

GENRE CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The article explores genre characteristics in English advertising discourses, particularly in book, consumer goods, and tourism advertising discourses. Research results show that 12 moves appear in all three types of advertising discourse. However, the frequency of occurrence of these moves is different. In addition, the article also learns about the layout characteristics of the types of advertising discourse mentioned above.

Keywords: Genre, book advertising, consumer goods advertising, tourism advertising.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hosney [4, p.25] argues that advertising is a type of discourse in the sense that it has an influence not only on language structure, lifestyle, but also on the content of daily interactions and exchanges. The messages of advertisements have permeated all aspects of culture, and as Beasley and Danesi [1, p.1] have pointed out that advertising has become an integral part of the “spiritual encyclopedia” of almost everyone who is living in today's modern society. Cook [3, p.1] also believes that in a world with a lot of environmental and social problems, advertising can be considered as one of the main factors that motivate people to consume more by making them feel constantly needy or unfulfilled or by tapping into their desires, worries, and ambitions.

According to Rahimian [6, p.17], advertising plays a very important role in business. This activity helps businesses provide information about their products and services to consumers and encourage them to buy and use those products and services. In the context of Vietnam's deeper and deeper integration into the international market, the number of foreign enterprises investing in Vietnam as well as Vietnamese enterprises expanding their investments into foreign markets is increasing. Obviously, as the transnational business activities of enterprises are increasing day by day, advertising activities become imperative and moreover, knowledge of the impact of advertising language power will help improve the effectiveness of promoting products and services in an intercultural business environment. Therefore, the research, analysis of advertising discourse among languages in general and in English in particular will create a basic foundation for Vietnamese businesses to create or transform advertising documents more effectively to bring financial efficiency in business activities.

According to Swales [7], genre is a set of communicative events with language that play an important and indispensable role in accomplishing the purpose of communication. The set of similar communicative purposes makes up the genre and gives it structure. Any major change in the purpose of communication is likely to lead to a different genre. The creator of the text is free to use the language source as he sees fit, but is subject to certain standard practices in that particular genre. Swales [7, p.14] also argues that it is these same practices that distinguish a personal letter from a business letter, an advertisement from a sales letter or an editorial from a newsletter. According to Dudley-Evans [4, p.2] the goal of genre analysis is to find out the customary structure of a particular text genre and the usage of the language of

that text genre. Genre analysis is aimed at analyzing the communicative goals of a particular text genre and explaining the customary structure of that genre. Genre analysis allows the study of the context, the grammatical system, the vocabulary in which the discourse is used, as well as the rules and practices, such as linguistic, social, academic or professional customs, that have an impact on the use of language in those circumstances. The results of genre analysis bring many benefits to applied linguistics, including teaching English for specific purposes.

From the point of view of applied genre analysis, Bhatia [2] argues that the goal of genre analysis is to address two issues: first, it is necessary to depict the customary or typical characteristics of a particular genre of text to determine the relationship between function and form; and second, the need to explain the specific features of contexts that are dominated by cultural, social, and cognitive factors in the field of expertise, whether it is specialized or academic. According to Bhatia [2], the main goals of genre theory are to: (1) represent and explain the increasingly complex world of practice; (2) Understand and justify personal intentions, and clarify socially recognized communication purposes; (3) Understand how language is used and formed in a social environment and to find effective solutions to applied language and pedagogical problems; (4) Understand how to recognize society, profession, organization and individual through different principles within the scope of specific cultural practices; (5) Helps explore language in social settings; (6) Helps to interact between academic and professional discourse practices.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

The research material includes 105 advertising samples focusing on the areas of consumer goods advertisements, book advertisements and travel advertisements. The analysis process is performed according to the following steps:

- Step 1. Setting criteria for sample selection, valid discourses include two channels: picture channel and text channel.
- Step 2. Collecting advertising discourses and classify into 3 groups of advertisements with each group consisting of 35 advertisements.
- Step 3. Analyzing and describing advertising discourses by category
- Step 4. Conclusions for research results.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Moves in the advertisements for books, consumer goods, and tourism services

