

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to define advertising and genre, and discuss the approaches to genre analysis. There is special focus on the move approach which originated in Swales' (1981) analysis of research article introductions, and Kathpalia's nine move structure for straight-sell advertisements. Relevant theories and related literature are also reviewed.

2.2. Advertising

2.2.1 Definition of advertising

The Oxford dictionary (1991) defines general advertising as 'business that deals with the publicising of goods especially to increase sales'.

Harris and Seldon define advertising as a public notice 'designed to spread information with a view to promoting the sales or marketable goods and services' (Harris and Seldon, 1962 : 40 as cited in Vestergaard Torben & Schroder Kim ; 1985 : 2). For the purpose of this study, advertising is defined as a process that attempts to increase sales by various strategies of persuasion .

2.2.2 Types of Advertising

There are two main types of advertising.(Refer to Fig. 2.1)

The first type is non commercial advertising that involves communication from government agencies, institutions, non-governmental organisation and other bodies to disseminate information, to promote a healthy lifestyle, to appeal for charity and assistance, and other purposes. Some examples of this are AIDS campaigns, blood donation drives, health promotions and similar public service orientated activities.

The second type is commercial advertising which can be further broken down into 3 types based on their functions: prestige or goodwill advertising , industrial or trade advertising and consumer advertising.

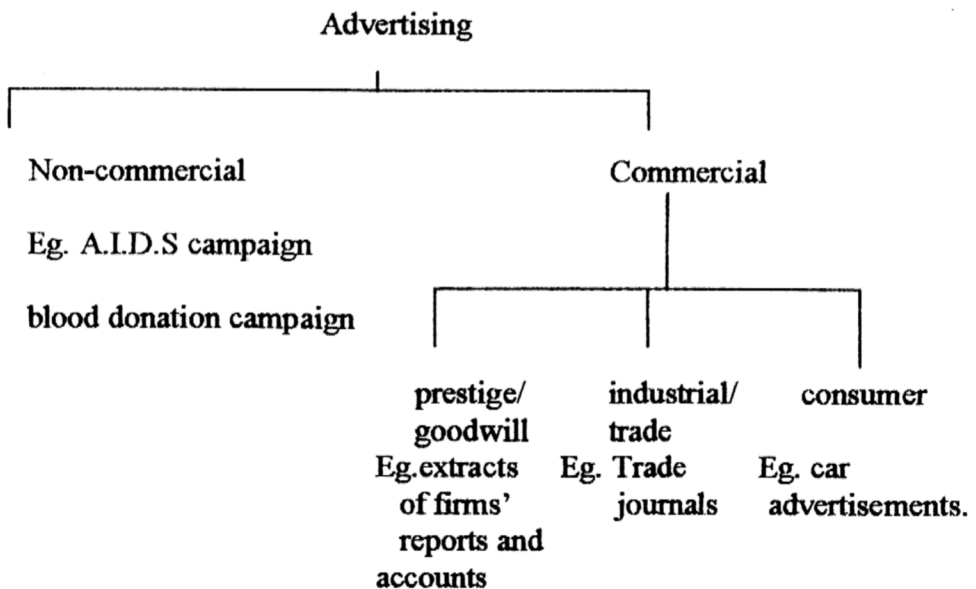


Fig. 2.1 Types of Advertising

Leech states that most advertising falls into the latter category i.e. 'commercial consumer advertising'. (Leech, 1966 : 25 as cited in Vestergaard Torben & Schroder Kim ; 1985 : 1). This apparently is the most frequent type, the type on which money and effort is spent and the type which affects most consumers. This is one of the reasons why this study focuses on commercial consumer advertising.

One of the main venues of commercial advertising is the newspaper. These advertisements can also be categorised into 2 types:

- (i) the classifieds and
- (ii) the display advertisements.

The differences between them are summarised in Table 2.1.

