classrooms concerning internal structures and language features. The analysis mainly involves examining in detail such written documents as research articles, medical records, law documents, or even business correspondence. Hence, the major purpose of this study is to seek out communicative purposes and textual regularities of a genre. Taking the studies of Swales (1990, 2004) as a necessary criterion for defining the genre, the researcher selected 50 Nigerian 419 scam emails to analyze their internal structure (moves-steps) in order to find out whether stages of each text entail a common order and content which conveys particular intention of luring the recipient. Moreover, some significant language aspects relevant to persuasion strategies employed to gain the victims' confidence were also investigated. Such communicative purposes as providing an opening salutation, opening an email, introducing a purpose, phishing, requesting further action, ending an email, providing a complementary close and providing a signature block are found. Furthermore, unethical techniques like appealing to pity, trust, avarice/exploiting basic human desires and needs, making the scam look urgent and setting deadlines, asking victims to comply in several steps, and appealing to politeness and genuine are hidden in each scam email and used as a tool for conveying mischievous intentions to recipients. Understanding a specific structure for this type of text offers rich pedagogical and occupational possibilities for a study of persuasion, which helps pre-experienced and experienced business students to develop their awareness and critical faculties for evaluation of electronic information.

Keyword:, Nigerian 419 letter, Scam Email, Moves, Steps, Genre Analysis

1. Introduction

Dear Partner,

This message might come to you as a surprise. However, it all just my urgent needs for a foreign partner that made me to contact you for this transaction. I got your contact from yahoo tourist search while I was searching for a foreign partner. I assured of your capability and reliability to champion this business opportunity when I was praying to God or Allah about you. I am a banker by profession in Burkina Faso West Africa and currently holding the post of assistant Audit & Accounts director in our bank.

We personally believe that from time to time, most of us may have read similar messages in one or many emails or perhaps mailed letters unexpectedly sent to you. Looking at first glance, we will find that it takes the shape of a recognizable layout of business English letters in general. A number of recipients, more or less, might have taken the bait attracted in its fabulous promise and ended up with agreeing to allow the sender to park a substantial amount of money in their accounts. But before that, the victim must pay a number of fees in advance as a guarantee of the promised grand sum.

In actual fact, this email is one kind of digital documents sent to a large number of recipients over the Internet as unsolicited or unwanted electronic messages, the so-called "spam". This particular kind of spam is the advance fraud fee initiative, more commonly referred to as the "Nigerian letter", or "Nigerian Money

"Offers", "Nigerian 419 scam", or just "419". The name comes originally from the fact that this scam violates Section 419 of Nigeria's Criminal Code (Nigeria - The 419 Coalition Website, n.d.). Sandler (2010) defines Nigerian 419 scam as a fraudulent email in which a stranger (often from Nigeria, and also from other places in Africa, Asia, or Europe) contacts you and asks for your permission to transfer a large amount of money obtained in any of a number of hard-to-believe situations to your account. In 2011, this type of scam email was ranked seventh among the top 10 internet scams, accounting for 1.60% of the total percentage according to the National Consumer League's Fraud Center of the US (Fraud.org, n.d.).

This paper reports on the first part of the authors' research project focusing on the ESP genre analysis of the Nigerian 419 scam emails. This sub-system of discourse analysis has been used by a number of previous researchers who studied academic and business written texts in order to analyze research articles, theses, textbooks, news reports, and business emails (e.g. Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993; Paltridge, 1997; Fortanet, Posteguillo, Palmer, & Coll, 1998). The reason why documents of a particular written text are selected to be analyzed is due to the fact that their common communicative purposes can be identified. This communicative purpose is in fact a key criterion to categorize texts into groups of the same genres. That is, a schematic structure of each genre can be formed. Swales (1990), one of the pioneers in the field, has put it as follows:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. The purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community. The genre names inherited and produced by discourse communities and imported by others constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation. (p. 58)

Since genre analysis has become a popular framework for analyzing the forms and rhetorical functions of non-literary discourse. A number of researchers from various backgrounds in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) have taken this effective framework as a criterion to identify rhetorical functions in a particular document. Findings provide theoretical ground for ESP courses. For example, Henry and Roseberry (2001) studied the moves and strategies of the genre "Letter of Application" written by native speakers of English. Saorin-Iborra and Ruiz-Garrido (2001) studied the structure regularities of tourist leaflets. Pinto dos Santos (2002) looked into the genre of business letters of negotiation. Vergaro (2004) examined discourse strategies of Italian and English sales promotion letters. Saesiew (2005) analyzed the lexicon-grammatical features and the move structures of the motoring news story. Thaveewong (2006) applied the original theory (moves-steps) of Swales (1990) to study language functions in business letters. Kerkeb (2013) studied a genre analysis of business English emails of Algerian employees.

