The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity

Rodney H. Jones

Creativity and interdiscursive performance in professional communication

Publication details
Vijay K. Bhatia
Published online on: 08 Sep 2015

How to cite :- Vijay K. Bhatia. 08 Sep 2015, Creativity and interdiscursive performance in professional communication from: The Routledge Handbook of Language and Creativity Routledge
Accessed on: 31 Oct 2023

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.
Creativity and interdiscursive performance in professional communication

Vijay K. Bhatia

Introduction

Jones (2012: 1) very aptly asks: ‘Does creativity reside in texts . . . or does it reside in people?’ He continues:

Most studies in the humanities, in literary and art criticism, have taken an almost exclusively product based approach to creativity . . . While some have sought to contextualize creative works in their social or historical contexts or to glean from them evidence of the workings of the artist’s mind, the starting point has nearly always been the text.

(Jones, 2012: 1)

In professional communication, however, creativity is as much a function of the use of textual resources as it is of the mindset of the producers of such texts. Therefore it is crucial to investigate both text-internal, as well as text-external, resources that make any instance of professional discourse sociopragmatically successful. Textual resources include lexico-grammar, semantic, and rhetorical, as well as discoursal, many of which are often intertextually appropriated, whereas text-external resources refer to the management, manipulation, or exploitation of a number of contextual generic resources that are interdiscursively appropriated by the expert members of professional and disciplinary discourse communities. There has been substantial published work on the appropriation of text-internal resources in discourse and genre literature (see, for example, Bhatia, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2004; Fairclough, 1993, 1995; Swales, 1990, 1998); however, relatively little attention has been devoted to the creative exploitation of contextual and other text-external resources – in particular, the innovative use of sociopragmatic space (Bhatia, 2004, 2010a) available to a writer in professional contexts. The most obvious examples include not only the appropriation, management, or manipulation of interdiscursive space in corporate disclosure practices whereby the corporate communicators cleverly manipulate various forms of discourses in the same document to further their business interests, but also the participatory mechanism, as in legislative provisions, to address different stakeholders, such as legislators, members of the judiciary, and executive members of the government, who implement these provisions, and, of course, the general public, who are governed by such provisions.
I have discussed elsewhere some aspects of appropriation of such resources (both text-internal, as well as text-external) in corporate disclosure reports (Bhatia, 2008) to achieve their corporate objectives, as well as their ‘private intentions’, and also in international commercial arbitration contexts leading to the interdiscursive colonisation of arbitration practices by litigation practices (Bhatia, 2012). In this chapter, I would like to take the argument further by claiming that, often, this kind of appropriation is meant to achieve interdiscursive creativity in the authors’ writing, which essentially helps them to give effect to relatively novel forms of generic constructs in response to not-so-conventional situational contexts. However, before considering this aspect of creativity in professional discourse, I would like to give a brief account of the nature and function of ‘intertextuality’ and ‘interdiscursivity’ in professional discourse, which, within the framework of critical genre theory, I view as interdiscursive performance (Bhatia, forthcoming).

We can begin by assuming that *intertextuality* refers to the use of prior texts transforming the past into the present (Bakhtin, 1986; Foucault, 1981; Kristeva, 1980). *Interdiscursivity*, on the other hand, refers to more innovative attempts to create various forms of hybrid and relatively novel genres by appropriating or exploiting established conventions or discoursal resources associated with other genres and professional practices. Interdiscursivity thus accounts for a variety of discursive and professional practices, often resulting in ‘mixing’, ‘embedding’, and ‘bending’ of generic norms in specialised contexts (Bhatia, 1995, 1997, 2004). Interdiscursivity thus can be viewed as appropriation of semiotic resources (which may include textual, semantic, sociopragmatic, and generic) across any two or more levels of discourse realisation – especially, those of genre, professional practice, and disciplinary or institutional cultures (see Bhatia, 2010a, for a detailed account). Appropriations across texts thus give rise to intertextual relations, whereas appropriations across professional genres, practices, and cultures constitute interdiscursive relations.