<i>Classified</i>	<i>Display</i>
<p>Classifieds as in the Malay Mail tabloid</p> <p><i>Eg. House for Sale PJ, Section 6, 2 storey bungalow, 8300 sq. ft, good investment for office. Chew 016-3300509</i></p>	<p>advertisements amongst the Editorial materials</p>
<p>-placed on special pages and classified according to subject.</p> <p>-read only by readers with a special interest in some particular product or service.</p> <p>-persuasive elements are often virtually absent because it is just a notice informing interested public that something is available at a certain price.</p>	<p>-located in prominent places amongst the editorial material to attract attention of readers whose main interest is not any specific advertisement.</p> <p>-inserted by a large firm or association, normally through the mediation of a professional advertising agency.</p>

Table 2.1 : Differences between

Classified and Display Advertisements

The display advertisements by reason of their location amongst editorial materials need to capture the interest of the reader who may just glance at them in passing. Thus their communication strategies have to be changed to first attract, and then convince the reader to buy the advertised property. This makes it necessary that they contain the necessary moves to achieve their communicative purpose, making them ideal candidates for genre analysis.

2.3 Genre

2.3.1 *Definitions of genre*

The Linguistics Encyclopaedia(1991) defines genre as ‘ a text or discourse type which is recognised as such by its users through its characteristic features of style or form’.

Swales defines genre as comprising:

a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognised by 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.

(Swales, 1990:58)

Bhatia defines professional and academic genre as:

a recognisable communicative event characterised by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalised with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognised purpose(s).

(Bhatia, 1993 : 13)

Bhatia elaborates further by agreeing with Swales

definition of genre. In Bhatia's opinion, Swales offers a good fusion of linguistics and sociological factors in his definition of genre. Bhatia however feels that Swales 'underplays psychological factors thus undermining the importance of tactical aspects of genre construction which plays a significant role in the concept of genre as a dynamic social process, as against a static one'. (Bhatia, 1991 : 16)

2.3.2 *Areas of Study*

Genre has been classified by researchers in various areas, some of which are genre in folklore studies, in literary studies, in linguistics and in rhetoric. Whatever areas it may be, the main notion underlying genre is the notion of ‘communicative purpose’, a property which Swales identifies as determining the choice of linguistic styles and the choice of text structure.

According to Swales, a genre is a social activity; either oral or written, which is moulded into a distinctive structure and has a purpose or goal. When writing or speaking, a particular purpose is to be achieved. This is known as the communicative purpose.

This purpose determines the shape or structure of the text that is produced. It determines the productive stages gone through in order to achieve this purpose. Each text has a beginning, a middle and an end which varies as the overall purpose of the text varies. The purpose also determines the choice of words and sentences within the text. Different purposes for writing results in different text types or genres which are distinguished by particular text structures and linguistic features.

2.3.3 *Characteristics of genre*

A genre is primarily characterised by the communicative purpose(s) that it is intended to fulfil. This shared set of communicative purpose(s) shapes the genre and gives it its internal structure. Any major change in the communicative purpose is likely to result in a different genre. A writer may have a lot of freedom to use linguistic resources in any way he or she likes, but he/she must conform to certain standard practices within the particular genre.

According to Bhatia (1993:14), it is these standard practices that distinguish a personal letter from a business letter, an advertisement from a promotional letter or a newspaper editorial from a news report.

Bhatia(1993:43) too believes that ‘communicative purpose is the most important factor in genre identification. ‘Communicative purpose ‘ is the common ground for establishing the logic behind the internal structure of each text and the regularities of organisation in it. Bhatia believes that regularities are cognitive in nature.

They reflect the strategies that members of a particular discourse or professional community use in the construction of that genre to achieve specific communicative purposes' (1993:21). These strategies are then the 'accumulated and conventionalised social knowledge' that is available to these communities.

In this study, I use the definitions of genre as used by both Bhatia and Swales.

2.4 Genre Analysis

2.4.1 The Definition of Genre Analysis

Genre Analysis has been defined in various ways. In this study, I have chosen those that would be relevant to my study.