To date, most studies of genre have been carried out with several writing tasks in academic and professional contexts in order to find out about, as mentioned by Dudley-Evans (1998, p. 9), "what learners need to do with language, what texts they use and how these texts work". However, research into the genre of scam emails is still rare in the literature. Not many researchers have studied scam emails in relation to the deceptions found on the Internet or electronic technology. Since there are massive forms of spamming at present, the concept of genre can contribute to our understanding of these emerging electronic texts. One example can be seen in the work of Cukier, Ngwenyama, and Nesselroth-Woyzbun (2008) who investigated the language functions in the electronic spam emails, including Nigerian letters. According to them, the genre of spam is not fixed and its messages do not just belong to one single genre but adaptations of printed texts that we are familiar to on the Internet and the genre of Nigerian letters uses such simple tools as the greeting, the characters, the setting, the plot and the use of language to provoke the victim's intuitive reactions to basic human desires and needs.

Continuing in the same vein, the present researchers aim to study structure regularities of a corpus of Nigerian 419 scam emails. It is hoped that the internal structure of this fraudulent writing can be a warning of

the risks of believing the information conveyed by the scammers to the addressees, who could be either those in the business circles or general internet users. No matter what educational levels these people have or what careers they are in, they can be the target of and lured by those scammers. Moreover, this study also provides a backdrop for the educational and linguistic fields, especially the ESP classroom. It analyses moves (communicative purposes) and steps (rhetorical strategies) found in fraudulent e-mails disguised as business English emails. The research is then guided by the following two research questions:

- 1) What is an internal structure (moves and steps) of Nigerian 419 scam emails?
- 2) Are there any similarities or differences in terms of internal structures between Nigerian 419 scam emails and business emails?

2. Methodology

2.1 Materials

Materials used in this study were authentic spam emails the researchers directly received by themselves and those given by their colleagues, friends and relatives. The data collection was limited to a period of five months from June 18 to October 25, 2013. In all, 85 spam emails were collected, including various types, namely general merchandise sales (7, 9%), phishing (8, 10%), lottery scams (20, 23%) and Nigerian 419 scams (50, 58%). Thus, 50 Nigerian 419 scam emails were selected as a corpus for analysis. The word length of each email was not limited. Even though there can be other variables concerning the email composers such as nationalities, genders, ages, and status, which may influence the analysis of these emails, this study focuses only on the content of emails and their physical layouts.

2.2 Frameworks for data analysis

Two frameworks were employed in this study. First, Swales's (1990, p. 141) CARs model derived from his analysis of research introductions was employed as the schematic structure for analyzing and coding of the moves and steps of the Nigerian 419 scam emails in this study.

Move 1: Establishing a territory

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Step 1: | Claiming centrality | and/or |
| Step 2: | Making topic generalization(s) | and/or |
| Step 3: | Reviewing items of previous research | |

Move 2: Establishing a niche

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------|----|
| Step 1A: | Counter-claiming | or |
| Step 1B: | Indicating a gap | or |
| Step 1C: | Question-raising | or |
| Step 1D: | Continuing a tradition | |

Move 3: Occupying the niche

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|----|
| Step 1A: | Outlining purposes | or |
| Step 1B: | Announcing present research | |
| Step 2: | Announcing principles findings | |
| Step 3: | Indicating RA structure | |
-

Figure 1: Swales's (1990, p. 141) CARs model

The term "move" is "the defined and bounded communicative act that is designed to achieve one main communicative objective" (Swales & Feak, 2000, p. 35) and "a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse" (Swales, 2004, p. 229). According to Connor and Mauranen (1999, p. 51), the moves identified in a particular genre are considered the tools for achieving the fulfillment of its overall communicative purpose. These moves may vary in length and size from just one sentence to several paragraphs and perform flexible functions. In addition, each of move is typically made up of one or several "steps". These smaller language functional units are embodied by linguistic realizations or exponents (Swales, 1990). Steps can be occurring to build moves and support the communicative purposes in moves as each step includes the details which can contribute to and guarantee the

validity of the move (rhetorical strategies). However, some moves which are meaningful may not need any steps to support them.

