

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter One of this thesis provided some background to this study and Chapter Two reviewed the literature. Chapter Three presented the methodology and analytical framework for the study. The analysis of residential property advertisements was presented and discussed in Chapter Four. This final Chapter will give a summary of the findings.

5.2 Summary of the Findings and the Prominent Moves for each Sub-category of Residential Property Advertisements in this Study

From the detailed analysis carried out in Chapter Four, it can be said that the first objective of this study, which is to examine the applicability of the Nine-move Structure as proposed by Kathpalia (1992), on property advertisements, has been achieved. The structure has been successfully applied by Lee (1995) in analysing luxury advertisements, and by Howe (1995) in studying car advertisements. From the analysis, it is obvious that the structure is not only applicable as an analysing system for a genre-based investigation into the linguistic structure of property advertisements but also allows a detailed analysis of property advertisements.

As for the second objective of this study, it has been decided in Data Analysis of Chapter Two that in order for a move to qualify as a prominent move, that particular move has to be found employed in at least half (50%) of the sample advertisements in a particular sub-category of residential property advertisement. The following are the moves found to be prominent in each of the four residential property advertisement sub-categories in this study.

<u>[A] Bungalow</u>	<u>Frequency of Occurrence</u>	
I) Headline	20/20	(100%)
II) Targeting the Market	20/20	(100%)
III) Justifying the Product	17/20	(85%)
IV) Appraising the Product	14/20	(70%)
V) Offering Incentive	14/20	(70%)
VI) Pressure Tactic	10/20	(50%)
VII) Urging Action	18/20	(90%)

<u>[B] Semi-Detached / Terrace</u>	<u>Frequency of Occurrence</u>	
I) Headline	19/20	(95%)
II) Targeting the Market	20/20	(100%)
III) Justifying the Product	19/20	(95%)
IV) Appraising the Product	19/20	(95%)
V) Offering Incentive	18/20	(90%)
VI) Urging Action	17/20	(85%)

<u>[C] Condominium</u>	<u>Frequency of Occurrence</u>	
I) Headline	19/20	(95%)
II) Targeting the Market	20/20	(100%)
III) Justifying the Product	18/20	(90%)
IV) Appraising the Product	16/20	(80%)
V) Establishing Credential	10/20	(50%)
VI) Offering Incentive	18/20	(90%)
VII) Urging Action	18/20	(90%)

<u>[D] Apartment</u>	<u>Frequency of Occurrence</u>	
I) Headline	19/20	(95%)
II) Targeting the Market	20/20	(100%)
III) Justifying the Product	17/20	(85%)
IV) Appraising the Product	10/20	(50%)
V) Offering Incentive	19/20	(95%)
VI) Urging Action	13/20	(65%)

From the details given in the above list, it is observed that six moves, namely the ‘Headline’, ‘Targeting the Market’, ‘Justifying the Product’, ‘Appraising the Product’, ‘Offering Incentive’ and ‘Urging Action’ moves are found to be important in all the four residential property sub-categories. The fact that all the four residential property sub-categories have the above listed moves as their primary move was no surprise, as the results concord with the findings of Kathpalia’s (1992) and Howe’s(1995), except for the ‘Justifying the Product’ move. An explanation will be given later when the ‘Justifying the Product’ move is discussed.

The discussion of the findings will be presented in such a way that the move which achieved the highest score in the frequency of occurrence will be discussed first, followed by the next as the following sequence.

1. Targeting the Market
2. Headlines
3. Justifying the Product
4. Offering Incentives
5. Urging Action
6. Appraising the Product

The 'Targeting the Market' move was found to be the most crucial among the above six most prominent moves. The study showed that the move was present in all the property advertisements sub-categories analysed with a frequency of occurrence of 100% for all the four sub-categories. Although the main function of this move was to target a certain group of people for whom the product or service is most suitable, it also played an important part in promoting the product or service by creating a desire or interest in the prospective buyers to read on. Since the move plays such an important role in promoting a product or service, it is not surprising that the advertisers included the move in their advertisement copies.

Both Lee (1995) and Howe (1995) found the 'Targeting the Market' move to be significant in their studies of car and watch advertisements. However, Kathpalia (1992) obtained only 2% for the frequency of occurrence for this move in the straight-line advertisements. That was because, as Howe (1995) and Lee (1995) pointed out,

Kathpalia employed a more overt realisation of the 'Targeting the Market' move in her analysis of the move. On the other hand, Lee (1995) and Howe (1995) employed a less overt approach in analysing the move in which they included the 'Unique Selling Point' concept that allowed the highlighting of the product's special features to be one of the various ways of realising the 'Targeting the Market' move. The 'Unique Selling Point' concept is also used in this study where the listing of the product price range is seen as a way of targeting the market.

The 'Headlines' move was found to be the second important move in the residential property advertisements. It has been proved in Kathpalia's (1992) study of general straight-line advertisements and Howe's (1995) study that the move is an important move for the advertisement samples in their respective studies. Kathpalia's study noted a frequency of 98% for the occurrence of the move while Howe's study indicated frequencies of occurrence of 100% for the 'small' car sub-category, and 95% for both the 'medium' and 'luxury' car sub-categories. The most important goal of the 'Headline' is to attract the attention of the readers as soon as they set eyes on the advertisement and to lead them to continue reading into the rest of the advertisement. Thus, it is not a surprise to find almost all (77 pieces of advertisements out of the total 80) of the advertisement samples have utilised this 'Headline' move. To be exact, all the twenty pieces (100%) of Bungalow advertisements, nineteen pieces (95%) each of the Semi-Detached / Terrace, Condominium and Apartment advertisements displayed the

‘Headlines’ move. The importance of a headline in an advertisement has been stressed by Claude Hopkins in the three simple sentences below :-

Don’t think that those millions will read your ads to find out if your product interests. They will decide by a glance--by your headline or your pictures. Address the people you seek, and them only.

