

## MASTER'S THESIS

### Fund-raising texts: a discourse description of two appeal letters and two leaflets

Lee, Chi Wai

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**FUND-RAISING TEXTS.  
A DISCOURSE DESCRIPTION  
OF  
TWO APPEAL LETTERS AND TWO LEAFLETS**

**LEE CHI WAI, PATRICK**

**STUDENT NUMBER: 98403311**

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents four texts for an analysis. Two are written as appeal letters, and two as leaflets. Their purpose of writing is to persuade an audience of Hong Kong residents to donate money for charity organizations. A qualitative approach informed by ethnography is adopted. Interviews with two organizations are conducted and verbal reporting of practitioners and the technique of introspection are used.

In this study, one focus is on the schematic structure of the texts and fund-raising texts are recognized as a particular type of genre. The "Problem-Solution discourse pattern" can be applied to the fund-raising texts even though practitioners did not acknowledge that they use any linguistic model. As for the textual moves, "situation or problem" is always placed at the beginning of the text because it is crucial to let readers know what the main theme is. Then, there are different combinations of the second move including "response, solution or problem". The final move is always "response" and two meanings of "response" are refined for the fund-raising texts: (i) a reply from readers and (ii) a response to the problem by the charity organization. In addition, "solution" needs to be refined better with reference to different parameters: (i) tangibility: tangible and virtual solution, (ii) time frame: proposed and referent solution and (iii) depth of target-achievement: ultimate and specific solution.

Another focus of this study is on the choice of style. As persuasion of readers to donate is crucial, adding involvement devices is to engage readers and make them "particular", which increases the possibility to solicit response successfully. Involvement devices include using "you", imperative clause and visual anchorage. There is a coherence between text and photographs; and there are two types of elaboration of "photographs": (i) illustration and (ii) anchorage and the photograph is important to make readers feel the "reality". It is a discursive way of using visual aid to present the reality in the visual text - "photograph". Finally, with reference to the question of whether "textual structure tell us the reality" or "the reality creates the structure", practitioners are not concerned too much with text structure. Practically, the reality to them is embodied in the structure.

## 摘要

本論文研究兩間在港的慈善機構所發出四篇文章的話語分析。其中兩篇為籌款傳單，另兩篇為籌款呼籲信件。

本論文特別探究執行寫作籌款文章的工作人員，如何運用文章的話語結構和風格，從而達到說服讀者捐款之目的。針對籌款文章之話語結構分析，本文以「問題與解決方法」意念作分析單位；有關分析文章之風格運用，是針對如何引入讀者置身有關情境中，從而說服讀者作出捐款之行動。

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Page of Acceptance	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	vi
Chapter	
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Promotional Writing	2
1.2 Fund-raising Text - Reality	3
1.3 Genre (Fund-raising Text - Structure)	3
2 Literature Review	6
2.1 Genre Analysis	6
2.1.1 General Definition: Text Type	6
2.2 The Schematic Structure of Discourse	8
2.2.1 Organizational Patterns of Clause Relationship (Spivey)	8
2.2.2 Narrative (Labov)	10
2.2.3 Problem-Solution Structure (Winter, Hoey)	11
2.3 Choice of Style	13
2.3.1 Involvement in Discourse	13
2.4 Afterthoughts : The Problem-Solution Structure	15
2.4.1 Basic Definition of Problem and Solution	15
2.4.2 Stages of Problem-Solving	17

3	Methodology	20
3.1	The Collection of the Texts under study	20
3.2	Research Design - Ethnography	20
3.2.1	The Ethnographic Interview	21
3.2.2	Text-Maker's Own Typology of the Genre	23
3.2.2.1	Ethnographic Assumption	23
3.2.2.2	Practitioners' Views on Structure and Style	24
3.3	Unit of Analysis - Problem-Solution Structure	26
3.4	Format of Analysis : Segmentation Within Text	29
4	Findings and Analysis	31
4.1	Schematic Structure	31
4.1.1	Introduction into Specificity of Genre	31
4.1.2	Sub-Genres: Direct Mail (appeal letter and leaflet)	32
4.1.3	Application of Hoey's Category Labels to Data Text	33
4.1.4	Explanation of Full Analysis in Table Form	36
4.1.5	Problem-Solution Structure - Response (Two Meanings)	39
4.1.6	Problem-Solution Structure - Aspects of Solution	40
4.1.7	Generalized Structure from Analyzing Data Texts	44
4.1.8	Practitioner's View on Structure	48
4.2	Choice of Style	50
4.2.1	Involvement of Readers - Using "You"	50
4.2.2	Strategic Position of "You" - Increase Response	52
4.2.3	Imperative Clause	56

4.2.4 Reality - Rhetoric of the Image	58
5 Conclusions	64
6 Limitations	65
Appendices	
Appendix 1: An Appeal Letter from UNICEF	66
Appendix 2: An Appeal Letter from Oxfam	67
Appendix 3: A Leaflet from UNICEF	68
Appendix 4: A Leaflet from Oxfam	69
Appendix 5: Full Analysis of An Appeal Letter from Oxfam	70
Appendix 6: Full Analysis of A Leaflet from UNICEF	73
Appendix 7: Full Analysis of A Leaflet from Oxfam	77
Appendix 8: Use of Photographs in Data Text 2	81
Appendix 9: Use of Photographs in Data Text 3	83
Appendix 10: Use of Photographs in Data Text 4	85
Bibliography	88