To find out whether there are any similarities and differences in terms of internal structures between Nigerian 419 scam emails and business English emails, the emails dominant moves and steps identified by Kerkeb (2013) are used as the schematic structure for comparison.

Move 1: Identifying the Subject (no steps are used with)

Move 2: Salutation (no steps are used with)

Move 3: Establishing Credentials

Step 1 referring to previous contact

Step 2 indicating enclosure or acknowledging piece of information

Move 4: Soliciting/Providing Information

Step 1 requesting/specifying product/service detail

Step 2 requesting/specifying transaction

Move 5: Promoting Further Contact

Step 1 expressing expectation of reply/attention

Move 6: Ending politely (no steps are used with)

Move 7: Signature (no steps are used with)

Figure 2: The emails dominant moves and steps (Kerkeb, 2013, p. 35)

According to this researcher, four moves namely, identifying the subject (Move 1), salutation (Move 2), ending politely (Move 6), and signature (Move 7) are considered the "framing moves" which contribute to the layout of the email genres, whereas the other three moves (establishing credentials (Move 3), soliciting/providing information (Move 4), and prompting further contact (Move 5)) represent the "content moves" which convey communicative purposes.

3. Findings

3.1 The Nigerian 419 scam emails dominant moves and steps

In an attempt to identify the genres that characterize the collected Nigerian 419 scam emails, a corpus of 50 emails was examined. Table 1 below illustrates the existence of the moves and their steps identified in the corpus.

Table 1: Distributions of moves and steps in Nigerian 419 scam emails

Move/Step	Frequency (%)
Move 1: Providing an opening salutation	33 (66%)
Step 1.1: Using a formal salutation	or 3 (9.09%)
Step 1.2: Using an informal salutation	30 (90.90%)

This move provides salutations or greeting expressions saying hello to the recipient. 66% of the collected emails were generally expressed with either formal or informal salutations, depending on the way in which scammers choose to behave toward the recipient. Thus, these two kinds of greetings become two steps that support this move. The former may include expressions like Dear Sir/Madam, Dear Partner, Dear Beneficiary and the latter Dear Friend, Hello, My Dear friend, Dearest, Dearly Beloved. The majority occurrence of informal salutations indicates scammers' tendencies to personalize the scam.

Move 2: Opening an email	41 (82%)
Step 2.1: Introducing yourself	and/or 37 (90.24%)
Step 2.2: Indicating the source and how the addressee's email address has been obtained	12 (29.26%)

82% of the present corpus contained this move. The scammer uses it to start tricking the

recipient by making the scam look legitimate. Two strategies scammers use could be introducing themselves as an authorized person in his workplace to impress the addressee and/or telling how they have received the addressee's email address.

Example 1: "I am the account officer to late Mr..... (Name)..... from.....Who is the gold merchant Agent here in Ouagadougou Burkina Faso." (EM 23)

Example 2: "I sourced your email contact through the internet in search of trusted person who can asset me." (EM 1)

Move 3: Introducing a purpose	50 (100%)
Step 3.1: Making up a lure story	and/or 35 (70%)
Step 3.2: Asking for help	and/or 5 (10%)
Step 3.3: Offering benefits	47 (94%)

This occurred in all Nigerian 419 scam emails, accounting for 100% of the corpus. Scammers explain why their emails have been sent to the addressee. Three strategies may be employed to deceive the recipient: making up a lure story, asking for help, and offering benefits.

Example 1: "My late father was Principal Protection Officer to President Yahya Jammeh. He died on the 19 Nov 2007 at the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital..." (EM 1)

Example 2: "I decided to make this business proposal to you and release the money to you as the next of kin or relation to the deceased for the safety and subsequent disbursement since nobody is coming for it." (EM 38)

Example 3: "I want you to take 40% of the total money for your personal use while 60% of the money will be used to be taking care of my son when I died." (EM 26)

Move 4: Phishing	44 (88%)
Step 4.1: Providing a fake form to fill in	and/or 28 (63.63%)
Step 4.2: Luring into contacting a fake banking officer	and/or 5 (11.36%)
Step 4.3: Introducing a new contact person and/or giving new contact details	23 (52.27%)

The word "phishing" is a computer hacker's description of "fishing" for information. This move appeared in 88% of the collected emails. Scammers trick the recipient into giving secret information about his/her bank account or credit card. Three strategies used were identified. First, scammers may provide a fake form to fill in:

