

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Introduction

The term 'genre analysis' was first used in ESP work by Swales in his work Aspect of Article Introduction, (Swales, 1981) in which he analysed a corpus of forty-eight research articles with the four-move structure, a system of analysis proposed by Swales himself. He later published the revised version, called the CARS model, in his book entitled Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings. (Swales, 1990). Swales' research forms the basis of other recent works on genre-based analysis. Bhatia's Analysing Genre : Language Use in Professional Settings (1993) is one of them. The researcher has based her definition and analysis of "genre" on Swales' research.

#### 2.2 Definitions of Genre

##### 2.2.1 Swales' Definition of Genre

In his book entitled Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings (Swales, 1990) Swales discussed the three concepts 'genre', 'discourse community' and 'language-learning task' in great detail. Swales believes that genres are the most stable and the most solid communicative events. His generic approach not only makes sense as a way of structuring the narrow world of the classroom, but also reflects a reality beyond that narrow world. According to Swales, "we operate in society, both at work

and at play, partly through a repertoire of genres that most of us add to and therefore become more proficient in as we become older.” (Swales, 1986:13) Furthermore, for Swales, ‘genre’ involves not only text type but also the role which the particular text plays in the community which produces it. He considers the author’s purpose to be of central importance. Swales perceives genres to be primarily characterised by their communicative purposes besides other factors such as content, form, intended audience, and medium or channel. Therefore, where communicative purposes differ, genre differ. Swales stresses the importance of “communicative purpose” as :

It is communicative purpose that drives the language activities of the discourse community; it is communicative purpose that is the prototypical criterion for genre identity, and it is communicative purpose that operates as the primary determinant of task.

(Swales, 1990:10)

Swales finally summarised his concept of genre in the following manner :

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. The purposes are recognised 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 realised, 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.

(Swales, 1990:58)

### 2.2.2 Bhatia's Definition of Genre

For Bhatia (1993), the central concern of genre analysis is to arrive at a 'thick' description of genre texts. It seeks to discover not only how a text is structured and what lexico-grammatical features it possesses, but also why it is written the way it is written. He also believes that the communicative purpose is an important characteristic of a genre. To quote Bhatia:

...off all the contextual factors associated with a conventionalised speech event, communicative purpose is the most privileged criterion for the identification of genres.

(Bhatia, 1993:43)

Bhatia suggests that genre analysis is the most promising analytical framework which reveals not only the utilizable form-function correlation but also contributes significantly to the understanding of the cognitive structuring of the information in specific areas of language use. In other words, genre-analysis allows one to study the institutional context, including the system or methodology, in which the discourse is used and the rules and conventions, such as linguistic, social, academic or professional convention,

that govern the use of language in such institutional settings. Bhatia points out that from the view point of applied genre analysis, the primary concern is twofold:

- i) to characterise typical or conventional textual features of any genre-specific text in an attempt to identify pedagogically utilizable form-function correlation;
- ii) to explain such a characterisation in the context of the socio-cultural as well as the cognitive constraints operating in the relevant area of specialisation, whether professional or academic.

(Bhatia, 1993:16)

Bhatia (1991,1993) asserts that there are at least three important aspects which one should know of in order to analyse the functional variation in the language of various genres, depending upon the nature of background knowledge and the motivating purpose the researcher brings to genre analysis. The three important aspects are, first, the linguistic aspect; second, the sociological aspects; and third, the psychological-cognitive or tactical aspect of writing.

The first aspect is concerned with the linguistic description of various texts and the emphasis is placed on an above-average incidence or even a lack of certain linguistic features, be their lexical, grammatical or even discoursal/rhetorical, in the texts under study. The second aspect focuses on the conventional and often standardised features of genre construction and providing non-linguistic explanations to the question of why members of 'secondary cultures' write the way they do. The third and last aspect of writing proposed by Bhatia, i.e. the psychological-cognitive or tactical aspect, is

concerned with the cognitive structuring that is typical of particular areas of enquiry and highlights the individual tactical choices known as 'strategies' exploited by a particular writer in order to produce a more effective writing with special attention to factors such as special reader requirements, medium factors and organisational constraints.

