

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used for the gathering and analysis of the data used in this study. These will be discussed under 2 broad headings, namely:

- (i) data collection and
- (ii) data analysis

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Selection of Newspapers

An initial survey was done to determine a suitable local daily newspaper that would contain a high count of home advertisements.

The Star and the *New Straits Times* were selected as these were the two most popular English Language newspaper in Malaysia.

The exercise was conducted over a one week period i.e 21.5.97 till 27.5.97. A daily count of home advertisements from each newspaper was done and tabulated as in the table below.

(Table 2)

Dates	Star	New Straits Times
21.5.97	1	0
22.5.97	1	0
23.5.97	1	0
24.5.97	5	2
25.5.97	6	4
26.5.97	8	4
27.5.97	8	1
Total	30	11

Table 3.1 : Frequency of home advertisements
in the two local newspapers

It was discovered that *The Star* newspaper had a higher count of home advertisements(refer Table 3.1). Hence this study intends to give an explanatory account of home advertisements taken from *The Star* daily.

3.2.2 Selection of Specific Home Types

In the course of data collection, it was noted that a wide range of homes were advertised. There was thus a need to limit the type of advertisements so that it would be possible to carry out a more in depth study into the genre.

Homes could not be classified according to middle-class and luxury class as earlier planned because according to the Housing Ministry, different states in Malaysia have their own way of classifying these homes.

For example, price was initially thought to be a useful criterion for classifying these homes but this again was not feasible because the price of homes vary according to the location. The price of a double-storey house could range from RM 80 000 to RM 300 000 depending on the location. Hence it would be best to classify homes according to the make and type, i.e. terrace homes and country homes.

According to the Longman-Lexicon of Contemporary English (1981, pages 170-171), a terrace home is defined as a house which is part of a line of joined houses. A country home or a country house is defined as a large house in the country belonging to one family with land around it. There are of course various definitions but the above definition will be used in this study. The word 'country' shall be used to mean a distance from the city centre and away from any commercial centre.

The terrace homes could represent homes that are targeted at the middle economic groups and the country homes could represent those that are targeted at the higher economic groups. It is hoped that a comparative analysis on these two types of homes would reveal a more varied move structure.

3.2.3 Selection of Advertisements

Having ascertained that there were more home advertisements in the Star daily, home advertisements of each of the 2 types were collected for a period of two months from the months of June and July 1997. This was considered sufficient as I have done a preliminary survey on these two newspapers over a period of 6 months and found that it was enough to yield a pattern for analysis purposes.

Due to time constraint, 10 home advertisements of each type was thought to be sufficient for an analysis of a preliminary study as this one. Thus a total of 20 home advertisements were selected.

(Please refer to Appendix A dan B.)

3.2.4 *Rationale for Sample Collection*

(i) A selection was made of different types of home advertisements (within the two categories). It was rationalized that this would reveal a greater variety of moves represented in the genre.

(ii) *Image building print advertisements* i.e. those that sought to promote the image of the developer and not the property were rejected as they only serve to promote the reputation of the home developers, not the actual product. As this study strictly deals with straight sell home advertisements, selling developers reputation is therefore not relevant to this study.

(iii) *Ambiguous advertisements* meaning those that could not be classified as belonging to either category (terrace or country homes) were rejected on the grounds that they would confuse the data.

(iv) *Certain types of home advertisements* were also excluded because their primary purpose is to inform readers about the activities taking place at the launch of a sale, not selling the home itself. On the other hand, if the advertisement concentrates on selling the home and not just merely informing or publicising a launch, it was selected and analysed. In these cases, information on the sales launch is taken as an 'Establishing Credential' move.

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 Moves in the Straight-sell Advertisements

Kathpalia's nine-move structure for straight-sell advertisements, listed in Section 2.5, forms the basis of the framework for this study. The realisation of each of these moves is described in Table 3.2 on pages 38 - 41.

Moves	Characteristics	Examples	Sample (as given in Appendix Sample)
1. Headlines (HL)	i) most outstanding print in the advertisement ii) brief, concise and memorable. iii) contains the most crucial and salient information about the advertisement. iv) visuals play an important role in the interpretation of a headline.	Bandar Baru Tambun Bigger, Better, More Beautiful, Homes Springville Country Homes	A 3 B 1
2. Targeting the Market (TM)	i) linguistic elements to pinpoint 'the particular market segment by education, degree of specialisation, profession, social roles, interests, etc.' (Kathpalia, 1992) ii) the first move realised in the body copy. iii) the 'unique selling point' (USP) of an advertisement. (Lee, 1995, as cited in Howe, 1995). The USP is defined as 'the need for every advertised product to make a proposition of a unique and specific benefit obtainable upon purchase of the product' (Bolen, 1984) iv) price listings	Living that accentuates prestigious lifestyle. Welcome to the lifestyle of the rich and famous. Make the intelligent choice today.	B 10 B 6 A 5

