CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used to collect the data and the analytical framework employed for this study. The nine move structure for straight-line/straight-sell advertisements as proposed by Kathpalia (1992) forms the basis of the analytical framework for this study. For this study, each of these moves identified in the data is made a description from the aspects of definition, characteristics, function, occurrence and location. The realisation of each move is also discussed and illustrated with examples. This study is a comparative study so the findings are compared to those of other studies particularly of Kathpalia (1992), Lee (1995), Howe (1995), Choo (1999) and Teh (1999). This chapter attempts to explicate the method used in arriving at the facts and findings.

3.1 Data Collection

3.1.1 Source of Data

The samples of data are collected from 'The Star' newspaper. 'The Star' is chosen because it is one of the two most popular English Language local tabloids.

3.1.2 Selection of Specific Institutions of Higher Learning

It is observed that the advertisements on Institutions of Higher Learning are of different types of institutions ranging from small new local institutions to renowned public and private foreign universities. The kind of programmes advertised can also vary in the range of short day courses, certificate or diploma programmes, first degree and post graduate programmes. It is thus required to limit the type of advertisements so that it is possible to conduct a more in depth study into the genre. For the purpose of this study, advertisements on 20 private Institutions of Higher Learning are taken.

3.1.3 Selection of Advertisements

Samples of advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning are collected from The Star dating from January 2000 to July 2000 for analysis in this study. However, not every newspaper collected during this duration is used for sample collecting. This is because the advertisements of private Institutions of Higher Learning do not appear everyday. They appear more frequently in the Sunday Star particularly in the Education Section.

3.1.4 Limitations and Rationale for Sample Collection

For this study, the selection of sample is limited to advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning offering first degree programmes (which include certificate and diploma programmes) and pre-university programmes (which include foundation courses). The rationale for this choice

is that the main target group of the advertisements consists of the secondary school leavers who are SPM or STPM holders (and their parents). This study will attempt to find out if there is a range of moves in the genre of advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning. Twenty samples of advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning are collected for analysis.

Those advertisements that promote short day courses or seminars for teaching specific skills or for purposes of motivation and personal growth are not included as these have a different target group. Moreover they do not come into the category of certificate, diploma or degree programmes. Advertisements on education fairs and open days of colleges are also left out as they serve only to inform. This study focuses on straight sell advertisements for Institutions of Higher Learning which offer post secondary school programmes.

3.2   Data Analysis

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Kathpalia's (1992) nine-move structure for straight-sell advertisements. The process of analysing the data begins with the identification of the different moves realised in each sample in the advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning in 'The Star' daily. The characteristics of each move are also described and the communicative functions of the moves are also discussed. The moves that

serve the similar communicative purposes are presented in conjunction with their manner of realisation. Samples of each move are listed under one group for easy reference and are displayed together and described. The elements in the samples that show the Headline, for example, are listed in one group while those points that display the Targeting the Market move are put in another group. These moves however may not appear in similar order and their realisation may come in sentences or clauses of different length.

The frequency of occurrence of every move in the advertisements is counted to determine the move structure which is representative for advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning. A grading system for the frequency of their occurrence based on Howe's (1995) study and Teh's (1999) study on advertisements is employed to investigate the pattern of the frequencies of these moves. An analysis of the location of each move is carried out to see if there is a pattern to it.

3.2.1 Nine-move Structure in the Straight-sell Advertisements

Kathpalia (1992) proposes the following nine-move structure for straight-sell advertisements:

Move 1   Headline

Move 2   Targeting the Market

Move 3   Justifying the Product/Service

Move 4   Appraising the Product/Service

Move 5	Establishing Credentials
Move 6	Endorsements/Testimonials
Move 7	Offering Incentives
Move 8	Pressure Tactics
Move 9	Urging Action

1. Headline

Howe (1995:85) defines Headlines as the most conspicuous print that conveys the most salient message or information in the advertisement.

Kathpalia (1992) and Howe (1995) state that the Headline move can be realised through any one or more than one of the other 8 moves. Therefore, Kathpalia (1992), Howe (1995) and Choo (1999) do not take the Headline as the first move. Teh (1999) however, considers the Headline as the first move based on the samples of her study.