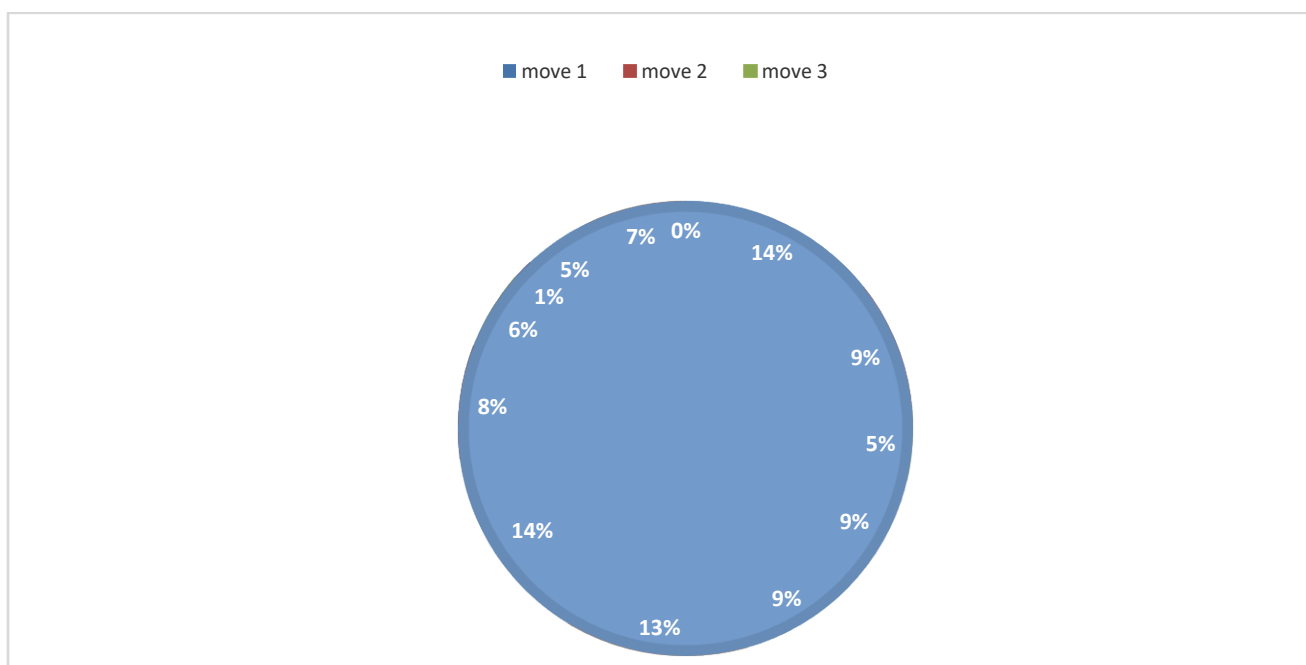
The results of the research show that there are 12 moves in the advertisements for books, consumer goods, and tourism services, which include: Headline, slogan, detailing products or services, targeting the market, justifying products or services, appraising products or services, establishing credentials, endorsement or testimonial, offering incentives, using pressure tactics, urging action, and soliciting response. However, the percentage of occurrence for each move is different as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Moves in English advertisements for books, consumer goods, and tourism

Moves	No of discourses	Percentage
1. Headline	61	14.35%
2. Slogan	39	9.18%

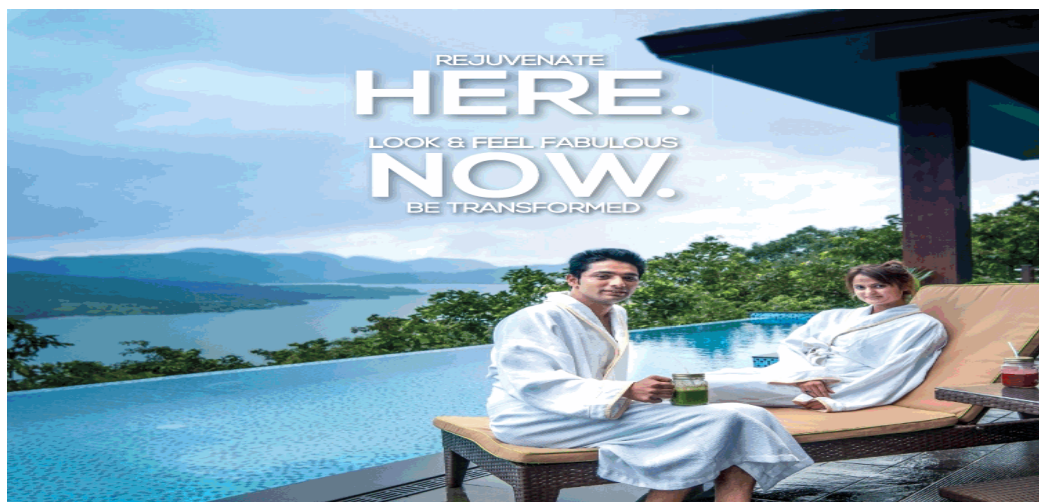
3. Detailing products or services	22	5.18%
4. Targeting the market	36	8.48%
5. Justifying products or services	36	8.48%
6. Appraising products or services	55	12.9%
7. Establishing credentials	61	14.36%
8. Endorsement or testimonial	34	8%
9. Offering incentives	24	5.65%
10. Using pressure tactics	6	1.41%
11. Urging action	20	4.71%
12. Soliciting response	31	7.3%
TOTAL	425	100%

