

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a methodology of analysis based on the previous chapter's review of theories and definitions. This chapter, then, specifically advances those methods, tests, and criteria which are to be applied to the selected SDWAs. The impetus for this is to engender completing the research objectives, answering the research questions and testing the research hypothesis.

3.2 SDWAs for Analysis to LSWA

This research focuses on the analysis of four SDWAs that span a nearly twenty year time period. (The actual SDWAs can be found in the appropriate appendix section.) The methods applied during analysis are to render the SDWAs as part of the cyber/digital sub-genre, LSWA (Clugston, 2012:Online). It should be noted that SDWAs are considered, in the final analysis, a sort of micro genre found in the LSWA sub-genre. It is these SDWAs, then, that are the focus of the research questions which were posed in the first chapter.

3.3 Towards the Research Questions

It must be remembered in this chapter the concern is only on the methodology and not the analysis. Thus the clearest theoretical application of methodology is to first concentrate on the research questions and then move forward to other areas.

- 1. Are SDWAs (and subsequent LSWAs) a cyber/digital genre?**

Testing a document to meet cyber/digital genre's standards is a necessary step in the Genre Analysis of SDWAs. The criteria that must be met to qualify any document as cyber/digital are the manifestation of the following characteristics: content, form and functionality, Santini, (2007). Functionality is defined as operations that can only be performed while on the internet (e.g., clicking hyperlinks to see another page, scrolling, as opposed to turning pages, to read documents). Furthermore, testing using Santini's 2012 criteria includes the following: "a digital genre is any

kind of genre that has a digital form, a digital genre can be any paper genre converted into a digital form or a class of texts that do not have any counterpart in the paper world such as home pages, About US pages, FAQs, webzine articles, personal blogs, corporate weblogs,” (Santini, 2012:Online).

2. In what manner do self-defense LSWAs demonstrate Genre Hybridism?

The aspect of Hybrid, or mixed genres, is evidenced through a combination of several embedded types of documents into one SDWA. As Santini says concerning cyber/digital genres, “[g]enres are not mutually exclusive and different genres can be merged into a single document, generating hybrid form,” (Santini, 2007:6). While the analysis of the exact constituents will be detailed in the next chapter, an example of the hybrid nature of SDWAs can quickly be detailed. That is to say SDWAs clearly manifest an embedded personal letter genre. It is quickly evidenced by comparing its structure/form to the prototypical structure/form given by Bodomo (2005) and Wilson (1994).

3. What aspects are salient in establishing a self-defense LSWA as extant and then variant?

In the seminal work of Yates and Orlikowski (1992) they argue that most new cyber/digital genres are mainly derived from earlier, offline/paper genres. In following Shepherd and Watters’ (1998, 1999) research these online/cyber/digital genres that have a basis in offline/paper genres are termed extant. That is to say, the fact that the genre existed before the internet (online vs. offline) demonstrates that it is an extant genre; if it is now contained online it demonstrates immediately that it is, at the least, an extant cyber/digital genre. What is merely required is to show that the SDWA had an earlier version in the offline paper genre world (this will be explicated further in another section). Turning to the question about manifesting the variant quality requires noting that the online cyber/digital document demonstrates functionality. Functionality can be defined as having qualities that are only available in the online cyber/digital milieu (i.e. not available in the offline paper milieu). Two such qualities that qualify for demonstration of functionality are hyperlinking in the text and ability to scroll (as opposed to turning pages).

4. How does the application of the AIDA/Moves template describe and define a self-defense LSWA’s structure and, furthermore, how does it demonstrate cohesion, coherence and purpose?

This chapter is concerned with methodology and not analysis. This question will be held for the analysis chapter. However, the theoretical methodological framework of the AIDA Template and Move Structure will be given in another section of this chapter.

5. What are the unique strategies used in the content (e.g., lexical choices, verb choices, overall page length of the advertisements, sentence length, tenses, punctuation marks and personal pronouns usage within self-defense LSWAs)?

Revealing the exact details of the above question will be accomplished in the Analysis Chapter. Later in this chapter the specific elements to be investigated will be delineated.