**Creativity in professional communication**

One of the most obvious professional genres in today’s world displaying creativity is the advertising genre, which displays a variety of linguistic and other semiotic strategies to achieve its typical communicative objectives by appropriating text-internal, as well as text-external, resources. The sheer pervasiveness of this genre in our social life leads Featherstone (1991) to identify the world of work in terms of what he calls ‘promotional culture’, in which one finds most of the institutionalised genres, whether they are social, professional, or academic, incorporating at least some elements of promotion. Fairclough (1992: 207) associates some of these discursive processes with what he calls ‘commodification’ of institutional orders of discourse. Referring to such strategies in discourse practices, he points out that:

There is an extensive restructuring of boundaries between orders of discourse and between discursive practices; for example, the genre of consumer advertising has been colonizing professional and public service orders of discourse on a massive scale, generating many new hybrid partly promotional genres.

*(Fairclough, 1993: 141)*

One of the most interesting aspects of such restructuring of discourse boundaries is that, more often than not, such restructuring can be viewed as a key interdiscursive resource for creativity, which, I would like to claim, is primarily responsible for the versatility in genre construction in professional discourses.
Let me give a brief account of what I consider crucial for interpreting interdiscursivity as appropriation of generic resources. As I pointed out earlier (Bhatia, 2010a), interdiscursivity refers to the appropriation of the text-external generic resources, which are primarily of three kinds, that make a particular genre possible (Bhatia, 2004): ‘discursive practices’; ‘discursive procedures’; and different manifestations of ‘professional cultures and identities’, including professional, organisational, institutional, and disciplinary, as well as ethnic and national identities, to name a few.

Discursive practices, on the one hand, are essentially the outcome of specific discursive procedures; on the other hand, they are embedded in specific institutional cultures, and realise various forms of identities – professional and institutional, as well as individual. Discursive practices also include factors such as the choice of a particular genre to achieve a specific objective, and a set of appropriate and effective modes of communication associated with a specific genre. Discursive procedures are related to factors associated with the characteristics of participants who are authorised to make a valid and appropriate contribution, and include participatory mechanisms, which determine what kind of contribution a particular participant is allowed to make and at what stage of the genre construction process, and the other contributing genres that have a valid and justifiable input to the document under construction. Both of these factors, discursive practices and discursive procedures, inevitably take place within the context of typical disciplinary, institutional, and professional cultures, which validate a particular genre and establish sociocultural identities.

It is important to note here that interdiscursivity functions essentially across discursive events and is often based on shared generic or contextual characteristics across two or more discursive constructs; hence some understanding of these shared features is a necessary condition to an adequate understanding of the new construct. Although interdiscursivity has been viewed as a function of appropriation of generic resources across various kinds of contextual boundaries and across genres, such as professional practices, professional identities, and cultures (see, for details, Bhatia, 2004, 2010a, 2012), in addition to these forms of appropriation it is also necessary to identify at least two other forms of management of discursive resources: the management and manipulation of ‘discursive space’ (Bhatia, 2014); and the exploitation of available ‘participant management systems’ (Bhatia, 2010b) to meet professionally shared expectations and objectives, often by mixing ‘private intentions’ and ‘shared objectives’, on the one hand, and meeting and invariably exploiting the expectations of multiple audiences, on the other. It may also be pointed out that often these appropriations, whether text-internal or text-external, discursively operate simultaneously to realise the intended meaning and are often achieved through the rhetorical processes of recontextualisation, reformulation, reframing, or resemiotisation. The full range of appropriations can be represented as in Figure 9.1.

Interdiscursivity, as discussed here, is thus an important function of how members of professional communities participating in a specific discursive act – or, more appropriately, genre – assume a variety of different roles to give expression to their discursive actions. Consider a typical doctor–patient consultation, in which different discourses are interdiscursively mixed to produce a hybrid of different discourses, consisting of the patient’s narration of symptoms, the doctor’s diagnostic response to symptoms leading to prescription of drugs, often including a set of instructions for the nurse, and then the pharmacist’s attempt to turn prescription to medication (Jones, 2013). It may also include the doctor’s advice and instructions, often incorporating reassurance about the patient’s condition, all of them within the same sociopragmatic space. Thus, in addition to the role of a specialist, collaborator, and mediator, the doctor also needs to facilitate mutual
understanding across different levels of specialist knowledge and understanding, convince the patient about his or her diagnostic conclusions, motivate and promote different treatment options, and reassure the patient about continued treatment. Candlin and Maley (1997), in a somewhat similar context, discuss the interdiscursive relations between bargaining, counselling, therapeutic, and legal genres in their study of mediation practice in Australia, thus claiming that interdiscursive use of different professional practices represents an attempt to incorporate strategies from related professional contexts.

