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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO  
RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS  
INTRODUCTION ARTICLES  
IN ENGLISH MAGAZINES**

**Field : The English Language**  
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**MASTER THESIS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
(A SUMMARY)**

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The Origin of the thesis is accessible for the purpose of reference at:

- *The College of Foreign Languages Library, University of Danang*
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. RATIONALE

The current trend of globalization, integration and development does not only help us make use of a lot of achievements of the world, but also absorb it and adapt it. This not only takes place in government policies, cultures, social movements, and financial markets through trade and the exchange of ideas, but also architecture in particular. New building technology knowledge, building materials, new concepts and orientations, etc. are being shared widely due to the impact of globalization on architecture. This impact is shown in the existence of the concepts of “*Green Architecture*”, “*Sustainable Architecture*” in the community of Vietnamese architects and their application in recently built construction work in Vietnam. Recently, dozens of urban planning project has made a totally new face for cities and rural areas, having influenced deeply the development of economy and people’s lives. Architecture integration is widely spread from commercial buildings to every corner of streets and every home of Vietnamese families.

Moreover, most of Vietnamese people work hard in their whole life in prior to build a beautiful house. The house not only is material possession but it also represents for the spiritual strength and social value of its host. As a result, Vietnamese people often spend a lot of time on searching for the unique, the most modern and the most high-tech for building their dream house. Furthermore, Vietnamese people tend to prefer whatever has foreign origin. They hunt for the hottest trend in global architecture, and they require their professional designers to apply for their own house.

Due to the technological advance in communications and mass media, the hottest trend in global architecture is easily accessible to the

majority of people via a lot of means: television channels, conferences, traveling, forums and press. Of these, press is the most convenient and cheapest way in general and magazines are the most favorable in particular. Magazines on architecture are more than what are known as journals but also released as periodical newspapers favored by normal readers. Readers are mostly attracted by meaningful articles and lively images. Magazines are also the traditional means that readers can take use of at any place and at any time.

To meet the demand, the staff of Vietnamese journalists try to investigate into Architecture field to write such professional articles. A certain amount of architects also take part in writing these articles. Meanwhile, Vietnamese readers are not satisfied with these kinds of articles in Vietnamese; however, they are not very good enough to understand an article in English. This brings difficulties for architects to satisfy their clients.

Far different from news and other types of magazine, these home design articles function as articles not only to offer excellent examples of various house styles, but also aim to advertise for a designing company or a product brand which makes it an effective advertising channel to customers.

For these above reasons, I have decided to choose *An Investigation into Residential Buildings Introduction Articles in English Magazines* as the topic of my M.A thesis.

## **1.2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1. Aims**

This research aims to analyze the discourse of residential building introduction in English in terms of layouts, syntactic structures, lexical features and cohesive devices which can help Vietnamese learners; especially students major in journalism who can

access standard outline for an article on residential building introduction and architects who want to have specific articles on residential buildings for architectural press.

### **1.2.2. Objectives**

The objectives of this research are:

- ü To find out discourse properties of articles on residential buildings introduction in English.
- ü To suggest some implications for teaching English to Vietnamese learners, especially journalism students.

### **1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

It is easy to recognize that the resource of articles on newspapers and magazines are abundant and various. However, the content of the items for this research is focused on residential building introduction which attracts all kinds of readers. And the samples are collected from printed materials on Internet. Layout, syntax, vocabulary and cohesion are four main aspects which will be clarified in term of discourse analysis.

### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

- i. What are the typical discourse characteristics of a residential building introduction article in English in terms of their layout, lexical features, syntactic structures and cohesive devices?
- ii. What are some suggestions for teaching and learning English for Architecture concerning as well as how to write and read an article on residential building introduction in English?

