CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

> There are a number of questions that might lead one to undertake a study of language. Personally, I am primarily intrigued by the possibility of learning something, from the study of language, that will bring to light inherent properties of the human mind.
>
> (Chomsky, Language and Mind 1972:103)

These wise words of Noam Chomsky answer the question of why one should study language. Although his answer does not cover every reason, it does however personify what this research is all about. It is imperative to comprehend the meaning of language itself in order to have a better understanding of what language entails. When people get together, for any multitude of reasons, they talk. This is because we live in a world of language and are all intimately familiar with at least one language - our own. Without language it would be difficult to converse or to communicate with one another. Words that make up a language affect one's personal power, in the sense that what one says is what one gets. Words build attitudes and they determine what one will attract and experience.

English, which once was the language of Britain, is now an international language used by people from all over the world (Chitravelu, 2001). It is thus an internationally acclaimed language and the importance of the English language is without doubt.

Literature contributes massively to the liveliness of speech and written language. People often pigeonhole literature as a component of language that is unnecessary and difficult; that can be enjoyed only by those who share a love for literature.

However, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2001) gives the meaning of literature as 'books, plays, poems etc that people think have value.' It does not say that literature is the language used in Old English and is difficult to comprehend. Alternatively, Algeo and Phyles (2004:19) argue that 'unless we know what a text means literally, we cannot appreciate it as literature." Words that were used in the olden Shakespearean era had different meanings from words used today; the meaning they seem to have may not be what they actually mean.

2.1 The English Language and Literature in Malaysia

Malay is the national language of Malaysia, thus English holds the position of second language. Platt, Weber & Ho (1984) and Crystal (1997) as quoted in Preshous (2001:52) contend that English 'is becoming more like a foreign language than a second language for Malaysians. However, according to Morais (2001:36) there has been 'increasing recognition and emphasis accorded to English' in Malaysia. It is widely used even as the medium of instruction at various levels of education. In fact, the Malaysian government has recently acknowledged the importance of the English language and has enforced the use of English as the medium of instruction for Maths and Science in schools.

This language that was known as 'the language of rulers' and held the association of 'power and prestige' was initially used in the colonial administration of the British and not many Malaysians understood it (Asmah Haji Omar, 2000). Today, Malaysians have their own variety of English known as Malaysian English. It is a variety spoken by Malaysians and there are words and phrases that are used within Malaysian English that may not be understood by speakers of other varieties of English.

When describing Indian English, Mehrotra (2003:19) wrote:

> ".... looked upon standard British English (BrE) as a model and a point of reference.... owing to the languages in contact, and, more importantly, the distinct socio-cultural reality.... the English language in India has acquired over the years features distinct from the native variety,"

Such a lengthy quotation has been citied because what Mehrotra (2003) has described about Indian English applies to Malaysian English in Malaysia. Malaysians are exposed to British English but they are also exposed to American English, and other languages such as Malay, Chinese and Tamil. This is due to the linguistic diversity that exists in Malaysia. In such a situation, it is only natural for words from these languages to become a part of the English spoken and in turn become what is generally termed Malaysian English.

Within Malaysian English there exists other varieties. Gaudart (1997) claims there are regional and ethnic phonological differences that have to be considered in any variety of Malaysian English. There has always been a relationship between language and culture. According to Trueba & Zou (1994), language is part of a broader concept. The concept referred to is culture. To this effect, Platt et al. (1984) explain there are two types of Malaysian English. The first is the old kind, which is used by Malaysians who are educated using English as the medium of instruction. The second type on the other hand, is the new kind used by Malaysians who are educated using Malay as the medium of instruction. Baskaran (1994), on the other hand points out that there are three levels within Malaysian English which are the acrolect that is used for official matters; the mesolect which is used in semiformal situations and the basilect that is used informally.

The number of students who enrol for the English Literature degree programme at the University of Malaya has been dwindling (Asmah, 1992). A situation such as this is

alarming and calls for further research. The reason many do not attempt to read literature is that it requires a strong command of the language as well as patience and diligence to look up the actual meaning conveyed by the writer. The literary text is usually not straight forward and requires interpretation. Griffith (2005:6) defines interpretation of literature as a 'process of thinking about details in order to see how they interconnect and what ideas they convey.' However, in one's daily routine many situations and documents are not straightforward and require interpretation. If literary devices could be studied in various materials apart from the conventional literature materials, then the transition to reading literary material would be smoother and more appealing to students.