Example 1: "I will require from the following details: 1) Your full name; 2) Your residential address in full; 3)Your mobile number (cell) telephone number; 4) Tel/Fax number; 5) Brief information on your profile, this should include your age, marital status and nature of job." (EM 34)

Second, they may lure the recipient into contacting a fake banking officer through a provided Web:

Example 2: "You can catch more story on this website: [http://www.\(provided URL\).com](http://www.(provided URL).com)" (EM 30)

Third, they may introduce a new contact person and/or give new contact details:

Example 3: "So you advice to contact the western union operator Mr. ... right now via email and re-confirm your information to him right away so that he will send you, your money control number of your first payment of USD\$5,000 UDS for you to pick it up in any western union near you." (EM 8)

Move 5: Requesting further action	31 (62%)
Step 5.1: Asking for an immediate reply	and/or 29 (93.54%)
Step 5.2: Asking for keeping this contact in secret	8 (25.80%)

This move took 62% of the occurrence. Scammers may request the addressee to react to their emails in two ways: asking for an immediate reply and/or asking for keeping this contact in secret not to tell others about their contact.

Example 1: "I urgent you to contact me immediately for further details in mind that the bank has given us a date limit." (EM 23)

Example 2: "Please all communication should be through email for confidential purposes." (EM 1)

Move 6: Ending an email	34 (68%)
Step 6.1: Closing the email in a courteous manner and/or	28 (82.35%)
Step 6.2: Motivating the addressee to do the desired action	24 (70.58%)

This move accounted for 68% of the corpus. Two elements were founded in this move to perform a supporting role for the scammer's communicative purposes. The former is closing the email in a courteous matter:

Example 1: "If you will be of assistance, I will surely appreciate and thank you for your kindness in giving me this help" (EM 29)

The latter covers urging the addressee to do the desired action again before ending:

Example 2: "Please act fast. I am waiting for your urgent response; feel free to ask me any question." (EM 23)

Move 7: Providing a complimentary close	37 (74%)
Step 7.1: Using a formal close	or 30 (81.08%)
Step 7.2: Using an informal close	7 (18.91%)

74% of the selected emails were ended with either formal or informal complimentary closes, depending on the way in which scammers intend to please the recipient. Those which are formal may include: Yours sincerely, Best regards, Yours Faithfully, Sincerely while those that are informal could be: Thanks, Good bye, Thanks and regards, Yours in Christ. The majority occurrence of formal complimentary closes suggests scammers' disposition to make the scam look legitimate.

Move 8: Providing a signature block	47 (94%)
94% of 419 emails in this study were provided with the sender' signature and position, a similar means by which the messages in business emails are closed.	

Totally, eight moves and 15 steps have been identified. Move 3's rate of occurrence corresponds to the largest share of the corpus (100%) while Move 5's the smallest (62%). Based on the above results, three moves: providing an opening salutation(Move 1), providing a complimentary close (Move 7), and providing a signature block (Move 8) are considered representing "frame moves" which imitate the layout of the email genre, whereas the other five (i.e. opening an email (Move 2), introducing a purpose (Move 3), phishing (Move 4), requesting further action (Move 5), and ending an email(Move 6) signifying "lure moves" which convey the communicative purposes of the scam genre. Moves 1-7 comprise two or three steps functioning as rhetorical strategies that make the recipient susceptible to the scam. It is worthwhile to mention here that the paragraphing of the analyzed scam emails, especially Moves 2-6, may be shuffled without corresponding to the move boundaries. The schematic structure of the messages where these moves and steps occurred is shown in an excerpt (EM 46) below. The underlined part highlights a step supporting the move to which it belongs.

Table 2: A sample email of the Nigerian 419 scam genre

Move 1:	<u>My dearest friend,</u>	Step 1.2
Move 4:	<u>COULD YOU PLEASE REPLY ME THROUGH MY PRIVATE</u> <u>EMAIL ADDRESS (sai mumuni@ig.com.br) AFTER</u> <u>GOING THROUGH THIS MESSAGE FOR CONFIDENTIAL</u> <u>REASONS</u>	Step 4.3
Move 2:	I know that this mail will come to you as a surprise. <u>I am the</u>	Step 2.1