6. Do self-defense LSWAs show fixity?

To ascertain if a genre has actual use for a specific segment of society, or a specific discourse community, the quality of fixity is evaluated. The importance of fixity, or stableness, cannot be overlooked in a society's communication. "All societies, whether reliant upon orality or literacy, rely upon some form of fixity in some classes of text," (Yates and Sumner, 1997:4). This implies that genres are structured communication that share linguistic and structural elements within a specific discourse community, Yates and Sumner (1997). Because genres are recognized through content, form, and purpose, the test for fixity is merely the observation if these elements have remained fairly stable over a number of years. If a genre manifests fixity—this is equivalent to Bhatia's (2004) idea of generic integrity—it then is a genre that serves a purpose within a specific speech community. In the words of Yates and Sumner, "...the constant production of texts using specific technologies in specific contexts tends to produce 'relatively stable types' or genres..." (Yates and Sumner, 1997:3). It is this quality that can denote the overall usefulness of a document's construct. To test for fixity merely requires evidencing that the same text or similar form texts have been used for a number of years within the medium (in this case the cyber/digital milieu).

3.4 Overview of the Theoretical Framework

Turning from the specific research questions to a more global perspective of analysis requires understanding the theoretical framework that will be applied to SDWAs. At the outset, although the task is rather complex, the procedural analysis follows a top

down paradigm starting with a Macro Analysis and then moving downwards to a detailed Micro Analysis based largely on Bawarshi and Reiff's (2010) procedures. This procedural view is explicated in the following: "We therefore consider the meaning-structure of the message as being determined from the top downwards, the speaker's overall purpose being the controlling factor, while other subsidiary purposes (for speakers may have several simultaneously) similarly control structure and expression at the lower levels," (Callow and Callow, 1992:7-8). While the aim of this deconstruction process is to discover salient aspects of genre, it must be stated, again, that single component deconstruction cannot wholly explain the complexity inherent in genre. As mentioned with writer's, reader's, and audience's purposes all being tied together in the greater construct of purpose, the interplay of component genre dynamics cannot be completely removed from the overall analysis equation. That is to say that over analysis of one part of a genre is apt to lead to a faulty description. An analogy that depicts this problem is the example of dissecting and deconstructing a beard. Recognizing a beard requires taking into account all of the dynamic components involved: face structure, color of hair, length of hair, number of hairs, etc. When any one of these components is singled out to be the one sole cause of a beard, then the description is skewed and inaccurate (i.e. non dynamic). A beard cannot be ascertained by a certain magical number of hairs, or a certain length of hair, nor even the color of the hair. In reality, these all are intertwined to give an impression that is best described by the viewer as a beard (i.e. the dynamic view). And it is so with genre analysis. "[G]enre [is] a useful concept because in identifying and labeling genres we try to capture the gestalt of the various components of the communicative act," (Kwasnik and Crowston, 2004:9). This idea of Gestalt taps into a seemingly basic quality of understanding. "It is at the basic level of categorization that people conceptualize things as perceptual and functional gestalts," (Taylor, 1989:48). Because of this, Gestalt and its implications cannot be ignored in the defining process of genre; that is genre is no one thing, but a dynamic interplay in which some components manifest more salient roles.

3.5 Overview of Philosophy

The dynamic interplay aspect of genre requires establishing a specific philosophy that will guide the ensuing analysis. At the core of the philosophical framework for this research's methodology is the idea that "[a] new definition for genre with respect to digital documents is necessary, incorporating the style, form, content and purpose of a document," (Boese, 2005:56). As stated in the last chapter, this research posits that a definition is needed prior to establishing a theory. To put this

idea into action this research adheres to the philosophy, previously stated, that genre is best viewed as a purpose driven, dualistically defined construct existing within a hierarchical taxonomy. This approach includes identifying genre purpose, analyzing rhetorical moves and inspecting how these moves are carried out textually and linguistically, Bawarshi and Reiff (2010).