(Hopkins, 1968 : 36)

The next move to be discussed is the ‘Justifying the Product’ move. This ‘Justifying the Product’ move is found to be optional (as it is not widely employed) in all the three studies on print advertisements described in Chapter Two but the findings in this study showed the opposite. The possible explanation for this result could be that it was because of the criterion used to identify the move in the samples. In this study of Residential Property advertisements, the researcher had considered the location of a property project as one of the justifying factors because she feels that it was one of the important factors that influenced the price of the product and its future appreciation value. And since most of the property advertisements in the sample had exhibited the use of this Justifying the Product move, its contribution to the frequency of occurrence of the move has helped in making it an important move for all the four residential property sub-categories.

The ‘Offering Incentive’ move is another significant move for the Residential Property advertisements chosen as sample in this study. More than half of the samples in each

residential property sub-category exhibits the move. Only in the Bungalow sub-category is there a slightly lower frequency of occurrence with 70% of the sample showed this move. The presence of this move in all the four sub-categories of residential property advertisements implies that the promotional strategy for the sale of property is more towards the hard-sell technique. Apart from the 'Offering Incentive' move, the 'Pressure Tactic' move is said to be an important feature in many hard-sell advertisements. However, although the move is present, it is found not important as it is not actively used in the residential property advertisement samples of this study. Perhaps, the offering of incentives would be more appealing to house buyers.

The next significant move for the Residential Property advertisements in this study is the 'Urging Action' move. It had been proved in the studies of Kathpalia's (1992) and Howe's (1995) that this move was an important move for straight-sale advertisements in general and car advertisements in particular. The possible explanation for the lower frequency of occurrence for this 'Urging Action' move in this study could be that the information and illustration given in the advertisements are generally not sufficient to convince the potential house buyers to take the final action to purchase a house. Property can never be an impulse-purchase as it involves a large amount of money which could be life savings for some people. Many would need to obtain mortgage from financial institutions before they could afford to purchase properties. Therefore, the majority of house buyers will want to at least have a preview of the miniature model of

their dream house, if the show house in actual size is not yet ready , before they make a decision to purchase the house. Besides, by inviting the interested customers to contact or pay the sales personnel a visit at their showrooms would allow the sales personnel the opportunity to persuade and convince the undecided customers in person.

The final move is the 'Appraising the Product' move. This move provides information about the features and benefits of a product or service advertised to convince the prospective customers about the value of the product or service. With such an important duty to perform, it is understandable that the move is necessary and thus forms one of the primary move in the straight-sale advertisement structure.

5.3 Conclusion

This research has been successfully carried out and both the objectives of the study have been achieved. The study has shown that the Nine-move Structure introduced by Kathpalia (1992) can be applied in the genre-based analysis of residential property advertisements in The Star. The study did not find as many differences in the structure of move for the four sub-categories of residential property as shown in Howe's (1995) study on Car advertisements where cars in general can be categorised into three sub-categories, "luxury", "normal" and "small". The residential property advertisements of different house types and prices shared the same, or almost the same, move structure.

Perhaps the promotional strategies used in the sale of residential property are almost similar for all house types even though there are significant differences in the range of selling price among the houses. Thus, it could be said that although Bungalows, Semi-Detached /Terrace Houses, Condominiums and Apartments are different types of houses and cater for people with different level of incomes, their promotional techniques are basically similar and therefore, cannot be viewed as sub-genre of the residential property genre. As Gillian Dyer (1982) pointed out:

Although advertisers will try hard to make each ad special and different, when you look at a large number of ads you realize that most are variations on a few basic ideas.

(Dyer,1982 :92)

5.4 Suggestions For Future Study

The researcher sincerely feels that although much effort has been put in this study of certain residential property advertisements it only concentrates on some types of property advertisements in The Star only. Other study can be carried out to search further into the move structure of residential property of other types. A study to include the other types of property advertisements, such as Commercial Property (Shop Lots, Offices, etc.) and Industrial Property as samples can also be carried out to find out whether there are differences in move structures among these property types.

Advertisements of foreign property, which may be using different promotional techniques, published in our local newspapers can also be used as samples as these advertisements are not included in this study. Perhaps such studies may show us some differences in advertising techniques used by foreign advertisers. Advertising for the sale of properties in countries like Australia and United Kingdom were noticed by the researcher during the process of collecting data for this study. That could form the basis of another interesting study.

Advertisements of property are found on television too. With the channel of communication being different, perhaps the strategy employed to convey the message could be different too. Thus, a study of property advertising on television may be useful in providing more insights in terms of the move structures of television advertisements.

Apart from that, special advertisements seen on television such as 'TV Innovation', 'Smartshop' and 'Kayla Beverly Hills Showcase' would perhaps be another interesting area of study. To the best of the researcher's knowledge no research has been done on these kinds of advertisement in general, and on the move structure in particular. Furthermore, the move structure for straight-sale advertisement as introduced by Kathpalia (1992) has so far been used in analysing print advertisements only. It would be both informative and interesting to learn about the findings of studies done on advertisements on the electronic media.

With the increased awareness on the importance of the Internet among Malaysians, more and more advertisements are being placed on the Internet. Among them are property advertisements. A linguistic investigation of how advertisements in general and property advertisements in particular are designed to fit and work effectively in that environment would certainly be interesting and informative.

The researcher hopes that the findings of the present study has provided interesting information about the structures of property advertisements and that the information be useful to teachers who wish to use advertisements as teaching aids in some ways.