	Manager of Bill and Exchange at the Foreign Remittance Department of Bank of Africa (BOA); in my department I discovered an abandoned sum of (\$10 Million US Dollars).	
Move 3:	In an account that belongs to one of our foreign customer who died along with his entire family in July 21 2003 in a plane crash. Since we got the information about his death, we have been expecting his next of kin to come over... View the website for more information about the deceased. http://www.sptimes.com/2003/07/21/Worldandnation/12_Americans_die_in_K.shtml It is therefore upon this discovery that I now decided to make this business proposal to you because a nationality of my country cannot apply or stand as the next of Kin since the deceased was a foreigner.	Step 3.1
	I will like you indicating your interest to help me in transferring it into your Bank account, and I agree that 40% of this money will be for you as foreign partner, in respect to the provision of a foreign account While 60% would be for me because I don't want this money to go into the Bank treasury as unclaimed Bill.	Step 3.2
		Step 3.3
Move 5:	I Hope that you will not expose or betray this trust and confident that I have Repose on you for the mutual benefit of our both families. In our Banking law and guideline here stipulates that if such money remained unclaimed after 10 years and above, the money will be transferred into the Bank treasury as unclaimed fund. Upon receipt of your reply, I will give you full details on how the business will be executed.	a
Move 4:	Here is my Private email address: (sai_mumuni@ig.com.br) Please, reply me through this email address for security purpose.	Step 4.3
Move 6:	I am waiting soonest to hear from you.	Step 6.1
Move 7:	Yours Sincerely,	Step 7.1
Move 8:	Mr. Sai Mumuni	

The following moves and step represent the above email:

Move 1: Providing an opening salutation

Step 1.2: Using an informal salutation

Move 4: Phishing

Step 4.3: Introducing a new contact person and/or giving new contact details

Move 2: Opening an email

Step 2.1: Introducing yourself

Move 3: Introducing a purpose

Step 3.1: Making up a lure story

Step 3.2: Asking for help

Step 3.3: Offering benefits

Move 5: Requesting further action

Step 5.1: Asking for an immediate reply

Move 4: Phishing

Step 4.3: Introducing a new contact person and/or giving new contact details

Move 6: Ending an email

Step 6.1: Closing the email in a courteous manner

Move 7: Providing a complimentary close

Step 7.1: Using a formal close

Move 8: Providing a signature block

Obviously, this 419 writer eagerly stated his/her phishing tactics (Move 4) at the beginning of the message by giving a new contact email (Step 4.3) right after addressing an informal salutation (Move 1, Step

1.2). By doing so and by reiterating it again before ending the email, the writer is emphasizing the significance of Move 4 (Phishing) in expectation of gaining the victim's confidence and personalizing the scam.

3.2 The identification of the Nigerian 419 scam emails' communicative purposes

Communicative purposes dominating the messages embedded in the collected emails were examined. Five distinct categories of communicative purposes were discovered in the corpus.

- 1) Make false introductions
- 2) State the purpose of making (deceptive) contact
- 3) Lure the victim into a fabulous offer
- 4) Set the victim into a follow-up scene
- 5) Make false endings

Apart from these, no other communicative purposes were identified in any of the 50 emails. These purposes distinguish five categories of genres. The first category of messages can be named the "False Introduction Genre", the second category "Trap Genre", the third "Grab Genre", the fourth "Hammer Genre", and the fifth "False Goodbye Genre". Accounting for 82% of the corpus, introduction genre messages tell the recipient the sender's fake identity and/or indicate the source and how his/her email address has been obtained. Example 1 below shows this genre.

The five communicative purposes mentioned earlier were conveyed in the majority of the messages through these eight moves, pointing to the shared set of communicative purposes of lies and deceit.

Example 1: False introduction genre messages (original data kept intact)

"I am Mr.....(Name).....,the manager in charge of Accounting and auditing department of Africa Development Bank (A.D.B)" (EM 3)

"I have been searching through public records., I sourced your email from a human resource profile database in the chamber." (EM 23)

Corresponding to the biggest portion of the collected data (100%), trap genre messages represented the most important communicative purpose of the genre. This includes messages that deliver a make-up story to ask the recipient for assistance in parking in his/her bank account fabulous hard-earned riches whose owner does not want to part with. This promises substantial funds as a reward.