Swales (1981) has defined genre analysis to mean a system of analysis that can reveal a system of organising a genre.

Dudley Evans (1987) further added that genre analysis is a system used to analyse language used in expressing the problems involved while organising a genre. He further suggests that genre analysis within ESP is able to make useful recommendations as to the way a particular genre should be written.

Bhatia(1993) emphasises the communicative purpose of a particular genre as being of prime importance to genre analysis. He adds that genre analysis is used to determine whether communicative purposes(recognised by the members of a particular community) are the motivating factors in shaping the structure of a text enabling us to recognise texts with similar communicative purpose as belonging to a particular class.

2.4.2 Purpose of genre analysis

The aim of genre analysis is to provide a means of classifying a particular genre or subgenre. A genre often has several subgenres, for example, the research article can be broken down into a number of subgenres such as the survey paper, the conference paper, research notes and the letter.(Dudley-Evans, 1987 : 2 as cited in the Linguistics Encyclopaedia)

Genre analysis emphasises the communicative purpose of a particular text genre, and relates to discourse analysis as it gives an *explanation* for the convention of genre construction and interpretation.

Genre analysis as an insightful and detailed description of academic and professional texts has become a powerful and useful tool for significant form-function correlations. This can be utilised for a number of applied linguistic purposes, including the teaching of English for Specific Purposes. (Bhatia; 1993: 11).

With a good awareness and mastering of the genre, one is in a better position to exploit the rules and conventions of that genre for the sake of creativity. By this, it is meant that the derived generic conventions need not always be used prescriptively, for genre analysis is pattern seeking not pattern imposing.(Hart, 1986: 280 as cited in Bhatia 1993 : 40)

2.4.3 Aspects considered in genre analysis

Swales pays importance to the linguistic and sociology aspects in genre analysis and underplays the psychological factors. But it is felt that the psychological factor is important because it offers an explanation for the tactics or strategies used in genre construction.(Bhatia, 1991:16)

The *Linguistic aspect* refers to analysis of texts ‘ with any above average incidence or even a lack of certain linguistic features’ (Bhatia 1993: 17). The *sociological aspect* allows ‘ the

analyst to understand how a particular genre defines, organises and finally communicates with social reality'.(ibid.) It provides answers to the often asked question ' why writers write the way they do?' The third aspect is *psycholinguistic* in nature and emphasises the tactical choices, known as 'strategies' that are adopted by writers to make writing more effective and successful and to ensure the readers buy their products.

In Bhatia's study on professional and academic writing, (Bhatia 1993 : 17) he has linked genre analysis with three aspects which are as follows

1. Linguistics and genre analysis
2. Sociology and genre analysis
3. Psychology and genre analysis

According to Bhatia, promotional discourse is a genre and advertising is a sub-genre. In this study of newspaper home advertisements, all the three aspects mentioned have to be considered because in combination, they would be able to present a detailed description of the advertisements.

Bhatia however acknowledges a major limitation of a genre based approach, viz. ' that it might encourage prescription rather than creativity in application.'(Bhatia; 1993 : 40). However, as he himself states, one can be more effectively creative in

communication when one is well aware of the rules and conventions of the genre.

2.4.4 Approaches to Genre Analysis

2.4.4.1 The Easification Approach

There seems to be many techniques in doing an analysis of a genre. One of the approaches adopted by Bhatia as seen in his study on genre in legislative documents was based on the notion of *easification*. He points out that easification attempts to make the text more accessible to the learner by using a variety of what he calls *easification devices*. (Bhatia 1993: 146) In this way the texts become reader friendly.

2.4.4.2 The Move Approach

As this study intends to use the 'move approach' to study the newspaper home advertisements, an attempt to review related research on advertisements will be reviewed in the following section.

A study on advertisements, specifically promotional texts by Kathpalia (1992) was based on Swales 4 Moves Model. Based on this model, Kathpalia examines the practical and theoretical issues related to genre analysis.