2.2 Characteristics of Radio

Like language, radio is a medium of communication. The speed of radio allows it to link continents in seconds on short waves. Radio frequency is basically operated based on AM and FM. AM is amplitude modulation and FM is frequency modulation. Katz (2003:68), states the differences between the two are area reception and audience. "AM stations can broadcast over a wider distance, but because the sound waves are impeded by any kind of obstruction, the sound quality is inferior to FM stations, which broadcast in a narrower listening area" (Katz, 2003:68). Unlike waiting for the press for newspapers and magazines, radio is usually a 'live' situation except for radio advertisements which are pre-recorded.

Radio has many characteristics which make it a favourite choice. For instance, its ability to speak to millions and at the same time speak to an individual. Another appealing characteristic of radio is that it is especially useful for those who cannot read and also for those who are visually impaired.

McLeish (1994) claims that radio can bring together people separated by geography or nationality. He goes on to say that radio can help to open other distances of culture, learning or status. In other words, radio has no boundaries. However, since radio is 'transient in nature' (McLeish, 1994) if listeners miss the news or a special traffic update, they will have to wait for the next segment. The leading characteristic of radio that is not shared by many other forms of the mass media is it is a medium that enables the listener to do other things as they listen. In today's fast moving world, multi-tasking has become a necessity. Thus, the mobility and ubiquitous nature of radio has boosted its appeal. Listeners can tune in to the radio while driving or at work. Nevertheless, this very same advantage can be a disadvantage as it can result in the listener not paying attention to the radio or the other activity being done.

As radio is an aural medium, the human voice is an additional advantage that adds to its appeal. According to McLeish (1994) the vitality of radio depends on the diversity of voices which it uses and the extent to which it allows the 'colourful turn of phrase and the local idiom'. However, Barnard (2000) asserts listeners extract meaning from 'words, sound and music' which are the' primary codes of language', nevertheless the 'spoken word is by far the most important.' Seeing that the spoken word is imperative, much emphasis is usually given to language. Finally, radio is not costly for the listener. In this world where hardly anything can be used without payment, radio offers its users the opportunity to tap into its diversity at a very low cost. These unique qualities of radio have allowed it to survive over the years and remain a dominant form of the mass media.

As with advantages there are bound to be disadvantages. Radio also has its flaws and limitations. 'The two main problems with radio seem to be listener attention levels and

the fact that radio advertising doesn't have pictures' (Sutherland, 2008:233). Images and graphics make a lot of difference in attracting and persuading. The lack of images factors in on the reason why language, sound and voice are given more emphasis.

The Internet, as Sutherland (2008:266) describes it, is 'the medium of the current millennium.' This said, radio can be accessed via the Internet. Hence, the spread and hold of the Internet is used to the advantage of radio. Now more people can tune in and raise the audience reach. Advertising on the Internet enables local advertisers to reach customers on an international platform thus heightening chances of international advertisers advertising in local channels as well which inadvertently leading to additional revenue.

2.3 Advertising in Malaysia

As in other countries all over the world, advertisements have tapped into the daily lives of many consumers in Malaysia. Various companies use the radio as a medium to advertise their products and services. Seeing that there are multiple techniques and methods in which customers are enticed and persuaded, the Advertising Standard Authority (ASA) was established in 1977, with consumers' best interest as the propelling force. The principle task of ASA is 'to promote and enforce high ethical standards in advertisements.' (http://www.asa.org.my/about.htm) The ASA also looks into complaints made about advertisements and potential ways of resolving problems. The official website for ASA, http://www.asa.org.my/about.htm, lists their constituent members, which are The Malaysian Advertisers Association, Association of Accredited Advertising Agents Malaysia, Malaysian Newspaper Publishers Association, and Sistem Television Malaysia Berhad. The observers are the Malaysian Association of Commercial Radio Operators and the Outdoor Advertising Association of Malaysia.

All advertisements must abide by the Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice that was introduced by the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, Malaysia's first Prime Minister. The code contains eight principles including rules and regulations with guidelines pertaining to advertisements. The aforementioned principles complement pre-existing regulations. The eight principles of the code are listed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Principles in the Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice

Principle One	All advertisements should be legal, decent, honest and truthful
Principle Two	Advertisements must project the Malaysian culture and identity, reflect the multi-racial character of the population and advocate the philosophy of *Rukun Negara* (National Principles)
Principle Three	Advertisements must not identify or typecast each particular racial group or sex with vocations, traditional values and backgrounds
Principle Four	Advertisements must comply in every respect with the Law, common or statute
Principle Five	All advertisements should be prepared with a sense of responsibility to consumers and to society
Principle Six	All advertisements should conform to the principles of fair competition as generally accepted in business