### **1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study will be a considerable material for journalism students in writing articles on specialized subjects. Architecture is such an extraordinary and difficult field that a few journalism students spend time

on studying during their schooldays. Moreover, although students already have their basic skills in writing articles, they need to study further knowledge of specialized matters in society to become a good critical writer. This study will be a limited source of beneficial reference that students can find. It not only helps them realize the similar things that a RBIA shares with other types, but it also provides special points that a RBIA uses to attract a variety of readers. Furthermore, this research will supply students with a standard RBIA sample in English to evaluate the performance of a RBIA in Vietnamese.

In addition, architects who often cooperate with Architecture magazines to write articles for specialized columns will also find this study as a helpful resource in providing a standard format to write an article, as well as how to develop a RBIA in an attractive way. It will also serve as a collection of articles for readers who want to understand more about RBIA's.

## **1.6. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

The study consists of five chapters as followed:

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter presents the rationale, the aims and objectives, the scope, research questions, the significance as well as the organization of the study.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

This chapter reviews previous studies related to the problem under investigation. The theoretical background such as theory of discourse and discourse analysis, genres of discourse, cohesion as well as an overview of magazines and home design magazines is also included in this chapter.

### **Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures**

This chapter concerns itself with research design, research methods, description of samples, data collection, data analysis and research procedures of the study. The validity and reliability of the study are also presented

#### **Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion**

The chapter deals with analyzing, interpreting and finding the layout, lexical features, syntactic structures and cohesive devices used in article on residential building introduction in English.

#### **Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications**

This chapter gives a summary of the development of the study, a brief restatement of the findings, some limitations and suggestion for further research. Some implications of the study for the practice of teaching and learning English in Vietnam are suggested.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Brown and Yule stated that: *“The analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis language in use.”* [6, p.1]. There are many studies which focus on one or another aspects of discourse analysis taken by some researchers including Brown and Yule (1983) with *“Discourse Analysis”*, Guy Cook (1989) with *“Discourse”*, Halliday and Hassan (1976) with *“Cohesion in English”*.

In Vietnam, Trần Ngọc Thêm (1998) with *“Hệ thống liên kết văn bản tiếng Việt”*, Nguyễn Đức Dân (1998) with *“Ngữ dụng học”*, Nguyễn Hòa (2003) with *“Phân tích diễn ngôn – Một số vấn đề lý luận và phương pháp”*, Nguyễn Thiện Giáp (2000) with *“Dụng học Việt ngữ”*, Đỗ Hữu Châu (2002) with *“Cơ sở ngữ dụng học”*, Diệp Quang Ban (2003) with *“Giao tiếp – văn bản – mạch lạc – liên kết – đoạn*

văn” which have been opening the way for more understandable analysis.

Besides, a number of studies related to writing articles and its characteristics in English and Vietnamese have been released.

At the Danang College of Foreign Languages in Vietnam, there have been some graduation research papers which give an insight into aspects and some other types of articles on newspapers and magazine.

## **2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.2.1. Discourse and Discourse Analysis**

#### **2.2.1.1. Discourse**

Halliday and Hassan (1976) use “text” to refer to discourse, or a “semantic unit”.

The other group try to classify them. With regard to text, Nunan (1993) states that text is “*to refer to any written record of communicative event. The event itself may involve oral language (for example, a sermon, a casual conversation, a shopping transaction) or written language (for example, a poem, a newspaper advertisement, a wall poster, a shopping list, a novel).*” [33, p.6]. Meanwhile, discourse is referred to “*the interpretation of the communicative event in context*” [33, p.6]. Discourse is language in action, while a text is the written record of that interaction.

#### **2.2.1.2. Discourse Analysis**

Both Yule (1996) as well as Jaworski & Coupland (1999) defined discourse analysis in the connection with its communicative use. “*Discourse analysis is the study of language use with the reference to the social and psychological factors that influence communication*” [13, p.129] was stated by Yule; and “*Discourse is language use relative to social, political, and cultural formations. It is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order and shaping*



*individuals' interaction with society*” was defined by Jaworski & Coupland [1, p.3]

### ***2.2.1.3. Spoken and Written Discourse***

Written discourse is different from spoken one in terms of the contexts, lexical characteristic, grammar, representation of text, manner and speed of production. And the type of discourse that is dealt with in this thesis belongs to written discourse.