Similarly, in the context of legislative drafting, a parliamentary counsel or draftsman invariably needs to manage a participation management system of a complexity that is rarely found in any other form of professional discourse (Bhatia, 2010b: 7). A draftsman not only has to satisfy the legislative assembly or council (which has the political power to make legislation as and when required), the judiciary (which has the power of ultimate authoritative interpretation), and the executive body (which is responsible for the implementation of all of the judicial decisions), but also, and more importantly, must show loyalty to the ordinary citizens of the state, who are the ultimate recipients of legislation. This creates an extremely complex and dynamic system of participation in this typical legal genre, and the parliamentary counsel must manage and manipulate this system to satisfy all of the participants.

This brief review indicates that the appropriation of intertextual and interdiscursive resources, whether linguistic or semiotic, as well as genre conventions at various levels of discursive engagement, are creatively exploited for the construction and interpretation of discursive, as well as social, professional, disciplinary, and institutional practices, and by doing so they tend to encourage interesting and creative patterns of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

Let me give more substance to my argument by considering specific instances of interdiscursive creativity from different professional contexts.
Interdiscursive creativity in corporate disclosure genres

In order to illustrate how interdiscursive appropriation of discoursal boundaries is exploited to achieve ‘private intentions’ within the context of socially shared conventions or expectations, I would like to consider the case of corporate disclosure documents. The focus will not be on what the companies disclose or do not disclose in a particular year, but more importantly on the hidden intentions and motivations as part of their professional practices, which demonstrate the creative use of the sociopragmatic space (Bhatia, 2004) generally available within the broader interpretation of the corporate annual report as a genre. I will also show how corporate writers persuade and convince their stakeholders, including minority shareholders, to accept their perceptions and projections about the future performance of the company in question.

Corporate annual reports have long been considered the pulse of corporate realities. Their main purpose is to inform the company’s shareholders about its performance and health: specifically, its successes and failures, current problems, and prospects for its future development. However, corporate annual reports and other disclosure documents seem to be changing in their function from ‘informing and reporting’ to, increasingly, ‘promoting’ the companies by a strategic underplaying of corporate weaknesses, often ‘bending’ the norms of corporate disclosure genres. One of the interesting aspects of corporate disclosure practices is that of the corporate annual report, which is typically a combination of at least four different discourses strategically positioned within the same discursive space. Corporate annual reports creatively exploit specific lexico-syntactic, as well as sociopragmatic, resources to ‘bend’ the norms and conventions of ‘reporting’ to promote a positive image of the company, even in adverse and challenging economic circumstances. Through these annual reports, the companies often negotiate the tension between the need to underplay a relatively weak corporate performance and to project expectations of good performance, often speculating about the future outlook, especially in contexts in which uncertainties about future economic and corporate growth and performance threaten encouraging prospects in the coming years. In addition, they also need to conform to the legal requirements of disclosure of information for the benefit of corporate stakeholders.

So, essentially, the corporate players make strategic use of four different discourses within the same document:

- **accounting discourse**, which forms a major part of the annual report, duly endorsed and certified by public accountants;
- **financial discourse**, in the form of what is conventionally known as the financial review section of the report;
- **public relations discourse**, in the form of the chairman’s letter to shareholders, for which public accounting firms do not take any responsibility; and
- **legal discourse**, which forms a major part of disclaimers, often necessary to comprehend the full implications of the information disclosed in the report.

Obviously, the most important section of the annual report consists of the accounting information, which essentially incorporates numbers displayed in the form of tables, graphs, and calculations of various kinds. These numbers are originally proposed by the corporation, and are then certified by public accountants to be true and honest representations of the profits and losses of the company or corporation in question. The financial discourse, on the other hand, offers a review of the company’s performance based on the numbers certified by the public accountants, although not certified by them. It is written by financial managers in
the corporation, who generally offer the corporate view of the performance of the company, apparently on the basis of the information included in the accounting section, to which they often refer, albeit selectively. However, there may not always be any explicit relationship between the two forms of discourse. They are positioned in the same interdiscursive space, perhaps to give the impression that one is a true representation, or at least a reflection, of the other, rather than an authoritative interpretation of the other. This strategic appropriation or manipulation of interdiscursive space is meant to project a positive impression in the minds of various stakeholders.

