- Instrument messages
  Instrument messages are employed in the same way for all interfaces, if not indicated otherwise in the description. Structure and syntax of the instrument messages are described in Chapter 5.3, "SCPI command structure", on page 263. A detailed description of all messages available for the instrument is provided in the chapter "Remote Control Commands".
  There are different types of instrument messages, depending on the direction they are sent:
  – Commands
  – Instrument responses

Commands

Commands (program messages) are messages the controller sends to the instrument. They operate the instrument functions and request information. The commands are subdivided according to two criteria:

- According to the effect they have on the instrument:
  – **Setting commands** cause instrument settings such as a reset of the instrument or setting the frequency.
  – **Queries** cause data to be provided for remote control, e.g. for identification of the instrument or polling a parameter value. Queries are formed by directly appending a question mark to the command header.
- According to their definition in standards:
  – **Common commands**: their function and syntax are precisely defined in standard IEEE 488.2. They are employed identically on all instruments (if implemented). They refer to functions such as management of the standardized status registers, reset and self-test.
  – **Instrument control commands** refer to functions depending on the features of the instrument such as frequency settings. Many of these commands have also been standardized by the SCPI committee. These commands are marked as "SCPI confirmed" in the command reference chapters. Commands without this SCPI label are instrument-specific; however, their syntax follows SCPI rules as permitted by the standard.

Instrument responses

Instrument responses (response messages and service requests) are messages the instrument sends to the controller after a query. They can contain measurement results, instrument settings and information on the instrument status.

5.1.3 LAN Interface

To be integrated in a LAN, the instrument is equipped with a LAN interface, consisting of a connector, a network interface card and protocols. For remote control via a network, the PC and the instrument must be connected via the LAN interface to a common network with TCP/IP network protocol. They are connected using a commercial RJ45 cable. The TCP/IP network protocol and the associated network services are

preconfigured on the instrument. Software for instrument control and (for specified protocols only) the VISA program library must be installed on the controller.

VISA library

Instrument access via VXI-11 or HiSLIP protocols is achieved from high level programming platforms using VISA as an intermediate abstraction layer. VISA encapsulates the low level VXI or GPIB function calls and thus makes the transport interface transparent for the user. See Chapter 5.1.1, "VISA Libraries", on page 241 for details.

IP address

Only the IP address or the computer name (LAN device name) is required to set up the connection. The IP address/computer name is part of the "VISA resource string" used by the programs to identify and control the instrument.

Forms of the VISA resource string:

- `TCPIP::host address[::LAN device name][::INSTR]`
- `TCPIP::host address::port::SOCKET`

Where:

- `TCPIP` designates the network protocol used
- `host address` is the IP address or host name of the device
- `LAN device name` defines the protocol and the instance number of a subinstrument:
  - `inst0` selects the VXI-11 protocol (optional, default)
  - `hislip0` selects the newer HiSLIP protocol
- `INSTR` indicates the instrument resource class (optional)
- **`port`** determines the used port number
- `SOCKET` indicates the raw network socket resource class

Example:

- Instrument has the IP address *192.1.2.3*; the valid resource string using VXI-11 protocol is:
  `TCPIP::192.1.2.3::INSTR`
- The DNS host name is *RSSM1*; the valid resource string is:
  `TCPIP::RSSM1::hislip0` (HiSLIP)
  `TCPIP::RSSM1::INSTR` (VXI-11)
- A raw socket connection can be established using:
  `TCPIP::192.1.2.3::5025::SOCKET`

Identifying instruments in a network

If several instruments are connected to the network, each instrument has its own IP address and associated resource string. The controller identifies these instruments by the resource string.