Example 2: Trap genre messages (original data kept intact)

"I am Mrs.....from Estonia, the wife of late Mr.....Who died in the year 2002 Air Crash on April 15, in Bussan, South Korea Aircraft: Boeing B-767-200-ER Rag: B-2552 Airline: Air China Flight NO: 129 Fatalities: 166:128 on his business trip. We were married for eleven years without children and since the death of my husband I decide not to remarry or get a child outside my matrimonial home." (EM 29)

"I know that I am going to be in with God. If you will be of assistance, I will surely appreciate and thanks you for your kindness in giving me this help." (EM 29)

"Hence, I am inviting you for a business deal where this money can be shared between us in the ratio of 60% for me and 40% for you." (EM 49)

The Grab genre included 88% of the messages. It is comparable to the practice of trying to trick the victims into giving their secret bank information. It provides a fake form to fill in. It lures the victims into contacting a fake banking officer. Grab genre messages may introduce a new contact person and/or give new contact details.

Example 3: Grab genre messages (original data kept intact)

"Please fill the below: 1) Full name and address:, 2) Country of residence; 3)Age and telephone number:" (EM 8)

"There are links to even sign up as well...Check it out ASAP. <http://www. URL.com>" (EM 37)

"Now contact my secretary in Burkina-Faso West Africa through her e-mail id (ma_am.xxxx@hotmail.com) ask her to sent you ATM worths sum of (\$850,000.00 US Dollars) (EM 17)

The Hammer is another genre identified. It consisted of 62% of the messages which hammer the deceptive tricks into the victims before the email ends. These messages include asking for an immediate reply and/or suggest keeping the sender's contact in secret.

Example 4: Hammer genre messages (original data kept intact)

“So you advice to contact the western union operator Mr..... right now via email and re-confirm your information to him right away so that he will send you, your money control number of your first payment of USD\$5,000 UDS for you to pick it up in any we” (EM 8)

“Please all communication should be through this email address: misssemiraibrahim@xxx.com for confidential purposes.” (EM 42)

The last genre, the False Goodbye, took 68% of the corpus. Goodbye messages are used when the scam writer wants to signal his/her ending of the email. These messages may consist of providing polite expressions disguised in a courteous business manner and/or strengthening the recipient's motivation to do the desired action.

Example 5: Goodbye genre messages (original data kept intact)

“Waiting for your urgent reply confidentially for more detail.” (EM 26)

“I am waiting for your urgent respond to enable us proceed further for the transfer” (EM 11)

3.3 A comparison between the internal structures identified in Nigerian 419 scam emails and business English emails

In order to find out whether there are any similarities and differences in relation to the internal structure of both Nigerian 419 scam emails and business English emails, the identified moves of the two genres were compared. See Table 3 below.

Table 3: A comparison between the internal structures identified in Nigerian 419 scam emails and business emails

Rhetorical organization of Nigerian 419 scam emails (419)	Rhetorical organization of business English emails (BE) (Kerkeb, 2013, p. 35)
-	Move 1: Identifying the subject (no steps are used with)
Move 1: Providing an opening salutation	Move 2: Salutation (no steps are used with)
Step 1.1: Using a formal salutation Or Step 1.2: Using an informal salutation	
Move 2: Opening an email	Move 3: Establishing credentials
Step 2.1: Introducing yourself and/or Step 2.2: Indicating the source and how the addressee's email address has been obtained	Step 1: Referring to previous contact Step 2: Indicating enclosure or acknowledging piece of information
Move 3: Introducing a purpose	Move 4: Soliciting/Providing information
Step 3.1: Making up a lure story and/o r Step 3.2: Asking for help and/o r Step 3.3: Offering benefits	Step 1: Requesting/specifying product/service detail Step 2: Requesting/specifying transaction
Move 4: Phishing	-
Step 4.1: Providing a fake form to fill in and/o r Step 4.2: Luring into contacting a fake banking officer and/o r	

Step 4.3: Introducing a new contact person and/or giving new contact details

Move 5: Requesting further action		Move 5: Prompting further contact
Step 5.1: Asking for an immediate reply	and/or	Step 1: Expressing expectation of reply/attention
Step 5.2: Asking for keeping this contact in secret		
Move 6: Ending an email		-
Step 6.1: Closing the email in a courteous manner	and/or	
Step 6.2: Motivating the addressee to do the designed action		
Move 7: Providing a complimentary close		Move 6: Ending politely (no steps are used with)
Step 7.1: Using a formal close	or	
Step 7.2: Using an informal close		
Move 8: Providing a signature block		Move 7: Signature (no steps are used with)