Table 1 shows 12 moves surveyed that appear in the advertisements for books, consumer goods and tourism. Specifically, the frequency of the moves is: Title accounted for 14.35%, Slogan 9.18%, detailing products or services was 5.18%, Targeting the market: 8.48%, Justifying products or services accounted for 8.48 %, Appraising products and services: 12.9%, Establishing credentials: 4.36%, Endorsement or testimonial 8%, Offering incentives: 5.65%, Using Pressure tactics 1.41%, Urging action accounts for 4.71%, soliciting response 7.03%. Thus, there is a difference in the frequency of occurrence moves in the advertisements for English books, consumer goods, and tourism. The difference is shown in Figure 1 below.



Move 1: Headline. This is a move that has a high frequency in the twelve surveyed moves (14.35%). Short, easy-to-remember headlines are placed in important positions in the advertisements such as the top, middle and bottom with large font size and are often bold in eye-catching colors. Headline placement also depends on the purpose of the advertisement

writer. For example, Headlines in bold, large font size, white on blue background in English tourism advertisements



Take the holiday you deserve...

Atmantan, India's most luxurious integrated wellness destination, sits atop a unique crystal hill in the majestic Sahyadris and overlooks the pristine Mulshi Lake.

You can choose from various lifestyle enhancing packages that focus on Detox, Weight Balance, Fitness, Mental Health, Optimal Sleep and more at this award-winning wellness centre.

Freshly curated: Sleep Sanctuary... A special program curated to foster optimal memory, weight, mood and musculoskeletal health.

All wellness packages are inclusive of your accommodation, wellness meal, doctor consults, spa therapies, daily fitness activities and use of water and pool therapy suits.



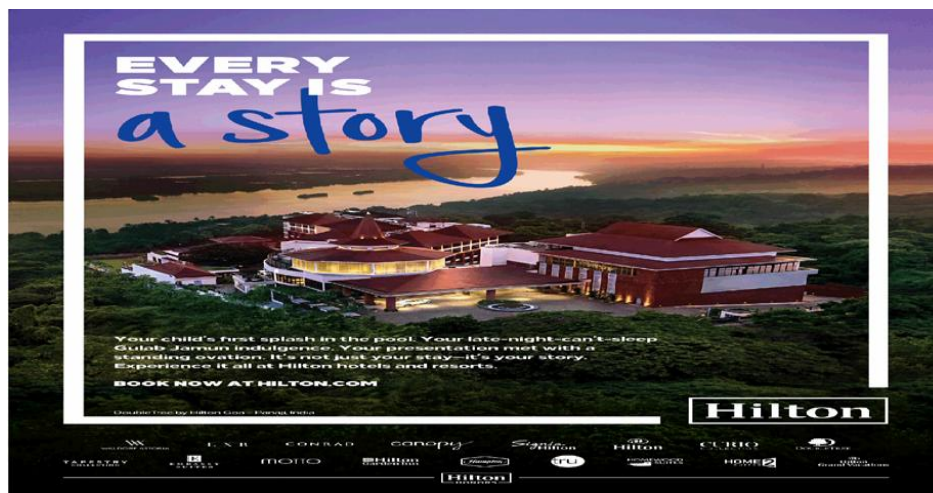
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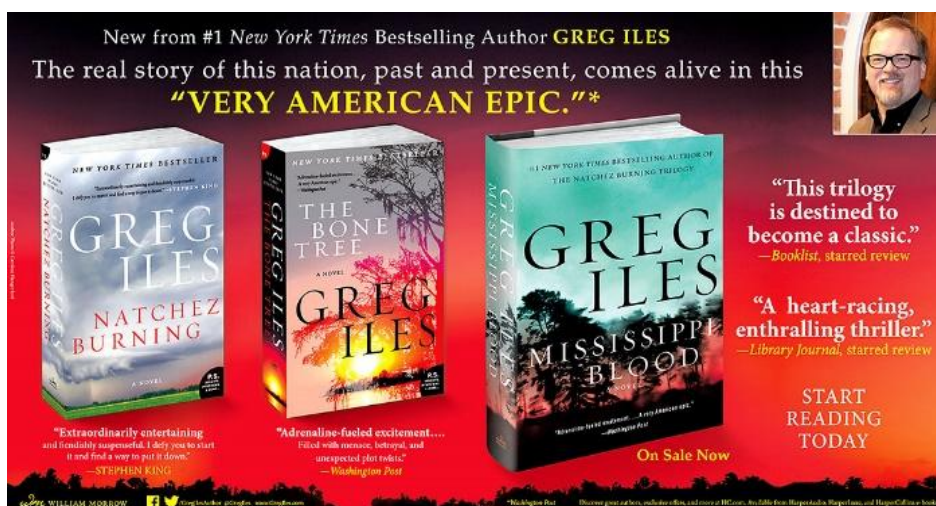
Depending on the type of advertisement, the move Headline is used to different extent. The frequency of using this move in the advertising discourses for books, consumer goods, and tourism in English has no significant difference. Specifically, when divided into two types of advertising discourse, book advertisements use headlines 14.19% while those for consumer goods and tourism 14.44%.