For this study, the Headline is identified as the most prominent feature in an advertisement. The Headline is often very short and precise but produces an impact. Sometimes it occurs in a longer form and may be presided by an Over Line or followed by a Subordinate Headline. It may be presented in a clause or a sentence and/or may be accompanied by an illustration. Visuals play an important role in the interpretation of a Headline. The function of the

Headline is to therefore, to highlight the most salient information in an advertisement.

The Headline performs the first and primary purpose to catch the attention of the reader of an advertisement. It is the Headline that attracts the reader first and it is the most read content in the advertisement. When a reader comes to a section where there is an advertisement, s/he spots the Headline first and focuses his/her attention on it.

A successful Headline is one that attracts attention, arouses interest and creates a want to possess the product/service advertised. A successful Headline will lead the reader to read on for more information about the product/service. If the reader is attracted by the illustration too, it serves to assist the Headline in its function.

2. Targeting the Market

According to Kathpalia (1992), Targeting the Market move is usually realised as the first move of the body copy. Its main objective is the identification of the market for which the product or service is most suitable. Therefore, instead of appealing to a large faceless audience, it addresses its message to a focused audience who is most likely to invest in the product/service advertised.

Kathpalia (1992) thus defines this move as a bridging move that links the Headline or visuals to the body copy. The body copy comes after the Headline but does not include the Over Line and Sub Headline.

Howe (1992) defines Targeting the Market as a move in the advertisement that is directed at identifying a particular group or class of readers, for example, the middle income or low income readers. Similarly, Choo (1999) states that the main objective of the Targeting the Market move is to attract the attention of a selected group of people to read further into the body of the advertisement for the advertising messages.

Howe (1995) also brings up psychological elements of brand loyalty, snob appeal and the need to be different from others. Lee (1995) also points out the feature of the Unique Selling Point. The Unique Selling Point refers to the unique and special benefits offered to the customer/client upon purchase of the product/service suggested by the advertisement (Bolen, 1984). Lee (1955) also discusses this feature in her analysis of Targeting the Market move in advertisements on luxury watches and cars.

For the purpose of this study, the Targeting the Market move is defined as the move that identifies a specific group of readers, that is, the SPM or STPM holders and their parents who are seeking a suitable college/university.

To realise the Targeting the Market move, Kathpalia (1992) suggests that the most direct attempt is to pinpoint the particular market segment according to sex, age, education, degree of specialisation, profession, social roles and interest.

Choo (1999) uses 4 methods, they are:

i.   By indicating explicitly the targeted group and potential buyers.

ii. By appealing to the human self-perception.

iii. By using the Unique Selling Point.

iv. Targeting the group of people who are with family, children or parents.

By using the family appeal, Teh (1999) uses 2 methods similar to those used by Choo (1999), that is method 2 by appealing to the special nature of potential buyers and using the Unique Selling Point concept.

For the data of this study, the following 4 methods are used as they are more prevalent.

    i.   By indicating explicitly the targeted group.

    ii. By appealing to the human self-perception.

    iii. Through the use of the second person pronoun.

    iv. Through the Unique Selling Point concept.

3. Justifying the Product/Service

Kathpalia defines Justifying the Product/Service as a buffer move to persuade the prospects that a particular product/service is important and that there is a strong need for it or that there is a problem in existing products/services which needs to be overcome (Kathpalia 1992:108).

According to Kathpalia (1992), the Justifying the Product/Service move can be realised by using lexical items to stress the importance of the product/service because of the benefits it gives. It can also feature the specific qualities of the product/service that make it appropriate by pointing out the everyday real life problems and needs of the public. Kathpalia (1992) proposes 2 sub-moves in this category:

1. Indicating the Importance of Product/Service

2. Establishing a Niche.

According to Kathpalia (1992), 'Indicating the importance of the product/service may be achieved either by highlighting the importance of a particular product/service due to the benefits it offers or the season/occasion for which the product/service is appropriate. According to Choo (1999), the Justifying the Product/Service move provides the prospective buyers with information about the product/service that can provide reasons why it is worth buying. This move is commonly realised through presentation of problems that can be solved or by providing missing pieces that can be fulfilled by purchasing

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the product/service. In her study of property advertisements, Choo (1999) finds that the realisations of the Justifying the Product/Service move are generally through indicating the following:

1. Location of the project.

2. Reasonable pricing

3. Future appreciation in value.

4. Easy accessibility

5. Availability of facilities

6. Added safety and extra facilities

By contrast, in this study, only three methods of realisation of the Justifying Product/Service move are identified. They are:

i. Indicating the importance of the product/service.

ii. Indicating the availability of facilities.

iii. Indicating the flexibility of the programmes and courses.