As can be seen in the above table, six moves identified in the Nigerian 419 scam emails genre and the business English emails genre share a common coherent communicative function. These similar moves include 1) Move 1: Providing an opening salutation (419) and Move 2: Salutation (BE), 2) Move 2: Opening an email (419) and Move 3: Establishing Credentials (BE), 3) Move 3: Introducing a purpose (419) and Move 4: Soliciting/Providing Information (BE), 4) Move 5: Requesting further action (419) and Move 5: Prompting Further Contact (BE), 5) Move 7: Providing a complimentary close (419) and Move 6: Ending politely (BE), and 6) Move 8: Providing a signature block (419) and Move 7: Signature (BE). The first, fifth, and sixth similarities contribute to the common layout of both genres. Moreover, the second, third, and fourth similarities reveal particular communicative purposes of each genre. That is, the Nigerian 419 scam emails genre intends to make the false introductions (Move 2), to state the purpose of making (deceptive) contact (Move 3), and to set the victim into a follow-up scene (Move 5), whereas the business English emails genre aims to deliver other documents for information or for comments (Move 3), to inform employees of the corporation's activities or issues (Move 4), and to exchange information about the corporation's activities (Move 5).

Differences, on the other hand, appear in the absence of certain moves in both genres. The Nigerian 419 scam emails genre does not take the Identifying the subject move of business English emails into consideration. This is due to the fact that the subject header field which enables all email users to write a few words inside it in order to title the message is regarded as the electronic format created by the email service provider, thus not including in the classification of the genre's moves. The business English emails genre does not include the Phishing move and the Ending an email move because this genre is clean, having no intention to masquerade its real communicative purposes. Moreover, as the major communicative purposes of the two email genres are totally different (i.e. *fraudulent* versus *clean*), steps used to support moves in both genres are also poles apart. That is, writers of both genres employ diverse rhetorical strategies in conveying their messages.

4. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

The ESP genre analysis in this exploration has brought some evidence about the way Nigerian 419 scammers organize their deceptive business writings and the rhetorical strategies they employ in passing on their deceptive messages. The following schematic structure reveals the rhetorical organization of the genre of scam emails:

Move 1: Providing an opening salutation (including an formal or informal salutation)

Move 2: Opening an email (introducing yourself and/or indicating the source and how the addressee's email address has been obtained)

Move 3: Introducing a purpose (informing the purposes of sending email, e.g. making lure stories, asking for help, offering benefits)

Move 4: Phishing (providing a fake form to fill in, luring into contacting a fake banking officer or introducing a new contact person and/or giving new contact details)

Move 5: Requesting further action (asking for an immediate reply and/or asking for keeping this contact in secret)

Move 6: Ending an email (closing the email in a courteous manner and/or motivating the addressee to do the desired action)

Move 7: Providing a complimentary close (providing an formal or informal close)

Move 8: Providing a signature block (signing name to end the email)

From the results observed, it may be concluded that the organizational structure of Nigerian 419 scam emails is somewhat predictable and easy to be followed. Writing this kind of scam can be effortless for scammers. That is why a huge array of scams has been increasingly designed and sent over the Internet to catch as many victims who are susceptible to the offer as possible. The texts studied suggest four compulsory moves (i.e. Moves 1, 3, 7, 8) and four optional ones (i.e. Moves 2, 4, 5, 6). Moves 1, 7, and 8 are obligatory as they are frame moves which form the layout of the email genre. If a scammer intends to make his/her scam email to arrive disguised as ordinary communications, he/she needs these moves. Appearing in all collected emails, Move 3, although one of the lure moves, needs to be stationed as it is key to erode the recipient's skepticism and appeal to deep rooted emotions, hopes, and dreams. Taken together, the elements of this move inform the recipient of the purpose of sending the received email, reveal a lure story, ask for help, and offer a lucrative deal. Thus, it is a must for this scam email genre. The remaining four lure moves (i.e. Moves 2, 4, 5, 6) would be considered optional as they are not present in all emails of the corpus, varying according to the unethical stories the scammer fakes out. This optional occurrence corresponds to the idea that moves are options on which the writer bases his/her particular arguments, depending on the choice and ordering of those designated moves (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). These results thus theoretically suggest that genre analysis has to recognize the fact that genre can become a deceptive tool. As one genre can masquerade another, multi layers of a particular spam message need to be carefully looked at in order to understand its genuine intent (Cukier et al., 2008).