### ***2.2.1.4. Descriptive Discourse***

Discourse Analysis can be either descriptive, i.e. describing language as it is, or prescriptive, i.e. laying down a set rules for good proper writing.

### ***2.2.2. Cohesion***

Cohesion is thus one of the text properties that contribute to the organization of discourse. The term refers to the connectedness of the surface elements in the text. Cohesion links all the sentences together semantically as a semantic property of a text.

In this thesis, only grammatical cohesion is mentioned and will be analyzed with reference, ellipsis and conjunction.

### ***2.2.3. Magazines and Home Design Magazines***

#### ***2.2.3.1. Definition of Magazines***

According to Wikipedia [54], magazine is defined as follows:

“Magazines are publications, generally published on a regular schedule, containing a variety of articles. They are generally financed by advertising, by a purchase price, by pre-paid magazine subscriptions, or all three.”

#### ***2.2.3.2. Functions of Magazines***

Magazines are one of the traditional mass media with following valuable features with functions such as: serving target audience; experiencing social, political and economic trends of society;

manipulating social trends; surveillance; interpreting; entertaining and advertising products and services.

### ***2.2.3.3. Definition of Home Design Magazine***

Home design is often accompanied with garden design to make a home and garden magazine. According to Writers' Digest Handbook of Magazine Article Writing [28, p.76], "*Home and garden magazines cover far more than just sumptuous surroundings. They're into cooking, pool safety, home security, and seasonal lawn care. What's more, they often include consumer-oriented pieces on how to choose outdoor grills, painting products, and range hoods – topics any competent writer can handle.*"

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The paper design is based on the combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The qualitative method is used to describe and analyze data to find out the distinctive features of a RBIA in terms of its layout, syntactic, lexical features. Meanwhile, counting and synthesizing the frequency of the occurrence of data by percentage are complemented by applying with a means of quantification.

#### **3.2. RESEARCH METHODS**

The methods used in this thesis are: the descriptive method, the analytic method and the inductive method.

#### **3.3. DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLES**

For doing this research paper, I will collect 150 samples of articles on residential building introduction from magazines in English of presses from various countries such as Canada, the USA, Australia, New Zealand. Magazines also vary from different fields such as home

design, house and garden, dwellings, interiors, and architecture records. These magazines were published within the past 4 years.

### **3.4. DATA COLLECTION**

Most of the data used in this thesis are versions of electronic magazines that were downloaded from the Internet.

### **3.5. DATA ANALYSIS**

After collecting the data, 150 RBIA's are selected for the analysis. The analysis of the data is focused on terms of layout, syntactic, lexical features of articles. The analytical results will be synthesized to withdraw the distinctive landmark of a RBIA.

### **3.6. RESEARCH PROCEDURES**

There will be major steps as follows:

- Ø Collecting data: many article items on home design are read from printed and electronic magazines to pick out samples appropriate to the content of residential building introduction.
- Ø Analyzing the data: pointing out the way of outlining and arranging the contents in the article items on residential building introduction, describing lexical and syntactic features and giving out the common cohesive devices used in this type of article items in English.
- Ø Synthesizing the findings and drawing the conclusion
- Ø Suggesting some implications for teaching and learning English.

### **3.7. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

Since the data are collected from authentic local and nationwide magazines, the quality of data is quite trustful. These data were published within 4 years (2008-2012), are not out-of-date. The accuracy and formality of language in the collected data ensure the validity and reliability of the research. In addition, the synthesized

percentages in this thesis are carried out carefully and reliably. The investigation is also carried out on the basis of the theoretical background from experienced linguists as presented in chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS


#### 4.1. LAYOUT OF RBIAS IN ENGLISH MAGAZINES

##### 4.1.1 Overview

There are six basic elements making a complete overview of a RBIA. They are *Main heading, Subheading, Byline, Illustrations, Captions or Cutlines and Pull-quotes*. Firstly, both main heading and subheading shows the condensed content of the text, meanwhile subheading clarifies more details about the article for the heading. Secondly, byline provides the name of the writer, photographer and sometimes stylist. Thirdly, while illustrations display marvelous photos of residential buildings to attract readers, captions or cutlines help them to understand clearly those photos. These first four elements can be found in any RBIA, meanwhile pull-quotes are optional ones that are often direct speeches of the homeowner.