Table 2.1, continued

| Principle Seven | No advertisements shall bring advertising into disrepute or reduce confidence in advertising as a service to the industry and to the public |
| Principle Eight | Advertisements must be clearly distinguishable as such |

Source: (http://www.asa.org.my/about.htm)

2.4 Radio in Malaysia

Twice a year, The Nielsen Company, a global information and media company, conducts a Radio Audience Measurement (RAM) research. The demographic profile, listening preferences and product consumption of people in Malaysia is measured. The latest survey was conducted from 2 to 15 March 2009, by analysing individual quarter hour diaries that were completed by 3,000 individuals. The RAM showed that 9 out of 10 Malaysians tune in to the radio every week and that an average listener tunes in for 22 hours a week as mentioned in the official website of The Nielsen Company (http://my.acnielsen.com). This goes to show that radio is not a trend or medium of the past. Rather, it has proven its staying power and ability to reach the masses.

In the first half of 2009, radio `adspend', which is the term referring to the amount spent on advertising, reached RM149 million demonstrating radio has held its own in its share of total advertising market. In fact, advertising spending on radio in the first quarter of the year 2009 showed 'an impressive growth of 9.2 percent' as stated in the report conducted by Nielsen at http://my.acnielsen.com/news/20090519.shtml. Figure 2.1 shows the radio advertising spending trend from the year 2000 to the year 2009.
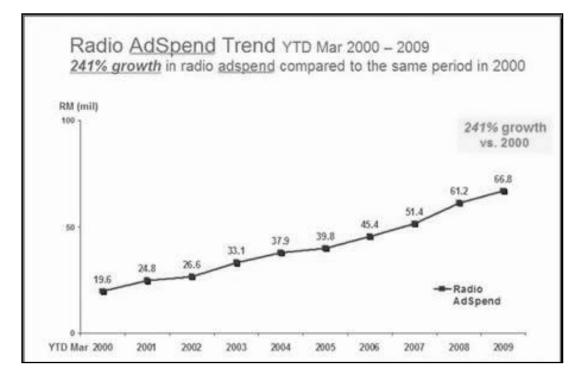
Figure 2.1

Radio Advertising Spending Trend

(Source: http://my.acnielsen.com/news/20090519.shtml)

Figure 2.1 illustrates the growth in radio adspend, a term referring to the amount of money spent on advertising. As depicted, the amount spent every year is shown in millions. The growth in adspend is seen to be steadily rising with each passing year, although the difference between the year 2004 and 2005 is very slight. However, from 2005 onwards, the growth ascension has become better. In totality there has been 241% growth since the year 2000.

Table 2.2 shows the channel weekly audience reach. The figures stated are from Survey 1 which was conducted in the first half of 2009 by The Nielsen Company. Two surveys are carried out each year; Survey 1 and Survey 2.

Table 2.2

Channel Weekly Audience Reach

Participating Channels	Survey 1 2009	
	%	'000
era	24.3	3,985
Thr	19.4	3,177
hitz.fm	7.8	1,287
Fly Fm	4.9	800
lite fm	2.8	467
mix fm	2.7	437
red fm	0.9	153
Traxx fm	0.6	106

(Adapted from http://my.acnielsen.com/news/20090519.shtml)

As can be seen from Table 2.2, leading the list of English channels is hitz.fm, attracting 1.29 million (7.8%) listeners weekly and in seventh position overall. Fly Fm is the second most popular English channel with 800,000 listeners tuning in every week. These two stations are followed by lite fm (467,000), mix fm (437,000), and Traxx fm (106,000). Era, a radio station that uses Malay as their medium of communication has the overall highest audience reach and thus has been included to serve as a benchmark for comparison.

2.5 Radio Advertisements

Radio advertisements basically fall into two categories, there are commercial radio advertisements and there are non-commercial radio advertisements such as public-service announcements. Commercial radio advertisements are to encourage the public to consume. Sherlekar (1995) claims that commercial advertisements are a form of paid communication. This is due to the fact that the advertiser has to pay for the air time.

However, radio advertisements, as with other forms of advertising, have multiple functions. Not only do they try to persuade the listener, but advertisements 'may also amuse, inform, misinform, worry or warn' (Cook, 2001).