Move 2: Slogan. This move is used by the advertising writer to help the receiver recognize the object of the advertisement and remember the message of the advertising discourse. The discourse using the slogan "Every stay is a story", for example, contains the travel agency's message, the company's commitment to travel services that every trip is meaningful. Since then, the slogan has both created the initial attraction and conveyed the meaning of the advertising message.



The use of slogans is very important because the advertising discourse is inherently limited in using many words, so advertisement writers take advantage of the customer's understanding of the company's brand and label. However, depending on the type of advertisement (books, consumer goods, tourism), the move slogans are used to different degrees. The English book advertising discourse mainly attracts customers (mainly readers) in the content of the book and the author, so the use of the slogan or not does not affect much to the message of the book advertising discourse. Besides, a slogan set suitable for the book is not easy as it requires advertising writers to really understand the ideological content of the book. Any advertising discourse may also have to pay attention to content and form, so book advertising writers often use book titles and maxims, author's writing style or generalized sentences/poems in the textbooks as slogans for the purpose of impressing customers about that book. Advertisements for consumer goods and tourism services need to use many of these moves to drive more interest in the product or tour. Therefore, the frequency of using this move in advertisements for goods and tourism products is higher than that of book advertisements, accounting for 13.04%.

Move 3: Detailing products or services. Survey results of 105 advertising discourses for books, consumer goods and tourism services in English shows that all these advertisements use this move of detailing products and services, accounting for 5.18%. This is an important move in persuading customers to buy the product. For example, the book advertising discourse is described in great detail as follow.



Considering two types of advertisements: for books, and for consumer goods and tourism, the frequency of occurrence of move 3 showed a difference, specifically: book advertisements accounted for 7.43% of the total number of 12 surveyed moves while advertisements for consumer goods and tourism services was 3.97%. The frequency of detailing products or services in the book advertising discourse is 3.47% higher than that of the consumer goods and tourism services.

Move 4: Targeting the market has the function of identifying target customers for products and services. Depending on the purpose and ideas of the advertising writer, the target customer is mentioned directly or indirectly. The move Targeting the market is an important step in the advertising discourse to identify the right target customers for the product. Therefore, the frequency of this move is quite high, specifically: the advertisement for books is 8.78% and the advertisement for consumer goods and tourism service is 8.3%. The frequency of the move 4 in the book advertisements is 0.48% higher. When it comes to strategies, the target customer is mentioned explicitly in a smaller proportion than the verbal expression. For example, consider the advertising discourse below expressing "boost energy".



Move 5: Justifying products or services to create trust in customers about the authenticity of the product, creating trust in customers from the place of production to legal issues. Move 5 is an important step in English advertising discourses. Therefore, the frequency of this move is quite high, specifically: advertisement for books 14.18%, consumer goods and tourism services account for 5.42%. The frequency of the move justifying products or services in the book advertising discourse is 5.7% higher.



Move 6: Appraising the product or service to create an incentive to attract customers' attention to the product or service. This is one of the important moves in the English advertising discourse (accounting for 12.9% of the frequency). The frequency in the book advertisements compared with the consumer goods and tourism is quite significant (about 4.3%). The data shows that all types of advertisements perform the act of appraising and praising products and services that attract customers. The advertisement on oil-free fryer uses a combination of vocabulary and grammar that praises “Fresh and pure”, or “Aquafina is the perfect companion for happy bodies everywhere” to hit customers' psychology and attract them to buy products.