##### 4.1.2. Residential Buildings Details

**Residential Buildings Details** is the body text, reveals the main content of an article. It presents specific information and description of the residential building, and stories surrounding it.

 **Introduction Part:** In the Introduction part, some landmarks of the building are highlighted to grab readers' attention. Not much information is revealed, but enough not to make readers bored at first. Some certain facts that may be referred in the introduction part consist of the highlight of the building, its position and owners as well as the old status of the building.

✚ **Body part:** Unlike any home description article that serves the sale campaign, a RBIA does not include some information such as area amenities such as access to transportation, schools, and shopping; assets or complete properties, the total numbers of rooms. But the highlight of the building, owners of the building, and stories around the design and building processes will be repeated in the **Body part**. The body part of the residential building details simply in turn presents to readers some information about the building that includes: its position, its owners, the designers, its old status, its rooms, its interior and exterior spaces, construction or redecorating process.

✚ **Conclusion part:** In *conclusion* part, feelings of the writer, designer or homeowner is often used to finish the article. Besides, landmark of the building or even what hasn't been finished for the building is also drawn to the conclusion.

## 4.2 SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF A RBIA

### 4.2.1. Passive Voice

In a RBIA, the building is the main character, an object having its possessor and designer. Moreover, according to Quirk “the passive voice is more commonly used in informative than in imaginative writing” [35, p.166]. Clearly saying, passive voice is also put to good use in RBIAAs. The passive voice is formed by the following structure, by Quirk (1985).

**Subject passive + Verb passive (be/get + p.p) + optional Agent (by-Phrase)**

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) shared the point of view about passive voice with Quirk. All of them agree that *be*-passive is the auxiliary verb most frequently used with the passive. Meanwhile the *get*-passive is commonly used in informal conversation. Thus, only *be*-passive is analyzed in our data. Here are some examples:

- (1) *The cantilevered lounge **was built** to be as indestructible as the wing of a DC-10.* [1]
- (2) ***Slipped** through a leather loop, an African cane from the 1930s becomes the bathroom door handle.* [74]

In a RBIA, reduced clauses are also most used which has passive meaning and functions as a phrase, staying at the beginning of the sentence. This kind of passive voice in a RBIA is often used to present the position of the building with some typical verbs such as: “*locate*”, “*set*”, “*sit*”, “*position*”.

Passives and reduced passives play in an important part in RBIAAs.

#### **4.2.2. Direct and Indirect Speeches**

With the hope to make a connection between the designer, the homeowner and readers, the writer uses a great number of direct speeches for RBIAAs.

According to Quirk (1985) “*Direct speech purports to give the exact words that someone utters or has uttered in speech or in writing. Indirect speech, on the other hand, conveys in the words of a subsequent reporter what has been said or written by the original speaker or writer*”.

Reporting clauses can be initial, medial and final. However, in a RBIA, middle position with the highest percentage 50% is more preferred than initial (8%) and medial position (41%). This can be explained that in a RBIA, the quotations consist of more than one sentence, usually two or even three. Therefore, the reporting clauses are put at the end of the first, before continuing another quotation.

The reporting verb “say” is used repeatedly in RBIAAs. There are also some other verbs such as: “explain”, “recall”, “admit”, “reply”, “respond”, “announced” and “note” with fewer occurrences.