Radio advertisements can also be in the form of public-service announcements. These advertisements are generally to instigate public awareness to certain issues. They do resemble commercial advertisements but usually represent non-profit associations. Nevertheless, according to Hyde (2001), some advertisements which are of community interest are paid for by some advertisers or local merchants who realize that their interests are served by supporting certain causes. 'Though radio has tremendous potential to effectively reach and influence consumers, it is greatly underutilized by most companies, particularly larger companies' (Weinberg et al., 1994). This is especially true as other forms of media compete for the advertisements and radio usually falls out to television and magazines.

2.6 Language and Radio Advertisements

As previously mentioned, words, sounds and music are the primary codes of radio from which the listeners extract meaning. Although by using language literal meanings are

communicated, elements such as tone, timbre and nuance ensure that the speech is communicated with much more than words.

The purpose of advertisements is to sell products, make the listener aware of a particular matter or promotion and to give information. An effective advertisement will interest, inform, involve, motivate and direct whilst taking into account the target audience, the product, the content, the style, the background and the voice (McLeish, 1994).

Advertisements usually have short term goal of selling the product advertised and a long term goal of maintaining the market of that particular product. Therefore, the language used to attract the listeners' interest plays an important role. This is especially true in radio advertisements because the listeners are only able to hear the advertisements. The language and style that it is presented in will determine whether the listener stays tuned in or changes the station. The presence of various elements ensures the success of a radio advertisement. Hausman et. al. (2000) explain that there are many techniques that make an advertisement successful and also that radio needs an entry in the 'theatre of the mind'. Coincidently, Cook (1994) explored the interplay of form and mind by examining the relevance of schematic theory to literary theory. The way an advertisement was constructed determined the amount of effort needed to process the information.

2.7 Language, Literature and Advertising

Commercial radio stations 'accept advertising as their chief source of revenue' (Katz, 2007). Therefore, a lot of attention is given to the production of advertisements. As radio advertisements do not have images, language is heavily relied on to attract and persuade listeners. Attitudes towards advertising vary from individual to individual.

Cook (2001:1) claims a person's attitude towards a type of discourse 'can be indicative of their personality or social and ideological position.' However, he says that it is not the case for every type of discourse. Some discourses are controversial and some are not controversial in nature. Nevertheless, Cook (2001:1) asserts advertising is 'one of the most controversial of all contemporary discourse types.'

Other previous studies conducted on various aspects of advertising have been carried out extensively especially over the recent years. Some have studied the language of advertising while others have looked into the techniques used in advertisements as agents of persuasion. Many well-known scholars have conducted research in this field. A brief look at some of their contributions will lead to a better understanding of previous studies carried out in relation to language and advertising. Leech (1966) in his pioneering research analysed various discourse and grammatical aspects in advertising. He also researched the vocabulary and rhetoric language used. He researched what verbs and adjectives were frequently used in television advertising. His research will serve as a basis for comparison in this research.

Geis (1982) analysed American television advertisements. He explored how advertising applies conversational implicatures which are the intended implications of the advertisement as well as pragmatic implicatures in advertising. In the same year, Dyer (1982) looked into the effects of advertising, semiotics and also the rhetorical language used in advertising. Goddard (1998) and Cook (2001) investigated the interaction that exists between language and images in advertisements.

Literature contributes massively to the liveliness of speech and written language. Advertising is a form of creative writing and as the boundaries of literature are not cut

and dried, there is bound to be overlaps of terms and techniques. Radio advertising uses language as well as other elements such as music and sound effects. Even though the dominant element is language, importance is also placed on these elements.

Therefore, there is validity to what MacRury (2009:101) claims: "Where in the past 'jingles' would do for an ad (advertisement) on the assumption that 'catchy' and 'repetitive' were the key creative watchwords, now humour, emotion and arresting music take their place." Jingles refer to a memorable short tune that usually has lyrics.

2.8 Literary Devices

Literary devices are at play all around, however, if we are not aware of their existence or of their usage, they can go undetected and often unappreciated. This section deals with the meanings of some common literary devices which were found in the data. Various researches have been carried out on literary language and advertisements. Vestergaard and Schröder (1985) conducted an analysis on rhetorical devices found in magazine advertisements.

2.8.1 Alliteration

Alliteration occurs when the same consonant sound or sounds are used at the beginning of two or more words. These words can be next to or close to one another. Abrams and Harpham (2009), explain that alliteration is the 'repetition of a speech sound in a sequence of nearby words.' Tongue twisters are excellent examples of the usage of alliteration. Alliteration creates a pleasant rhyming sound that draws the attention of the listeners.