3.6 Analysis Framework

As discussed in the Literature Review Chapter, the overarching design of the analysis procedures adheres to Bawarshi and Reiff's (2010) English for Special Purposes (ESP) genre analysis model. They explain this approach as follows:

A typical ESP approach to genre analysis, for example, will begin by identifying a genre within a discourse community and defining the communicative purpose the genre is designed to achieve. From there, the analysis turns to an examination of the genre's organization—its schematic structure—often characterized by the rhetorical “moves” it undertakes, and then to an examination of the textual and linguistic features (style, tone, voice, grammar, syntax) that realize the rhetorical moves. The trajectory of the analysis thus proceeds from a genre's schematic structure to its lexico-grammatic features, all the while attending to the genre's communicative purpose and the discourse community which defines it. The process is by no means linear or static, but generally speaking, it has tended to move from context to text (Flowerdew 91-92), with context providing knowledge of communicative purpose and discourse community members' genre identifications, (Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010:46-47).

In the research of SDWAs this procedure is held as a sort of road map. That is it indicates the starting point and path towards the final destination. However, the cyber/digital territory to traverse is unique as is the final sub-genre destination. This requires that additional tools of analysis be added along the path towards labeling a new cyber/digital sub-genre. To begin this journey, the path starts at the macro level.

3.6.1 Macro Analysis

The primary steps in the analysis process of any document are to test for the manifestation of Macro Components. It is only after establishing the Macro Components that the document should be considered for micro analysis. This means that the document must be found not to be an aberrant document. After this is

accomplished, the document must then be placed inside of a taxonomical hierarchy. This is done to accurately establish a lineage which can lead from Supra Genre to Sub-Genre. This lineage placement includes inspection of the offline and online progenitors of the document. In the case of SDWAs a cyber/digital genre labeling is achieved via demonstration of cyber/digital functionality. Furthermore, fixity is easily demonstrated through examination of the years in which the SDWAs were first presented on the Internet. It should be kept in mind that the analysis at the macro level requires less involved dissection than that of the ensuing levels. That is to say that a descriptive check list, much like a preflight check list, is all that is normally required to verify the macro components involved.

3.6.2 Ascertain Text as Aberrant Document or Genre System

Although there is some debate about whether genres are systems or processes of systems (e.g., Chandler, 2000) this examination of SDWAs adheres to the concept of systems. Therefore, establishing that a document qualifies as a part of a genre system requires that it answer the why, what, who, how, when, and where parameters that define the core dynamics of communication: notably these are purpose, participants, form, time, and location, Yates and Orlikowski (2002). To save space in this section the precise genre system questions can be found in the Appendix and the results in the following chapter.

3.6.3 Online and Offline Genres

Evaluating SDWAs requires demonstrating the involvement of both mediums. The salient aspect to note is that much like a biological organism the proposed cyber/digital sub-genre, LSWA, requires two parents: Online and Offline. The Macro Analysis includes the naming and defining of these. The Supra Genres give the telltale genetics, as it were, that make an LSWA what it is. In other words, the Supra Genres encode the salient characteristics that carry through to the Sub-Genre offspring.

3.6.3.1 Offline Genre

Generally advertising is thought to be a genre within the Supra Genre of Persuasion; however, according to Longacre (1992) this is not true. The present SDWA research follows Longacre's (1992) definition that the correct category in which advertising belongs is not persuasion, but, rather, that of hortatory. The distinction is quite

important in understanding the overall purpose of an SDWA. The distinction is that while persuasion's goal is to change the values and beliefs of the reader, hortatory's goal is to change the conduct/action of the reader. This, most bluntly, means to create a sale through motivating the reader to buy the advertised product. With this difference detailed, demonstrating the involvement of offline, paper genre requires no more than finding nearly equivalent documents of the cyber/digital document in the paper world. The evidence of an extant genre is developed the second a nexus can be drawn between the online and the offline versions of the text. To demonstrate that SDWAs existed as Self Defense Paper Advertisements is no more difficult than demonstrating their prior offline use. This can be established in the paper genre world by locating versions used in direct mailing or trade magazines. To demonstrate that the SDWAs originated in the paper genre world, and therefore are, at once, a extant cyber/digital genre, one advertisement is proffered for proof: the Clugston Combat JKD Long Copy Advertisement (LCA) can be found in the trade magazine Blackbelt, December 1998 issue; it also existed in a direct mail version in 1995.

3.6.3.2 Online Genre

Establishing online genre is easily accomplished by locating a document that is housed in the cyber/digital environment of the Internet. The document must demonstrate fixity, however, to be considered an Internet genre.