In comparison with the business English writing way, the internal structure of the 419 emails looks similar to that of the business English emails. Both genres share certain features of the email genre layout. The results can be pedagogically useful for syllabus development and production of teaching materials for business English courses. Business English students should be advised that the messages in Nigerian 419 spam genre resemble the traditional genre in their manifest form so as to enhance the possibility of bringing out certain behaviors, but the actual intent of this spam are in fact dissimilar to what they appear. For classroom exercises, a diagram showing a comparison of the rhetorical organizations of both genres can be introduced to students so that the disguised communicative intentions of the scam genre can be revealed. In-class group discussions can be assigned for students to analyze such issues as persuasive strategies, audience, language usage, format etc. Hard-to-believe stories described in the scam emails can serve as entertaining classroom activities. More in-depth research exercises can also be carried out in terms of researching some of the names mentioned in the factual content of 419s to see whether these people are identifiable. In the same way, having students examine some of the websites mentioned in 419s can be another interesting assignment.

For business people who most of the time sit in front of computer monitors, the realization that "...the Internet, with its potential for mass mailings, for anonymity and global reach, has transformed what was a minor source of fraud to a significant criminal threat" (Cukier et al., 2008, p. 87) is really worth noting. They should keep it in mind that scammers are successful persuaders who receive considerable, albeit disreputable, rewards for their endeavors. Sensible people are prone to succumb to the allure of instant fortune scammers are luring. Developing their decisive faculties for examining Web information is definitely worth a try.

Needless to say, future genre-based research is needed to be conducted in order to investigate how genre theory can contribute to our thoughts of new electronic forms emerging with hidden agendas as the globalized world progresses. In addition, the utilization of ESP genre analysis in pedagogy is another aspect to research into. This is to explore whether it serves as an effective tool to teach business English and business communication.

REFERENCES

- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analyzing genre: Language use in professional settings*. Harlow: Longman.
- Connor, U., & Mauranen, A. (1999). Linguistic analysis of grant proposals: European Union research grants. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(1), 47–62.
- Cukier, W. L., Ngwenyama, O., & Nesselroth-Woysbun, E. J. (2008). Genres of spam: Expectations and deceptions. *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*, 20(1), 69-92.
- Dudley-Evans, A. (1998). Introduction. In I. Fortanet, S. Posteguillo, J. C. Palmer, & J. F. Coll (Eds.), *Genre studies in English for academic purposes* (pp. 9-12). Castellon: Universitat Jaume I.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fortanet, I., Posteguillo, S., Palmer, J. C., & Coll, J. F. (Eds.) (1998). *Genre studies in English for academic purposes*. Castello: Universitat Jaume I.
- Fraud.org. (n.d.). Top scams of 2011. Retrieved December 25, 2014 from <http://fraudresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/National-Consumers-League-2011-Top-Scams-of-2011.pdf>
- Henry, A., & Roseberry, R. L. (2001). A narrow-angled corpus analysis of moves and strategies of the genre: Letter of Application. *English for Specific Purpose*, 20(2), 153-167.
- Kerkeb, A. (2013). A genre analysis of business English e-mail the case of a multinational's Algerian employees. *Scholars World International Refereed Multidisciplinary*, 1(2), 32-47.
- Nigeria - The 419 Coalition Website. (n.d.). The Nigerian Scam (419 Advance Fee Fraud) Defined. Retrieved March 28, 2015 from <http://home.rica.net/alphae/419coal/>
- Paltridge, B. (1997). *Genre, frames and writing research settings*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Pinto dos Santos, V. B. M. (2002). Genre analysis of business letters of negotiation. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(1), 19-40.
- Saesiew, D. (2005). The genre of motoring news in the Nation and the Bangkok Post (Case study, King's Mongkut University of Technology North Bangkok, Thailand). Retrieved from [http://www.gits.kmutnb.ac.th/ethesis/data/ isbn9741904738.pdf](http://www.gits.kmutnb.ac.th/ethesis/data/isbn9741904738.pdf).
- Sandler, C. (2010). *Teen's guides: Living with the Internet and online dangers*. New York: Facts on File.
- Saorin-Iborra, A., & Ruiz-Garria, M. F. (2001). The genre of tourist leaflets. *PASAA*, 32, 71-81.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research genres: Exploration and applications*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2000). *English in today's research world: A writing guide*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Thaweeewong, P. (2006). *Genre analysis of English business e-mail correspondence in internal communication between Thais and Germans in profit and non-profit organizations*. (Doctoral dissertation, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand).
- Vergaro, C. (2004). Discourse strategies of Italian and English sales promotion letters. *English for Specific Purposes*, 23(2), 181-207.