4. Appraising the Product/Service

According to Kathpalia (1992) the Appraising the Product/Service move describes the features and indicates the value of the product/service. It is an important move in straight-sell advertisements. It is defined as a straight forward evaluation by translating the chief features of the product/service into concrete consumer benefits.

This move is achieved by stating or listing the features offered to the purchaser of the product thus portraying the product as something good and irresistible to readers. The results of Kathpalia's (1992) study on promotional texts give a 98 % frequency of occurrence for this move. This goes to show that the Appraising the Product move is an essential move for straight-sell advertisements.

She proposes 3 sub moves. In this study the Appraising the Product/Service move is also divided into the 3 sub moves proposed by Kathpalia (1992):

      i. Product Identification

      ii. Product Description

      iii. Product Evaluation

5.   Establishing Credentials

Kathpalia (1992) defines the Establishing Credentials move as an in-house assessment of the company's accomplishments.

The primary role of the Establishing Credentials move is to promote the reputation of the company which manufactures or supplies the advertised product/service with the aim to gain confidence and faith of the public in the skills, reliability and integrity of the manufacturer. Kathpalia (1992) suggests 3 ways of realising the Establishing Credentials move:

1.   Identification of the company by mentioning the name of the company or manufacturer.

2.   Guarantee/warranty of product/service, trial offer and after sales service.

3.   Provision of company profile.

Howe (1995) says that credentials can be established, by highlighting the achievements and reputation associated with the product/service advertised. This gives evidence of the quality of the product/service.

6.   Endorsements/Testimonials

Kathpalia (1992) defines the Endorsements/Testimonials move as being uninitiated from outside sources, that is, the consumers themselves. It is based on the belief that consumers are the best judges of the product/service's reliability and satisfaction. However, not all testimonials are by authentic consumers.

The Endorsements/Testimonials move is therefore, a psychological move that uses comments from customers or experts to give credibility to the messages of the advertisement. This exploits the psychological tendency of the public to believe more in the endorsements of the experts or testimonial of satisfied customers than the words from the advertisers regarding the positive qualities of the product/service. These endorsements and testimonials will

increase the level of confidence of the customers towards the product/service. Kathpalia (1992) proposes that this move can be achieved through the following ways:

    i.   By presenting the testimonials of well known authorities.

    ii. By presenting the official/ public citation of achievements and seals of approval.

   iii. By presenting the testimonials of average consumers.

   iv. By presenting the testimonials of fictitious consumers.

7.   Offering Incentives

     Kathpalia (1992) defines the Offering Incentives move as one that aims to make the acquisition of the product/service more attractive by offering incentives like discounts, free gifts, services, samples and other benefits. This makes the purchasing of the particular product/service more tempting. The Offering Incentives move encourages readers to respond to the advertisement by taking action to buy it.

8.   Pressure Tactics

     Kathpalia (1992) defines the Pressure Tactics move as the imposition of constraints on the advertised product/service in order to hasten the buying process. These constraints can appear in the following forms:

    1. Time constraints on the offer and availability of the product/service.

    2. Quantity constraints on the availability of stocks.

3. Emotional blackmail on a specific market segment.

9.   Urging Action

Kathpalia's (1992) definition of the Urging Action move is a task of urging the prospective customer to take prompt action and specific action to clinch the deal. Howe (1995) refines the definition as direct or indirect realisation of action.

The purpose of the Urging Action move is to persuade the interested customer to take the final and most important step to purchase the product/service. This move is realised directly through the use of persuasive expressions and even imperatives to suggest urgency. It is also achieved indirectly through the persuasive factor of inviting the customer to contact the sales personnel immediately. The customer can make a telephone call or use a cut out coupon provided for his/her convenience in the advertisement to request for more information.

3.2.2   Calculation of Frequencies of Moves

Teh's (1999) four level system is used to categorise the frequencies of occurrence of the various moves. This system is employed to trace the general pattern and structure in the frequencies of occurrence of the moves.