3.6.4 Application of Taxonomy

A central aspect of the philosophical approach to cyber/digital genre analysis in this research is taxonomy. In fact, it is considered a central part of the entire evaluation method. While the utility of its application has already been discussed in the previous chapter (Lee, 2001; van Dijk, 1985; Steen, 1999), it is held that a dynamic hierarchical taxonomy fits especially well with cyber/digital genre analysis. A taxonomy is dynamic and flexible and this meshes well with the Internet because the medium evolves and mutates documents at a fast pace (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005; Santini, 2006; Crowston, 2010; Orlikowski and Yates, 1999; Ferrar, 1991; Sumner and Yates, 1997; Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010; Posteguillo, 2002). Taxonomy, then, is applied as it would be in the pursuit of zoological/biological categorizations. At the top of the hierarchical taxonomy used in this research is the Supra Genre and at the lowest position is the Sub-Genre. Supra Genre description is the act of labeling the most primordial progenitors of the document being analyzed. Explaining the

progression of this taxonomy from supra to sub connects the different genres through a morphological sameness. The mutations and hybrids are developed because they show some sort of specialization that is necessary when the communication's purpose and a change in the environment interact—a coping, adaptation strategy, as it were. In other words, a Sub-Genre, is the offspring of a Meso Genre, which in turn is the offspring of Supra Genre. The Sub-Genre, as a sub species, traces its characteristics to the characteristics of its parents and the mutations that have evolved along its journey to its present form.

3.6.4.1 Offline Supra Genre

The Supra Genres give the telltale genetics, as it were, that make a sub-genre what it is (a LSWA in this case). More precisely the Supra Genres encode the salient characteristics that carry through to the Sub-Genre offspring. The offline Supra Genres in this research are Advertising, Lee (2010) and Hortatory, Longacre (1992). Hortatory has often been confused with Persuasion. This research holds to the fact that Longacre's (1992) delineation and subsequent definition of hortatory is correct. Therefore it is the correct parent genre to advertising genre. (Note: Because there is so much confusion between the terms persuasion and hortatory, it can be thought that hortatory is a refined version of persuasion.) At the Meso Genre level advertising will be refined to the Sales Letter Advertisement. At this stage, however, it is enough to focus only on the Supra Genres, though.

3.6.4.2 Online Supra Genre

In the analysis of SDWAs it is quite easy to delineate the online Supra Cyber/Digital Genre. To establish this it is only necessary to demonstrate that the SDWAs exist in a cyber/digital environment and have been written in HTML. These are both self-evident via searching for a SDWA online.

3.6.5 Meso Taxonomical Genre Analysis

The methodology of the Meso Genre analysis is to step down a spot on the taxonomical hierarchy. That is to examine below the Offline Supra Genres (Hortatory and Advertising) and to look below the Online Supra Genre (cyber/digital). Thus, extending the view on the hierarchical taxonomy requires dropping down to a more evolved (adapted for specialized purposes) variation of the prior Supra Genres.

3.6.5.1 Meso Taxonomical Off line Advertising Genre

It should be kept in mind that the influences of the Supra Genres are not lost at the Meso Genre level. They are merely changed and expressed in an adaptation to the audience and environment. Advertising, as a discipline, is constantly aware of the importance of adjusting to its audience.

In every ad consider only new customers. People using your product are not going to read your ads. They have already read and decided... The advertising man studies the consumer. He tries to place himself in the position of the buyer. His success largely depends on doing that to the exclusion of everything else (Hopkins, 1923:28)

That is while Advertising retains its purpose to sell, the manner in which it attempts to do this changes. There are, in reality, a myriad of forms available to off line advertising. This can include billboards, magazine advertisements, newspaper advertisements, radio advertisements, TV advertisements, Hot Air Balloon Advertising, Placards on Trains, Buses, and Subways, and/or direct mailers. Each of these methods carries a variety of different variables that can be changed (e.g., size of text message, color, images, fonts, etc.). The decision to use one vehicle of advertising over another is decided on by various factors (which are outside of the scope of this research). Suffice to say, in the quest to reach new customers new forms were tried in the offline, paper world. One such variety of advertising is the Sales Letter (Curly, Byrd). The entire book Discourse Description (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1992) is devoted, in fact, to the analysis of one such sales letter. This sales letter or, as it was termed, fund raising letter is a discussion of the exact type of document that this research considers a direct predecessor to the SDWA.