### 4.2.3. Inversion

*“Locative inversion is the inversion of subject and verb (normally lexical verb, including lexical be) plus fronting of the locative complement of the verb (either complement of place or direction)”.* [59]

In a RBIA, locative inversion is often used in building description details. Here are some examples:

- (3) *Just beyond this progression of quirky and grand spaces is the voluminous living room, with sweeps of wall that would make any art collector swoon.*

[16]

As illustrated in those above examples, we can realize the specific pattern of a locative inversion that is comprised of a prepositional phrase or an adverb phrase followed by a verb phrase and a subject noun phrase. The verbs in locative inversion in RBIA are often “verb to be” which is an intransitive verb. These above sentences take the Preposition Phrases to be moved into the topic position and then the subject Noun Phrase into an adjunction position of Verb Phrase or Subject.

## 4.3. LEXICAL CHOICES OF A RBIA

### 4.3.1 Position Verbs

According to Thomas Payne [40, p.58], position verbs *“describe the static position of an object, e.g., stand, sit, crouch, kneel, lie, hang”*. Here is an example:

- (4) *In fact, from the perfectly ordinary suburban street on which it **sits**, it’s little more than a white cube rising from a black rectangle.* [72]

There are a number of verbs used to describe the location and/or surroundings of a place. These may explain position (e.g. situated, positioned, set); they may also give some suggestion of

movement (e.g. run, lead) or action (e.g. stand, sit, lie). Interestingly found, the verbs “*sit*”, “*run*”, “*lead*” are used to describe the location of inanimate entities. Meanwhile “*set*” and “*position*” are being used for animates, in passive voice.

Normally, a position verb is often accompanied by prepositions or prepositional / adverbial phrases.

#### 4.3.2. Descriptive Adjectives

According to the result of our research, descriptive adjectives appear densely in a RBIA. Descriptive adjectives are used to reveal factual information about the building’s appearance as well as expression for opinions or feelings of the author or the owners towards the building. Here is an example:

- (5) *Christina chose **dark** mahogany for the island and honed, **paprika-colored** onyx for the counters.* [3]

A truly building is shown by the use of a variety of adjectives.

Moreover, list of descriptive adjectives used for each RBIA will be an artistic collection that brings a harmony and unique connection for each of the buildings.

Descriptive adjectives are also used to express opinions or feelings of the author or the owners towards the building. Here is an example:

- (6) *Underpinning their comments is a sense of **joyful** relief that they’ve seen their way to a future in their beloved home.* [23]

Moreover, by using a variety of past participles from such verbs as “*enamor, relax, swoon, inspire, impress*”, RBIA can perfectly express impression of the building onto anyone. Here is an example:

- (7) *During the renovation, Weiss’s client became so **enamored** of the design process that he involved himself in*



*every detail, from the size of the bathroom tiles to the length of the cabinet pulls in the kitchen to the intricacies of the hidden door hinges.* [17]

Moreover, a great range of adjectives are also used to express readers' senses such as sight and touch.

Another interesting character we need to know is that writer also applies the use of superlative adjectives to get the most effective impact on readers. It also shows the distinctive features of the building.

However, it is the fact that not all the adjectives show positive expressions of the building. Negative adjectives are also mentioned in a RBIA. By searching in the collected data, we can find a typical example of negative adjectives such as:

- (8) *When her client first showed her the space, "I couldn't hide my disappointment," Weiss says. Located in a nondescript 1960s building, the 2,000-squared-foot, second-floor condominium "had a **dark** warren of rooms off a long hallway, and the windows were **ratty** aluminum slides."* [17]

#### **4.3.3. Proper Nouns**

In this thesis, proper nouns are referred to proper nouns, not included any other word class. Here is an example:

All of these words in RBIA are proper names of people that consist of name of homeowner; the designer and others in the design company; the place either of the building itself or of the design company's location. These words not only help readers brainstorm the described building but also its designers. The name of the designer and its company is repeatedly honorably is to promote the designing task and its brand.

In addition, names of brand of products, furniture or fittings used in the building decorating; the names of those products' designers and their nationalities, and their living areas. Many brand names are figured out not only help producers sell more products, but also help the owner confirm their housing style and wealth.