The third kind of discourse, which most readers can understand, is the chairman’s statement, which, in reality, is nothing more than public relations discourse, giving the predictions and projections based on the company performance in the reporting year. Once again, it can be considered at least twice removed from the reality of the accounting discourse, but is generally believed to be based on the certified numbers given elsewhere in the annual report. It is interesting to note that the accounting discourse, which is accessible only to insiders, is strategically appropriated and recontextualised to create the financial discourse, which is relatively more accessible than the former. Since the two are put together and there are frequent references to accounting information, the readers are likely to get the impression that the financial discourse must be a true interpretation of the accounting discourse. However, it is likely that any such ‘resemiotisation’ (Iedema, 2003) of the accounting information may not necessarily be a consistent and true representation of the statistical information, and may even lead to varying interpretations, but the reader is less likely to question if the two sections share the same discursive space. The financial review therefore is a resemiotisation of a ‘convenient selection’ of the accounting discourse meant for those corporate stakeholders who do not have either enough expertise or time to understand the full implications of the accounting discourse. There is an expectation that this section of financial discourse will take into account the main features of the annual report, and there is also an expectation that there will be an adequate degree of referential help available for the reader to go through relevant sections of related textual and numerical information.

Let us consider the discourse of public relations, mentioned briefly above. This discourse, of course, is a further resemiotisation of the earlier discourses, and is meant to reassure stakeholders that the performance of the company is reasonably strong and the future seems even better than the past. There are a few references to facts and figures, which form an integral part of the two earlier discourses, and most of the estimations and predictions are based on impressions and hopes of the chairman. The three discourses, which are taken from the same annual report of a public listed company, are placed in a particular order within the discursive space of the same corporate document, co-constructing the intended meaning and serving a rather typical corporate objective of informing stakeholders, as well as public monitoring authorities, about the performance of the company in the preceding year, while at the same time giving a rather positive impression of the company’s performance to its shareholders in order not to precipitate an undesirable downward trend in share price movement. The three discourses also vary considerably in terms of the technicality and complexity of information, but the most interesting aspect of such reports is that it is the technically complex accounting discourse that has the maximum amount of credibility, in that it is this discourse that is certified by the public accounting firms. As the discourses become less technical, they become less credible, because they reflect only partially the realities of the certified accounting discourse as they are successively recontextualised.

The three discourses thus tend to serve two very different purposes: the accounting discourse and, to a lesser degree, the financial discourse tend to report accurately, on the
basis of figures and a recontextualised selection of these, the corporate performance in the preceding year; the chairman’s letter is meant to promote a positive image of the company to its shareholders in order to sustain their confidence in future corporate performance. All of these discourses are products of very different corporate practices: one centrally located in the conventional and legally required practice of auditing corporate results; the other, an instance of marketing and public relations practice to promote the interest and image of the company. However, the three discourses are strategically placed in the same document, thus establishing an interesting interdiscursive relationship. The real motivation for placing these discourses within the boundaries of the same corporate annual report is that such interdiscursive proximity is likely to lend marketing and public relations discourse the same factual reliability, and hence credibility, that is often presupposed based on the use of numerical data in accounting discourse. The public relations discourse, on its own, is likely to be viewed by the intended audience of shareholders as a promotional effort, but when it is placed in the context of the accounting discourse, it is likely to raise the legitimate presupposition that it may be drawing its conclusions from the accounting numbers, which have been certified by a public authority and accepted by the controlling government agencies. Many of the minority shareholders, the numbers of which have increased considerably in recent years, often lack expertise, and sometimes even the linguistic skills, to fully understand the implications of the accounting or even the financial discourse in the annual report, but when they see the chairman’s letter to shareholders in the same report, which is ‘assumed’ to be based on the accounting data, they are likely to take at least some of the predictions and speculative statements in the letter rather more seriously than otherwise.