Her study use promotional texts as data and gives a critical review of the various analytical approaches in the fields of literature, rhetoric, sociology, text linguistics, systemic grammar and applied linguistics. Her research also includes a detailed account of the various moves involved in genre analysis.

The three promotional genres were compared from several perspectives including the contextual, rhetorical, semantic, textual and linguistic.

The part of Kathpalia's work which is most relevant to this study is her analysis of print advertisements. She divides all print advertisements into the following categories: straight line, picture-caption, image building, testimonial, sweepstakes and lucky draws, and pretend genres. The focus of Kathpalia's chapter on print advertisements was on straight-line (also known as straight-sell) advertisements, which formed the majority of all print advertisements in her sample.

She introduces a nine-move sequence for straight-sell advertisements as follows :

1. Targetting the Market.
2. Headlines
3. Justifying the Product/Service
4. Appraising the Product/Service
5. Establishing Credentials
6. Endorsements/Testimonials
7. Offering Incentives
8. Using Pressure Tactics
9. Urging Action (Kathpalia, 1992 : 177)

(These nine moves will be described in more detail in the next chapter.)

The purpose of my study is to find out what are the moves that advertisers use to achieve their communicative purpose. The communicative purpose of 'The Star' home advertisements is to capture the attention of prospective groups of buyers. It is possible that these moves are exhibited by presenting the details of the homes clearly and objectively.

Kathpalia examined the practical and theoretical issues related to genre analysis of promotional texts. An analysis of 3 types of promotional texts : Blurbs, Print Advertisements and Promotional Letters was studied. She focused on straight line print advertisements and introduced a nine move sequence for straight sell advertisements.

Following Kathpalia, Howe (1995) conducted a study on the move structure of car advertisements, using Kathpalia's nine-move structure for straight-sell advertisements. In her study, a comparison was done between luxury cars, normal and small car advertisements. Howe did a study on newspaper car advertisements applying Kathpalia's move structure analysis as a system of enquiry into the structure of the advertisements.

Howe's analysis of her data showed that certain moves were more prominent than others depending on the category or class of advertisements but all the classes prominently portrayed these moves :

- (i) **Headline**
- (ii) **Product Appraisal and**
- (iii) **Targetting the Market**

Both Kathpalia's (1992) and Howe's (1993) study on genre in promotional texts and car advertisements respectively are useful to my study on home advertisements as these are also viewed as communicative events within the larger consumer advertising industry.

Besides the two studies mentioned above, few genre-based studies have been done on advertisements in general, but apparently none on home advertisements. In view of the horde of home advertisements in the newspapers, there is a need to find answers as to whether there exists a structure to home advertisements as in car advertisements. If there is, can these structures be defined into a move structure model?

The findings will then help ESP learners as it is a study done within the actual context of advertising. Apart from helping to develop a syllabus design, the findings can be used to formulate teaching materials.

2.4.5 Recent genre related studies

To date, there has been research into medical occupational genres;(eg. Candlin et al; 1976,1981, Azirah;1995), legal genres (eg. Bhatia; 1983, 1987, 1989) and research process genres like the research article (eg. Swales; 1981, 1985, 1990, Peng; 1987, Sunila 1995), theses (eg. Dudley-Evans, 1986) and the abstract (Salager-Meyer, 1992).

Swales own concern is with the introduction to articles from pure, applied and social sciences and he considers the major aim of genre analysis to be to gain insights into the nature of genre that will be useful in ESP materials writing and teaching. (Dudley-Evans, 1987 : 1 as cited in the *Linguistics Encyclopaedia*)

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the definition of genre and genre analysis and reviewed a number of approaches to genre analysis that is relevant to the current study.

Swales and Bhatia's definition is being used as it is felt they are the most appropriate for promotional purposes.

In terms of analysis, Kathpalia's Nine Move Structure has been adopted to discover if it would be useful in helping the analysis of home advertisements in 'The Star' newspaper.