- (9) *The end-grain **Douglas** fir floors were inspired by the **Room & Board** store in Orange County. "You find these floors in very high-traffic places because they're so durable," Friedman explains.* [13]

#### 4.4. COHESIVE DEVICES

##### 4.4.1. References

There are three types of reference: personal, demonstrative and comparative reference (Halliday and Hasan, 2001). The following examples will illustrate the popular use of personal references as means of cohesion in a RBIA:

- (10) *The form and scale of **the building** recalls ancient Venetian palazzo, but **it** is treated in a more abstract, contemporary fashion, with an emphasis on the flatness of the external surface.* [30]

Another kind of personal reference which is also found in a RBIA are possessive adjectives such as "its, their, his". "Its" no longer refers to the building itself, but some characteristics or aspects that it possesses. Similarly, "their" or "his" represents for those of designers or homeowners.

- (11) *In **their** housing scheme, **Ingenhoven Overdiek & Partner** decided to reinterpret the morphology of the area between the city centre and the harbor basin.* [32]

Demonstrative references are also used to evoke readers' curiosity, getting them into the story. It is also used as a means of

strong emphasis on the location of the building mentioned to make the reader remember it.

- (12) *Together they have created a welcoming, comfortable family home that's artistically pleasing and also meets their ecological vision. It feels as if it has been **here** for years, though they move in only at the end of 2008.* [127]

#### 4.4.2. Ellipsis

Halliday and Hasan (1976) defined ellipsis as “*substitution by zero*”. According to Halliday and Hasan [18, p.142-144], “*an item is elided if its structure does not express all the features that have gone into its make-up*”. They discuss ellipsis under three headings: *nominal, verbal and clausal ellipsis*. Of three types, clausal ellipsis is not often used in a RBIA; but two others are.

Nominal ellipsis according to Halliday and Hasan (1976) is a kind of ellipsis that occurs within the nominal group. Under certain circumstances the common noun, the Head, may be omitted and some words functioning as deictic, numerative, epithet or classifier are upgraded from the status of modifier to the status of head. We can see these in the following examples

- (13) *As Miller Hull Partnership only takes on four or five **residential projects** per year, most  $\emptyset$  inquiries are politely given a pass.* [101]

Nominal ellipsis here involves omission of a noun headword “residential projects”, in example (102); meanwhile the Numerative “most” takes a role of Head in a sentence and refers to the “residential projects”.

In the other case, a subject in a sentence is omitted, and then we can see the usage of ellipsis there. Here are some examples:

- (14) *When **the old building** was dark,  $\emptyset$  uninviting, and  $\emptyset$  failed to engage with the landscape, the new one is airy and  $\emptyset$  open, giving the impression that the relatively small space is in fact much larger.* [100]

The subjects in each sentence are not mentioned repeatedly, making the sentence run smoothly. There are other kinds of ellipsis in a RBIA, it is verbal ellipsis. In a verbal ellipsis, the verb in the next clause is not used again but reader still keeps track of the sentence. We can see the examples of verbal ellipsis in the following examples.

- (15) *Things progressed, the grass **turned** brown, then  $\emptyset$  green, then  $\emptyset$  brown again.* [99]

#### 4.4.3. Conjunctions

Conjunctions and its four types contribute to grammatical cohesion by making relationship between the sentences. It is different from other cohesive by reaching the meaning through reference to other parts of the text. The four types of conjunctions include additive conjunction, adversative conjunction, causal conjunction, and temporal conjunction.

Additive conjunction aims to show external relationship between sentences. It can help explain and clarify more information to the previous part (in addition, and) and support an exemplification (*for instance*).

Adversative conjunction show clear opposing relationships between parts such as “*in fact*”, “*however*” and “*but*”.