All the three aspects of academic and professional writing described above are directly relevant to the study of newspaper advertisements. Bhatia has made a claim that, 'for an adequate description of genre, inputs from contextual, sociolinguistic and cognitive considerations and constraints are crucial' (Bhatia, 1991:159) because they offer a 'thick description' of the text. Thus, the genre-based analysis is a useful approach in gaining a better understanding of the discourse structures of the property advertisements in terms of their linguistic moves and also in explaining some common features found in the discourse of advertisement.

### 2.3 The Problem-Solution Pattern for Discourse Analysis

Hoey (1983) claims the Problem-Solution Pattern to be effective for analysing most narrative texts such as technological reports, short stories, lectures and letters to journals. He explains that many texts tend to begin by presenting a problem of some sort and then proceed by providing a solution to solve the problem. He claims that this framework can also be used to analyse commercial advertising because an advertisement generally starts with establishing a need or stating an existing problem, and follows by

presenting the product or service advertised as a solution to the problem. Before Hoey, others such as Grimes (1975, in Hoey,1983:8) also recognises the Problem-Solution Pattern. He comments, “Both the plots of fairy tales and the writings of scientist are built on a response pattern. The first part gives a problem and the second its solution. The solution has to be a solution to the problem that was stated, not some other; and the problem is stated only to be solved...” (Grimes,1975, in Hoey,!983:8) However, as Howe (1995) found the framework to be “too general to generate detailed findings on the car advertisement genre” , the researcher feels that, based on a rough survey of the property advertisement samples for this study, the framework unsuitable for analysing property advertisements because the property advertisements seem to present more than just a problem to convince their readers.

## 2.4 AIDA

The old saying “You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink” certainly implies to advertisements as well. People cannot be forced into buying something unless they want to. But, they can be influenced into wanting to do the thing the advertiser wishes them to do. Thus advertisement must start out from the firm bedrock of human wants and desires and then attempt to influence people to satisfy these wants and desire through the products or services it has to offer. Advertising copy-writers normally have a number of copy formulae as guidelines for them to refer to when creating advertisements. These formulae assist in guiding the copy-writers in structuring

the advertising messages. The principles of advertising given below are found in the book Real Estate Principles and Practices by Alfred A. Ring and Jerome Dasso (1977). Their principles can be summarised as follows:

- 1) An advertisement must be able to attract its readers' attention.
- 2) It must arouse interest. In other words, an advertisement should be able to stir the readers' emotions or intellectual curiosity sufficiently to make them want to read the advertisement messages from the beginning to the end.
- 3) An advertisement must be able to arouse desire, and the desire aroused must be strong enough to cause the audience to want to investigate further and to lead him or her to take the next step.
- 4) The advertisement must be effective enough for the readers to take the action of buying the product or service advertised.

These principles seem to be the more popular ones among the copy writers. They can be simplified and represented by the acronym AIDA which stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (Mandell, 1980; Burton and Ryan, 1980; Bolen, 1984). However, these are merely guidelines. Most or perhaps all advertisements vary according to product or service types, media or channel, targeted audience, etc.. It also depends on the creativity of the copy-writer on how to transmit the message to the readers.

## 2.5 Move Structure in Advertisements

Kathpalia investigated the rhetorical moves of advertisements in her study entitled A Genre Analysis of Promotional Texts (1992). She attempted to clarify the concept of genre by examining the practical and theoretical issues related to Genre Analysis. She began by critically reviewing the various analytical approaches taken towards the concept of genre in the fields of literature, rhetoric, sociolinguistics, systemic grammar and applied linguistics. She also gave a step-by-step account of various stages in genre analysis which included the practitioner's perspective on a particular genre (e.g. functional, semantic, textual and linguistic); identification of the central and peripheral moves, and the sequence, recurrence and embedding moves. These are the background for her analysis of three types of promotional texts, Blurbs, Print Advertisements and Sales Promotional Letters.