Moves	Characteristics	Examples	Sample (as given in Appendix Sample)
3. Justifying the Product (JP)	<p>i) use of lexical items to describe the importance of the advertised home.</p> <p>ii) highlights specific qualities of the home upon purchase.</p>	<p>Villa Fantasia is a real dream come true.</p> <p>The more complete township for quality lifestyle</p>	<p>B 7</p> <p>A 3</p>
4. Appraising the Product (AP) (divided into 2 submoves viz. i.) Product Detailing (PD) ii) Product Evaluation (PE)	<p><u>Product Detailing</u> i) states or lists the features offered by the advertised home.</p> <p><u>Product Evaluation</u> i) identified in terms of the use of lexical items, such as adjectives with positive connotations. ii) highlights the positive features of the advertised home.</p> <p>For this study, as long as there is evidence of either the PD or PE submoves, an advertisement is considered as having realised the AP move.</p>	<p>Cement tiles roofing.</p> <p>30 minutes from the city</p> <p>Fully fitted bathroom accessories.</p> <p>Elegant facade.</p>	<p>A 8</p> <p>B 7</p> <p>A 4</p> <p>A 6</p>

Moves	Characteristics	Examples	Sample (as given in Appendix Sample)
5. Establishing Credentials (EC)	i) highlights reputation of the developer stating commitment to service and quality	reputable developer	A 6
6. Endorsement/ Testimonial (E/T)	i) members of the public testifying to the positive qualities of the homes.	-	-
7. Offering Incentives (OI)	i) benefits from purchase of the homes.	Pre-approved 80 % loan Free SPA legal fees	A 1 A1
8. Pressure Tactics (PT)	i) Time Constraint. ii) Quantity Constraint	Come early to avoid disappointment. Only 80 lots available	A 6 B 1

Moves	Characteristics	Examples	Sample (as given in Appendix Sample)
9. Urging Action (UA)	<p>Realised <i>directly</i> through</p> <p>i) use of imperatives to suggest urgency</p> <p>Realised <i>indirectly</i> through</p> <p>ii) element of persuasion to view the showhouse</p>	<p>80 % sold. Last chance to own land for your dream home.</p> <p>For enquiries, please contact Susan. Tel: 03-400878</p>	<p>B 10</p> <p>B 9</p>

Table 3.2 Realisation of the Moves in the Home Advertisements

3.3.2 Calculation of frequencies of Moves

Based on Howe's(1995) study, a four grade system was used to classify the frequencies of occurrence of the various moves was employed to detect general trends in the frequencies of moves.

A summary of the four grades are shown in Table 3.3 below.

Frequency of occurrence <u>No. of times appearing x</u> 100 No. of samples(10)	Frequency Level	Prominence Level
$75 \% \leq f \leq 100 \%$	Prominent	1. Most Strong (MS)
$50 \% \leq f < 75 \%$	Prominent	2. Quite Strong (QS)
$25 \% \leq f < 50 \%$	Not Prominent	3. Slightly Strong (SS)
$0 \% \leq f < 25 \%$	Not prominent	4. Not Strong (NS)

Table 3.3 : Strength Level System to classify frequency of occurrence (modified version of Howe's)

The prominence level of a move is determined by its frequency of occurrence in all the samples where 100 % frequency is deemed as an 'obligatory move'. Any frequency $\geq 50 \%$ is deemed as occurring 'prominently'. Any frequency $\leq 50 \%$ is deemed 'not prominent'.

The prominence is again sub-divided into Most Strong (MS) with a frequency of 75 % and above, Quite Strong (QS) with a frequency between 50 % dan 75 %, Slightly Strong (SS) with a frequency between 25 % and 50 %, and Not Strong (NS) with a frequency less than 25 %.

3.3.3 Analysis of the Move Structure

Using the realisation of the 9 moves as in Table 3.2, the 10 samples of home advertisements of each category were analysed for the frequencies, and results tabulated according to frequency and strength levels.

For each move, as in the Kathpalian straight sell ad framework, the analysis covers the frequency of occurrence of the move in each of the categories of home advertisements. Based on the criteria for 'strength', the analysis determines the relevance of a move for each category of home ads. For each move discussed, the variation in the frequency of occurrence in the 2 categories is explained taking into account the functional realisation of each move.

The purpose of doing this analysis is to explore whether all the 9 moves are existent and how prominent are their appearance in the home advertisements. If they are prominent, they are again analysed as to what communicative intent they serve ie. why do they show such prominence. In short it is intended to find answers to the question whether there is a structure to 'Home Advertisements' and why do copywriters write the way they do. Each move would contribute to the overall purpose of the text which is to promote the advertised home in order to make a sale, or at least to generate enough interest so that the prospective buyer can be persuaded to seek out the show house or attend the launch to view the plans of the home.

For each move that is discovered, an analysis that covers the frequency of occurrence of the move in both classes is again done to seek answers to 'which aspects of genre analysis the 2 classes of homes differ'.

3.4 Conclusion

It is hoped that this method of analysis would reveal a structure to home advertisements and this fixed structure can be defined using the various move structures as used by Kathpalia.

The next chapter presents the results of the analysis, giving a comparison between terrace and country homes and describes the patterns and structures observable in both the categories of advertisements. These genres can then be explicitly taught by ESP teachers and the teachers would know what they are looking for in assessing learners' work and can provide constructive feedback to help learners to become successful writers