The word “so” and “as a result” also supply more information for the previous part; however, they are called causal conjunctions because the sentence where it sits is the result of the previous one. “Hence, consequently, for, because, for this reason, it follows, as a result, in consequence, for this purpose, to this end, then, that being the case, under the circumstances, otherwise, under other circumstances, therefore, in this respect /regard, otherwise, in other respects” are causal

conjunctions that are also used in RBIA. Here is the distribution of conjunctions in RBIA:

**Table 4.5. Distribution of Conjunctions in RBIA**

<b>Types of conjunctions</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Additive	55	14
Adversative	201	51
Causal	64	16
Temporal	75	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100</b>

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1. CONCLUSIONS**

“*An Investigation into Residential Buildings Introduction Articles in English Magazines*” is an investigation into how RBIA are structured and why typical discourse features are used in these articles. In progress, we accomplish the analysis of these articles in term of four main aspects: discourse structures, syntactic features, lexical features and cohesion. This study has been established as a good resource that contributes partly to the theoretical studies of discourse analysis in home design sector in general and the typical discourse features of RBIA in English in particular.

In term of layout, A RBIA has two main parts: Overview and Building description details. The overview part is comprised of six components namely *Main heading*, *Subheading*, *Byline*, *Illustrations*, *Captions or Cutlines* and *Pull-quotes*. The Main heading, Subheading and Illustrations tell us some general initial information about the residential building that will be described in detail later. Main headings

are structured by many forms such as: noun phrases, adjective phrases, verb phrases, preposition phrases or a complete sentence. Meanwhile, Subheading is composed of up to one sentence, aims to supplement extra information for the Main heading. What are displayed in line of the main heading are often styles of the building, its characteristics, its position, or a hot trend design orientation. In addition, Byline reveals the name of the author who writes the article and the photographer who produces the illustrations. Illustration is such a crucial part that the photographer is referred to accompanying with the writer. It is also the most attractive and glorious part in RBIA. It is like a picturesque photo collection of the mentioned residential building, illustrated with captions (or cutlines). Cutlines of RBIA often have font in white, black or shades of gray that are written on the photo. In other word, it sets the photo it accompanies as its background. Pull quotes are also very important. In a RBIA, pull quotes are often direct reported speech of homeowner that shows their feeling about their own dwelling. However, pull quotes are optional and not as much appreciated as other parts of the overview. In other words, all Main heading, Subheading, Illustrations, Captions or Cutlines are obligatory parts that are always visible in any RBIA. The building description details part is the most informative which includes three parts: introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction starts the text with some initial building information which is used to grab readers' attention into the details. What are often referred in the introduction part are the highlight of the building, its position as well as an interesting story surrounding the homeowner and his house. These facts are also included in the body part of articles whose introduction part does not mention these before. Readers can find specific description of the residential building in the body part of building description detail which is combined with stories

around the owner, the designer and the design and building process. The description detail of the building embrace such things like: its position, its owners, the designers, its old status, its rooms, its interior and exterior spaces, construction or redecorating process. The description details part takes up most room in RBIA; while the two others include just one paragraph. The conclusion is the ending paragraph of RBIA. Some feelings or emotion of the homeowner are sometimes pleased ending for a RBIA.

As for syntactic features, the study deals with three main structures which are passive voice, direct and indirect speeches and inversion. As the objects of a RBIA are the residential building and stories of homeowner and designers, passive voice and direct speeches are the most dominate kinds of sentences in English. Meanwhile, inversion takes up the least percentage of all. However, it is the most interesting type of sentence in RBIA towards my own opinion because the inversion of prepositional phrases at the beginning of the sentences creates a lively panorama view of the building and visual effect on readers. Although the writer makes use of passive voice for RBIA, there are also many active sentences in which the building acts as inanimate object and takes a role as the subject of the action verb. All three popular kinds of syntactic structure feature a RBIA partly different from other types of article.

As regard to lexical features, position verbs, descriptive adjective, proper nouns and preposition are typical parts of speech found in RBIA. Descriptive adjectives draw a picturesque picture of the building in readers' eyes which takes up the highest interest among these four parts of speech. Preposition is the second favored lexical feature which shows clearly the arrangement of the rooms inside building as well as its interior. Proper nouns are used for the reason of

introduction and advertising. And the least appearance belongs to position verbs which locate the position of the building.