3.6.5.2 Online Meso Genre

The effects of the Online Supra Genre do not change. The ability of the cyber/digital world remains the same. That is to say, the functionalities available remain the same. The ramifications of being housed on the Internet remains the same at this level.

3.6.6 Micro Analysis

It is at the micro level in which the most intensive analysis occurs. SDWAs at the Micro Analysis level are best viewed through three lenses: 1. Function/Purpose, 2. Form/ Structure, and 3. Content. Additionally, each of these three lenses has its own specific tests, criteria and methods which will be explained in the appropriate sections.

3.6.6.1 Purpose/Function Analysis

The Lens of Purpose/Function essentially presupposes all of the other lenses. This view has been expressed by several leading researchers in the field: "...genres are conceptualized as goal directed or purposive," (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005:121); "Genres are how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them" (Martin, 1985:250). "A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes," (Swales, 1990:58). And, "[a] genre binds the shared purpose to characteristic aspects of substance and form," (Yates and Orlikowski, 1994:2). That is without a reason/purpose there is no need to create any advertising text. In essence an SDWA begins with the advertising writer's conceptualization. And this concept revolves around a function to serve a specific purpose (to sell product). In fact, LaLanne (2011) considers purpose the primary objective of an advertisement writer's process of constructing a text. Everything else is subservient to this notion. It exists to do nothing else. The advertising copy writer, then, only uses those devices and methods that will ensure the likelihood that this will occur. Purpose is viewed, at first, as a philosophical decision. The writing process then follows this decision. The actual ability to fulfill this is accomplished by the synergistic interaction of the form/structure and the precise lexical-grammatical content. It is here that the function is achieved through a dynamic Gestalt. The effect upon the reader when it all works together is to achieve its hortatory goal: to sell. In the methodology of this research, purpose is viewed in two ways: 1) It is an a priori decision for the genre, and 2) Purpose is fulfilled and realized when it does elicit a sale, thus labeling the genre from its effect.

3.6.6.2 Form/Structure Analysis

"Genres are not only characterized by shared set of communicative purposes they are also highly structured and conventionalized..." (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005:122). Thus, the Lens of Form/Structure requires analyzing an SDWA according

to its formal and structural components. To return to the last chapter's snap shot analogy entails looking at the SDWA's form. That is it requires looking at the embedded or, as Santini labels it, at the Hybridism qualities within a SDWA. This, then, will reveal the embedded genres in the SDWA. This Gestalt form will then account for how the document is displayed on the page (or on the computer screen). Another aspect of the Gestalt form links itself to the direct advertising purposes are the headlines: "We pick out what we wish to read by headlines, and we don't want those headlines misleading," (Hopkins, 1923:34). Hopkins then adds a statement that directly connects to the AIDA Template: "The writing of headlines is one of the greatest journalistic arts. They either conceal or reveal an interest," (Hopkins, 1923:34). Considering, now, the structure apart from the form requires returning yet again to the last chapter's movie analogy. This entails ascertaining the internal structure via the AIDA Template and Move Structure application. The value of the AIDA approach has been validated in the following researchers' work: Khankhrua (2007), Guffey (2001), Kramer (2001), Thill and Bovee (2002) and Cheung (2007). In addition, Bird (1994), Gallant (2012), and Curley (2010) have touted the advantages of using the AIDA template in the copy writer's profession. The way in which the AIDA Template manifests itself is through an organizational structure termed Move Structure. "As the name suggests the move structure of a text indicates a preferred way of organizing the text in order to realize a particular communicative purpose," (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005:132). The Move Structure approach has been validated in the following researchers' work: Cheung (2007), Bhatia (1993), Foz-Gil, (2009) and Askehave and Nielsen (2005). This research combines both the AIDA Template and Move Structure to form the central form/structure analysis methodology. Specifically, this is accomplished via the following: 1) Form is achieved by an analysis of the entire document and how it is displayed and 2) Analysis of structure is built, literally, from the arrangement of the components of the document's form. Again, both hold a dynamic Gestalt quality and impact the reader, whether consciously or unconsciously, at the same time.