Kathpalia made a comparison of the three promotional texts genre from several perspectives including the contextual, rhetorical, semantic, textual and linguistic and also described the relationship between the three types of promotional texts. In her conclusion, she revisited the theoretical issues related to genre theory in the light of her analysis such as the relationship between the three semiotic planes of language (i.e. genre, register and language), the role played by the contextual configuration in the realisation of the texts, the rhetorical or genre structure of texts and finally, the creativity and generative power of genres.



In the massive and thorough work of Kathpalia (1992) which comprises two thick volumes, only the chapter in which she analyses the print advertisements relates most with this study of property advertisements. Her sample comprised various print advertisements collected from various sources and were divided into the following: Straight-lines/Straight-sale advertisement, picture caption advertisement, image-building advertisement, testimonials advertisement, sweepstakes and lucky-draws, and advertisements of pretend genres. However, the majority of the print advertisements in her collection are those of the straight-line/straight-sale type of advertisements.

Kathpalia (1992) has further extended the four principles of advertising (AIDA) into a more detailed framework for better and more delicate analysis of advertisements. Her framework comprises nine moves and they are:

1. Headlines
2. Targeting the Market
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)

Lee, (1995) following Kathpalia, carried out a study on the move structure of luxury advertisements using the nine-move structure for straight-line/straight-sale

advertisements. Her study focused specifically on the moves in watch and car advertisements. Her samples of advertisements were collected from credit card magazines. Lee's (1995) results of analysis showed that, in the case of luxury advertisements, the nine-moves for straight-line/straight-sale advertisements could be reduced to only five moves. The five obligatory moves are : Headlines, Targeting the Market, Appraising the Product / Service, Establishing Credentials and Endorsements / Testimonials. The other four moves were not significant for the 'luxury' advertisements in her study.

After Lee(1995), Howe (1995) too applied Kathpalia's nine-move structure for advertisements in a genre-based analysis on print advertisements. Howe (1995) centred her study on the rhetorical moves of printed car advertisements found in The Straits Times, a local newspaper in Singapore. Howe collected a total of sixty print car advertisements as samples and further categorised them into three sub-categories : 'luxury', 'normal' and 'small'. The sub-categorisation was done based on , according to Howe, the most reliable criterion which was the affordability in terms of the actual on-the-road car price. Each of the three sub-categories of car advertisements comprised twenty car advertisements. Howe studied the various realisations of each rhetorical moves of all the samples and investigated the frequency of occurrence for each of the nine moves in each of the sub-categories.

The results of Howe's (1995) analysis of the car advertisements showed that the nine-move structure for straight-line advertisements introduced by Kathpalia was applicable for investigating the patterns of car advertisements. The study also showed that the nine-move structure was capable for differentiating the sub-categories as differences in the frequency of occurrence in moves were found in different sub-categories. The differences, as explained by Howe (1995), could be attributed to the different promotional strategies taken for each sub-category. For instance, the 'luxury' car advertisements would apply the 'soft-sell' tactics, while the advertisements from the 'small' car advertisements sub-category would apply more of the 'hard-sell' tactics.

Apart from the three studies mentioned above, few studies have been done on print advertisements in general. To my knowledge, there is no study done on property advertisements in terms of linguistic analysis. Thus, it is hoped that the investigation of the move structure of property advertisements in The Star newspaper will give greater insight into this as a discourse genre.

## 2.6 Conclusion

Both Swales' (1986, 1990) and Bhatia's (1991, 1993) concept of genre is useful in this study of property advertisements especially their views on the 'communicative

purpose'. Both of them agree that the construction of a text is determined by its communicative purpose. This notion allows property advertisements to be viewed as 'communicative events' between the advertisers and the consumers.

The 'communicative purposes' of the property advertisements in The Star newspaper are to capture the attention of the prospective customers, to inform them about the new project, to create awareness, to provide them with some key information on the project and to persuade potential customers to purchase the products advertised, (e.g. Bungalows, Condominiums, Apartments, Semi-Detached Houses, Terrace House etc.) . Advertisement copy-writers are generally creative people. In order to produce advertisements that are successful and suit the taste of the ever-changing public, each copy-writer will display his or her own style of creativity and will come up with advertisements which carry their own peculiar structure or style.