2.8.2 Pun

A usually humorous use of a word in a manner which suggests two or more meanings is known as pun. Puns depend on 'context for their witty overtones because the context gives significance to both meanings' (Myers-Shaffer, 2000).

2.8.3 Parallelism

Parallelism occurs when 'some component of the form or the meaning of a text is similar to some other component at some abstract level of description' claims Montgomery (2000). Parallelism can also occur in the form of parallel themes, ideas or concepts. Lexical parallelism is when words from the same semantic field are used and syntactic parallelism is when a sentence structure is parallel between two parts of the text (Montgomery, 2000).

2.8.4 Personification

This literary device is used to give inanimate objects, animals and ideas human characteristics. Delin (2000) refers to personification as 'a device used in poetic language: treating things and ideas as if they were human.'

2.8.5 Euphemism

Taboo words describe words that are considered rude or impolite; words that are unacceptable and which may cause distress or anger. Therefore, words that are acceptable or rather words that are not offensive are used instead. These words and expressions are referred to as euphemisms. Delin (2000) states euphemism is 'a polite term used to cover something unpleasant or taboo.' Bolinger (1980:16) discusses euphemisms deriving examples from advertising such as the usage of 'simulated instead of imitation or fake.'

2.8.6 Allusion

Rae (1998) describes allusion as 'a reference usually brief often casual occasionally indirect to a person, event or condition, thought to be familiar to the reader.' She stresses on the importance of association as it is a vital part of allusion. 'The purpose of allusion is to bring a world of experience outside the limitations of a statement to the reader' (Rae, 1998). Rayner et. al. (2004), explain the function of allusion from an emotive point of view. According to them, when an advertiser uses allusions to other media text, they 'cleverly engage an audience with the text by allowing them to feel pleased that they have understood the allusion and can become party to the cleverness of it.'

2.8.7 Metaphor

A metaphor is similar to a simile. However, it does not use the words 'like' or 'as' that is found in similes. Metaphors are used to show similarity between two concepts, one abstract and the other concrete. By using metaphors, an abstract concept is understood in terms of a more concrete concept. According to Montgomery (2000), 'metaphor occurs when a word or phrase in a passage is clearly out of place in the topic being dealt with but nevertheless makes sense because of some similarity between it and what is being talked about.'

2.8.8 Simile

The comparison of two ideas or objects that are unlike each other is known as simile. Although similes and metaphors are similar, there are two main differences. Firstly, in contrast to metaphors, similes do not have implied meanings. Secondly, a simile is used to mark similarities (Griffith, 2005).

2.8.9 Hyperbole

Hyperbole is over exaggeration of a matter or situation. Its purpose being to show emphasis. Turco (1999) describes hyperbole as 'calculated exaggeration' and 'overstatement.' Hyperboles are usually not literarily true but make the statement or situation attractive and interesting.

2.8.10 Ambiguity

This literary device is often used by advertisers to cause uncertainty in the mind of the listener or reader. Ambiguity is 'a verbal nuance that simultaneously gives room for alternative interpretations of the same word or statement' (Hall, 2002). It creates within the listener or reader an uncertainty of its exact meaning.

2.8.11 Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeic words are words that 'resemble the sound to which they refer' (Fry and Kress, 2006). They are words that are equivalent to sound effects. For example, words such as `sizzle', `buzz' and `boom'.

2.8.12 Antithesis

As its name would suggest, antithesis occurs when two contradicting words are placed together. Rae (1998) explains the meaning clearly as 'the juxtaposition of two words, phrases, clauses, or sentences contrasted or opposed in meaning in such a way as to give emphasis to their contrasting ideas and give the effect of balance.'

2.8.13 Connotation and Denotation

Connotation and denotation are the implicit and explicit meanings of a word. Simply put, denotation is the meaning of a word as found in dictionaries, thus making it explicit

in nature. On the other hand, connotation is the feelings that are attached to a word. The connotation of a word, although generally the same can sometimes differ from individual to individual However, most words have generic connotations. Abrams and Harphams (2009) classify denotation as the 'primary significance or reference' and connotation as the 'secondary or associated significations and feelings it commonly suggests or implies.'

2.8.14 Repetition

Repetition is basically the reiteration of an individual word or of a phrase. In advertisements, the brand name and product being advertised is often repeated. Repetition is based on the age old adage that repeated words or phrases tend to have longer staying power in the mind.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the related literature in the research. Aspects of language and literature as well as advertising in general and in Malaysia have been discussed. In the subsequent chapter, the research methodology and framework will be explained with the justification for selection of data and the examination of the data collection process.