3.6.6.3 Content Analysis

Performing content analysis is a complicated aspect of the overall methodology. There are many reasons for this. At the forefront, content must be separated from the Gestalt:

From studying non-digital genres we know that the role of content and form inform each other. For example, if we are presented with only the empty framework of the format of a letter (heading,

salutation, body, and closing) most people can identify the genre. Similarly if we are presented with the content without the form— just the text— we can still recognize it as a letter. (Kwasnik and Crowston, 2004: 6).

That is approaching content requires looking deeply into the text. Thus, this research's Content Analysis is based, partly, on the model used by Juan Palmer (1999):

Objective of the advertisement, b) Register, c) Linguistic analysis: i) Length of the ad, ii) Length of the sentences, iv) Use of verb tenses, v) use of verb voice, vi) Use of personal pronouns, vii) Use of possessive adjectives, viii) Use of punctuation marks d) Content units i) Images, ii) Combinations of images and text, [i and ii are not applicable in this research] iii) HT linkers c) Author's involvement in the target ad i) Use of copyright regulations, ii) Advertisement developers' information, (Palmer, 1999:42).

Additionally, the content analysis contains a synthetic approach obtained from several researchers: Winter (1992), Longacre (1992), Khankhrua (2007), Lapansaka (2006), Santini (2006c), Samaru (2001), Palmer (1999), Yus (2007), and Askehave and Nielsen (2005). Ostensibly, this evaluation will consist of the following areas of content analysis:

A. Fonts:

1. Font Choice in Headlines.
2. Font Choice in Sub Headlines.
3. Font Choice in Text (e.g., Verdana, Tahoma, Times).
4. Font Size in Headlines.
5. Font Size in Sub Headlines.
6. Font Size in Text Body.
7. Font Color Choice in Headlines.
8. Font Color Choice in Sub Headlines.
9. Font color choice in text body.

B. Lexical

1. Word Count.

2. Pronoun usage: frequency of I, you, we, us, they/them, he/she, him/ her.
3. Selected Proper Noun usage.
4. Selected Verbs: Non past tense Number, Past tense number, Future modals, Conditional Modals.
5. Selection of Voice.
6. Mode selection.
7. Amount of selected contracted verb forms.

C. Paragraphs:

1. Number of Bullets Used.
2. Number of Paragraphs.
3. Maximal Sentences in a paragraph.
4. Minimal number of sentences in Paragraphs.
5. Number of Fragment Sentences.

D. Salutations:

1. Greeting Used Type.
2. Closing Used Type.
3. Post Script Yes/ No.
4. Testimonials and placement.

It is hoped that a pattern of SDWAs' idiosyncratic usage of linguistic items can be delineated. Establishing patterns of usage should help develop an accurate description of the inherent nature of the cyber/digital documents. This, in turn, will foster a correct categorization within the hierarchical paradigm of advertising genre.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter started by further narrowing the selection of tools needed for the classification and analysis of SDWAs. To do this it first focused on delineating the specific methodology for answering chapter one's research questions. Continuing on from this, it then explicated the theoretical framework and philosophy on which the research's operational methodology was built. This was specifically done to establish a procedural guideline. The first step discussed in this procedure was to ascertain if the documents were indeed part of a genre or merely aberrant. The next step, if the

documents proved to be part of a genre system, was to subject them to a top down examination. This would consist of a macro to micro analysis based largely on Bawarshi and Reiff's (2010) paradigm. In the next step, the chapter delineated the saliency of the offline and online genres' causal relationship in creating and defining a cyber/digital sub-genre. This step was done in conjunction with applying a taxonomical hierarchy onto the SDWAs. The application of a hierarchical structure was realized to allow for an establishment of a functional gradient. This gradient could then reveal the evolution/mutation process from the generalities of a supra genre towards the specifics observed in a sub-genre. To further illuminate these distinctions, the next step in the procedure was to apply the perspectives from differing lenses of view. Each of these lenses (purpose/function, form/structure, and content) was discussed as a unique tool for analysis. That is each of them could allow for further insight into the dynamic of genre. Understanding this dynamic, or Gestalt, interaction among the three aspects is considered crucial for analyzing genre. The chapter, then, concluded with a listing of the specific linguistic elements central to performing a content analysis of SDWAs.