The four level system is shown in table 3.1 that follows.

Frequency of Occurrence = $\dfrac{X \text{ No. of times appearing}}{N \text{ No. of samples}} \times 100$	Level of Frequency of Occurrence	Level of Prominence
$75\% \leq f \leq 100\%$	Most Prominent	Most Strong
$50\% \leq f < 75\%$	Quite Prominent	Quite Strong
$25\% \leq f < 50\%$	Slightly Prominent	Slightly Strong
$0\% \leq f < 25\%$	Not Prominent	Not Strong

Table 3.1: Strength Level System to Classify Frequency of Occurrence (adapted from Teh 1999:42)

To calculate the *Frequency of Occurrence (%)*,

a. The X number of times the move appears is divided by the N number of samples that is *20*

b. The percentage is then obtained by multiplying the result of step 'a' by *100*.

For example:

The number of times the Justifying the Product move appears is *15*, the Frequency of Occurrence is

$$\frac{15}{20} \quad X \quad 100 = 75\%$$

The level of significance that is, the prominence level of the frequency of occurrence (Most Strong, Quite Strong, Slightly Strong or Not Strong) is determined based on the following criteria:

Frequency of Occurrence	Range	Level of Prominence
75 % ≤ f ≤ 100 %	Frequency is equal to/more than 75 % but equal to/less than 100 %	Most Strong
50 % ≤ f < 75 %	Frequency is equal to/more than 50 % but less than 75 %	Quite Strong
25 % ≤ f < 50 %	Frequency is equal to/more than 25 % but less than 50 %	Slightly Strong
0 % ≤ f < 25 %	Frequency is equal to/more than 0 % but less than 25 %	Not Strong

Table 3.2: **Criteria to Determine the Level of Prominence of the Frequency of Occurrence.**

To explain Table 3.2, the Frequency of Occurrence refers to the number of times the move appears in the samples. The Range determines the Level of Prominence of the Frequency of Occurrence of the move. Four ranges of Frequency of Occurrence are thus determined to indicate the four Levels of Prominence: Most Strong, Quite Strong, Slightly Strong and Not Strong.

Taking the example mentioned earlier:

The Justifying the Product move has a Frequency of Occurrence of *75 %*. Therefore it falls in the range of equal to/more than 75 % but equal to/less than 100 %. This indicates that its Level of Prominence is *Most Strong.*

Taking another example, the Appraising the Product/Service has a Frequency of Occurrence of *60%*. This puts it in the range of equal to/ more that 50 % but less than 75 % which indicates its Level of Prominence as *Quite Strong.* Likewise a move with a Frequency of Occurrence that falls in the range of

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equal to/more than 25 % but less than 50 % will indicate a Level of Prominence as *Slightly Strong*. Lastly, a move that has a Frequency of Occurrence in the range of equal to/more than 0 % but less than 25 % is determined as having a *Not Strong* Level of Prominence.

3.2.3 Analysis of the Move Structure

Using the realisation of the 9 moves proposed by Kathpalia (1992) described in section 3.2.1, 20 samples of advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning are analysed for the frequencies and the results are tabulated according to frequency and strength levels by referring to the table of Strength Level System (Table 3.1).

Analysis is done for each of the move as proposed in the Kathpalia (1992) straight-sell advertisement framework. The analysis looks at the frequency of occurrence of the move to determine the significance of each of the 9 moves for the advertisements on private Institutions of Higher Learning.

The intention of this analysis is to investigate whether all the 9 moves appear and how significantly are they employed in the advertisements. If they are significant, they are investigated for the reasons of their significance and their communicative aims.

3.3   Conclusion

Employing this method of analysis, the researcher hopes to find a pattern of structure in the print advertisements of private Institutions of Higher Learning as propagated by Kathpalia(1992) and to compare the findings with those of other studies on advertisements, particularly those of Kathpalia (1992), Howe (1995), Choo (1999) and Teh (1999). For each of the moves and sub moves if they are identified, the pattern of structure is discussed based on the following aspects: definition, characteristics, functions, occurrence and location. The discussion is illustrated with examples from the samples and supported by quantified findings. If a specific nine-move structure is determined, a model based on this framework is proposed as part of the results of the study.