Nevertheless, stock exchanges and other public monitoring bodies everywhere have listing rules that contain specific provisions to protect minority shareholders, ensuring that they are given sufficient information through ongoing disclosures to make informed decisions on their investments. Baker & McKenzie, in its April 2002 ‘Corporate Alert’, cites an interesting case from Australia, *GPG (Australia Trading) Pty Ltd v GIO Australia Holdings Ltd* [2001] FCA 1761, in which a shareholder successfully sued GIO for losses for publishing a misleading or deceptive notice in relation to corporate disclosures. Corporations, for their part, guard against any possible (intended or unintended) overestimations, unsupported predictions, or speculative statements in their public relations discourses, and often include yet another form of discourse that is popularly known as the ‘legal disclaimer’, which essentially disclaims all that is claimed in the annual report. Every claim made in the corporate disclosure documents is systematically disclaimed through typical legal statements along the lines that:

> Words such as ‘expect’, ‘anticipate’, ‘intend’, ‘believe’, ‘estimate’, and variations of these words and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, which are based on current plans, estimates, and projections, and therefore undue reliance should not be placed on them.

A good understanding of this creative manipulation or exploitation of interdiscursivity is essential to fully appreciate and understand how corporate writers creatively ‘bend’ generic norms and conventions to communicate modest, or weak, corporate performance without undermining investor confidence in their company. By strategically placing public relations discourse within the sociopragmatic space of the accounting discourse, the company encourages the reader to draw positive, and hopefully reliable, implications. This interdiscursive appropriation of discourses across disciplinary boundaries through various forms of recontextualisation can be summarised as in Figure 9.2.
It is obvious from this discussion that, by using interdiscursivity as a resource with which to understand creativity in corporate and other professional genres and practices, what we are doing is demystifying professional intentions and motivations as part of professional practices – that is, we are attempting to investigate authors’ mindsets, as evidenced by their interdiscursive appropriations.

**Creativity as genre blending**

I would now like to consider one more illustration of a creative manipulation of discursive space in newspaper advertising, often referred to as ‘classified advertising’. It is interesting to note that newspapers, to attract advertisements, promote certain themes in the form of what might be close to an advertorial (that is, an advertisement in the form of an editorial), followed by relevant advertisements of products and services on the same page. The advertorials are often embedded in the form of expert opinions, news reports, or reviews of a specific range of products or services, which are invariably exploited to attract specifically relevant and attractive advertisements. Once again, it is the proximity within the discursive space of the newspaper of which these two genres take strategic advantage in fulfilling the ‘private intentions’ (Bhatia, 2004) of the two participants – that is, the newspaper and the advertising company. A typical classified page from a prominent broadsheet *South China Morning Post* is entitled ‘Directory’ and can be visually represented as in Figure 9.3.

Each weekday, the first page of the classified section in this newspaper contains a different advertorial relevant to a set of advertisements. The first half of the page contains the advertorial and the second half of the page displays the relevant set of advertisements. It may be that such strategic exploitation of discursive space is simply meant to provide advertisers with more privileged space in which to promote their products or services. For instance, in summer, the theme may be about hobbies and other leisure activities, which are likely to be very much in demand during the approaching holiday time. It will give an informative and almost promotional account of three such service providers, giving necessary details in brief, including the fee, as well as the contact details and the website address. This appears to be much more than a conventional advertorial, almost amounting to mini-advertisements, although focusing on not one, but several service providers at the same time. The structure...
of each of these accounts is typical of advertisements (Bhatia, 2004), including some of the crucial rhetorical moves, such as ‘anticipating the needs of potential customers’, ‘offering of service’, ‘essential detailing of the service’, ‘endorsements’, subtle indications of how to ‘seek further information’, and ending with ‘cost and incentives’. Strange though it may seem, but perfectly justifiable in this case, the ‘endorsement’ is by one of the instructors of the company itself, leaving one to wonder whether it is really an advertorial or a sponsored feature. The rhetorical structures of the other two service providers included there are almost exact repetitions of this one. The first can be illustrated as in Table 9.1.

![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Figure 9.3 Classified directory (South China Morning Post)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural element</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential customers’ needs</td>
<td>Most primary school students nominate arts and craft as their favourite subject. The sense of freedom and self-expression the subject provides offers a welcome respite from daily demands of school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering services</td>
<td>During the summer holidays there is a wide variety of courses to choose from catering to children’s artistic interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorsements</td>
<td>“Summer time is holiday season, and it’s a great time for children to explore different artistic talents away from their normal school studies,” says Aidan Wong, an instructor at the Pottery Workshop. “Working with clay, in particular, is a good choice for them to express themselves and create whatever they want.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soliciting response</td>
<td>The Pottery Workshop (<a href="http://www.potteryworkshop.com.cn">www.potteryworkshop.com.cn</a>) in Central runs a summer holiday workshop on ceramic hand-building techniques. All works made during the course will be functional and artistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of the service</td>
<td>The programme involves four two-hour sessions for children aged six and above. Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings throughout July and August.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs and incentives</td>
<td>The cost is HK$1,800, including tuition, equipment and materials. However, there are additional costs for firing finished works</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creativity and interdiscursive performance in professional communication