Move 7: Establishing credentials has the function of creating confidence in customers about the quality and safety of the product. This is done by using strategies such as mentioning the company's brand name, reputation, awards received or company history. The purpose of this move is to help increase sales and boost brand loyalty. This move can be realized with both words and pictures. The advertisement on English beverage products establishes credentials by the “Tiger” brand and the “world acclaimed” note.



This is also an important move in the English advertising discourses, the frequency appears quite high in the 12 surveyed moves (14.36%). Considering each type of advertisement, the frequency in the book advertisements is 14.2%, and in the consumer goods and tourism is 14.44%.

Move 8: Endorsement or testimonial has the function to state the benefits of the product thanks to positive comments from customers using the product, or related certificates, degrees, reputations, awards, etc. product. Similar to the moves appraising the products, establishing credentials, offering incentives, this move helps to increase customers' confidence in the quality and safety of the product. This is also an important move in English advertisements, accounting for a fairly high percentage of the 12 surveyed moves (accounting for 8%). The frequency in the advertisements of books is 12.84%, and in consumer goods and tourism products is 5.42%. It can be explained that reputable brands always create the trust of customers. As for products and goods for daily living, especially those that are too popular, customers pay little attention to brands or labels, but for products of great value, prestigious brands are the consumer's preferred choice.

Move 9: offering incentives for customers to buy products including promotions, discounts, free gifts, free warranties, product trials or purchases with low interest installment. For example, the strategy itself “20 clinical studies: increased weight and height in 60 to 90 days, increased number of healthy days” is an incentive strategy to attract customers.

This is also an important move in English advertisements, appearing quite high in the 12 surveyed moves (accounting for 5.65%). Considering each type of advertisement, the rate of frequency appearing in the book advertisements (accounting for 8.2%) is 3.87% higher than that of consumer goods and tourism products.

Move 10: Using pressure tactics works to pressure and urge the customer to make a quick decision to purchase by using strategies such as a time limit for promotion, or the availability of the promotional products. This is the least important move in the English advertising discourses, accounting for the lowest percentage of the 12 surveyed moves (1.41%).

Move 11: Urging action is similar to the pressure strategy move that prompts the customer to make a quick decision to purchase by using strategies such as a time limit for promotion or the availability of promotional products. But the frequency of this move (4.21%) is higher than that of the pressuring tactics.

Move 12: Soliciting response is used to urge potential customers to have a response about advertised products including strategies such as providing phone number, company website, email address, filling out form, QR code, affiliate links, social media accounts like Facebook, Zalo, and YouTube.... This move helps customers get information about the product by using one of the contact methods above to contact the product supplier. Using sub-steps in the move of soliciting response also helps with product sales. This is also an important step in the English advertisements with the frequency quite high in the 12 surveyed moves (accounting for 7.3%).

2. The layout of the English book, consumer goods and tourism advertising discourse

Information value theory is that placing different advertising factors at different positions will give different information value and meaning to the advertisement. Frame analysis of the advertisement layout points to the degree of connection and disconnection between elements in the advertising discourse. A frame consisting of contours or color contrasts creates a "separate unit of information". The color contrast between white and black creates a strong division between ideal and real information in the frameset advertisement that makes the image or language "joined" or "disjoined". In product advertisements, advertising writers create separation of information by using different frames and colors to distinguish different types of information corresponding to detailed product-related descriptions and offers.



About information value: The layout of the advertisement is determined by the orientation or placement of the elements or the advertised information. advertisement layouts have a center or margin defined by the print/typography and prominence. The information can also be

placed along the vertical or horizontal axis. Product advertising discourse is presented horizontally. Language and images are divided on the horizontal axis. The contrasting colors between the image and the language make the advertisement layout stand out.



In advertising discourse, the writer uses color contrast between images and words to help separate the upper and lower parts of the QC template. The upper part is the battery information, the lower part is the phone image taken at night.



The prominence of the image attracts the reader's attention, such as lines, colors. Advertising writers use color contrast, size, and sharpness to highlight important information. The image takes up more space than other information in the advertisements. The contrast of colors helps to highlight the information of the advertising discourse. In fact, the advertising discourse has many flexible structures, layouts, and changes depending on the purposes and ideas of the advertising writers.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study has studied about the genre characteristics of English advertising discourse with the focus on studying the samples of books, consumer goods and tourism advertisements. Specifically, the study focuses on understanding two aspects: structure of move and visual layout of advertising discourses. The research results have partly helped to find out the customary structure of genre of the advertising discourse in English, thereby helping the advertising designers to have a better view on how to create an effective advertisement suitable to the culture and language of the target market, helping businesses sell more goods to ensure the sustainable development of the business.

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