Finally, reference, ellipsis and conjunction represent for typical grammatical cohesion features. Among these, reference appears with the highest frequency in each RIBA. Conjunction, ellipsis and repetition are also used to make the sentences in the text run smoothly and naturally. The writer seems to use reference as the dominate cohesion features. The reason can be explained that the main character in RBIA is always the building itself. And stories around it and its owner will be always the choice of the writer for any RBIA. Of four types of conjunction, adversative takes the lead with the percentage of 51%. Temporal, causal and additive are nearly the same with the percentage in turn 19%, 16% and 14%. The contrasting situation that the adversative brings about makes a deep impression on readers towards what the writer wants to talk about.

## **5.2. IMPLICATIONS**

Up to now, there are a lot of research resources on the discourse analysis in general and discourses in certain fields in particular. Nevertheless, studies on residential building introduction articles are not found. In progress of doing this research, it is hoped that this thesis will be one of useful resources to teaching and learning English, for not only teachers and students but also those who want to have good writing skills in general and RBIA writing skills in particular. Moreover, the study hopefully contributes to building valuable data storage of those who are about to building their own home with a collection of home design magazines and RBIA.

### **To teachers**

A normal building description essay is very easy, but a RBIA in English magazines is a complicated task. A journalism student or an



architect who wants to write this kind of article has to have not only writing skills, but also deep knowledge of architecture field in general and home design in particular. This study will probably be a beneficial resource for teachers to provide their learners these two things. Firstly, they provide teachers with some basic knowledge of RBIA: what, how to write, and whom to write by giving background information such as: layout, syntactic features and cohesion in RBIA. They are also given a list of wonderful lexical choices that are collected in examples in this study. This can help them enrich their vocabulary list that can be used to design exercises for students to improve their language competence. Moreover, teachers who want to major in English for Architecture also take use of this study.

### **To students**

This study is also beneficial for journalism students who want to improve their writing skills for a particular subject and architects who want to be a freelance for a home design magazine. Similarly, these learners can make use of useful resources of basic knowledge of RBIA to teach themselves how to write a successful RBIA. This study also provides student with a wide range of typical RBIA samples from different well-known home design magazines that were collected carefully.

Students who major in Architecture also find this study useful for them to improve their English for Architecture. It provides them some basic knowledge of syntactic features and lexical choices most used in RBIA in particular that helps them have better understanding how to translate these materials in English into Vietnamese. Since then, they can enhance their translation skills to any other articles in Architecture.

### **To readers and magazine publishers**

Readers and magazine publishers will not take care of how to write a RBIA, however, this study will be also appreciated by them as

there are a collection of residential buildings, each of which are such special ones that are referred in magazines of well-known presses. Readers will be provided with various choices of housing styles as well as good recommendation of interior decoration inside the houses. Meanwhile, magazine publishers will have a standard sample towards a RBIA, so that they can edit and publish their own RBIA's that may be considered to follow these samples.

### **5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The discourse analysis concept is quite wide, however the study: "*An Investigation into Residential Buildings Introduction Articles in English Magazines*" just focuses on only four discourse features of RBIA's. They are layout, syntactic features, lexical choices and cohesive devices. Moreover, selected articles for analyzing are electronic versions that are published within 4 years, not the latest ones. The total numbers of articles are limited to the amount of 150. Finally, cultural features as well as the difference between American English and British English are also the interesting point to deal with, but due to limited time, I haven't mentioned it in the thesis. However, I hope that these shortcomings will not effect on the readers' expectations for this thesis.

### **5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

I strongly recommend some further studies followings:

- § An Investigation into Cultural Features of Residential Buildings Introduction Articles in English Magazines
- § An Investigations into Stylistic devices of Residential Buildings Introduction Articles in English Magazines
- § A Discourse Analysis of Interior Products Introduction Articles in English Magazines