It is interesting to note that the editorial or a sponsored feature – whatever we decide to view it as – is, in fact, a sequence of three mini-advertisements, all with a consistent rhetorical structure of a typical advertisement, with endorsements from specialists who sometimes represent the individual companies in question. It is a bit difficult to say if it is a paid feature, in which case it would be a subtle way of buying advertising space, with the ‘voice’ of the newspaper promoting the individual products: a very clever and ingenious way of exploiting discursive space in order to express what I have called ‘private intentions’ within the ‘socially accepted communicative purposes’ (Bhatia, 1995: 1). ‘Advertorial’, though a relatively recent form of ‘mixed genre’ (Bhatia, 2004), has a ‘socially accepted communicative purpose’ of reviewing a product or service, but in this case it incorporates ‘embedded advertisements’, thus quite creatively exploiting available discursive space on the top half of the newspaper page.

Creativity as popularisation of disciplinary genres

Another key area of such hybridisation is seen in the creation of popular versions of specialised discourses. Gotti (2014: 22), focusing on popularisation for the purposes of making specialised knowledge accessible to non-specialist readers for information through recontextualisation, makes an interesting point when he claims that an interdiscursively constructed popular version is characterised by its ‘lack of discussion . . . of new scientific knowledge added to the discipline’s conceptual base’. He attributes this to the lack of shared disciplinary knowledge on the part of lay readers, which is an important factor because the main purpose of such popularised versions is essentially informative. In his view:

Popularization often involves not only a reformulation of specialized discourse, but also a ‘recontextualization’ (Calsamiglia and van Dijk 2004: 370) of scientific knowledge originally produced in specific contexts to which the lay public has limited access. This recontextualization implies a process of adaptation of popularization discourse to the appropriateness conditions of the new communicative events and to the constraints of the media employed, which have become quite varied in their nature and are often used in an integrated way.

(Gotti, 2014: 22)

Other instances of such popularisations can be found in brochures and leaflets issued by governments for information regarding health policies and guidelines on new legislation, among many other such efforts. Popularisations are therefore by far the most prolific category in which we find large-scale appropriations of disciplinary discourses for information or entertainment purposes in public space. Examples include, among others: business and scientific reports in newspapers and magazines for lay readers; sports reports in newspapers; science fiction, both in print form, and on television and in film; travel-related television programmes; television programmes and films on law and medicine, such as hospital dramas, and detective and forensic dramas; and documentaries and dramas based on real-life events. All such forms are creatively reconceptualised (and often recontextualised, or resemiotised) hybrid formations that seem to serve a mixture of different, but related, communicative purposes.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have made an attempt to explore the nature of the creative exploitation of interdiscursive sociopragmatic space, claiming that interdiscursivity is central to
our understanding of creativity in professional genres and practices. Focusing on critical interdiscursive performance in genre-based professional contexts, I have examined the interrelationship between discursive practices (constructing, interpreting, and using professional genres) and professional practices (managing professional activities, such as corporate disclosures, public relations, negotiating investor confidence, selling corporate performance, etc.) in typical corporate and other professional contexts. At a more theoretical level, I have made an attempt to underpin the importance of interdiscursivity in studies of language and creativity, highlighting the notion of tension between ‘generic integrity’ (Bhatia, 1993, 1995, 2004) and ‘appropriation of generic resources’ (Bhatia, 1997, 2004) to give expression to creative exploitations in professional contexts. The chapter has argued for a critical genre analysis of discursive and professional actions within professional cultures, by focusing on ‘interdiscursivity’ as interaction between discursive and professional practices in the context of specific professional, corporate, and institutional cultures.

Related topics
creativity and discourse analysis; everyday language creativity

Further reading

This article gives a comprehensive account of interdiscursive appropriation in professional genres.


This is a very useful account of some aspects of interdiscursivity in spoken discourse.


This article gives an insightful account of discoursal hybridity in public discourses.


This article looks at the process of discourse popularisation of disciplinary discourses.

References


