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**Come live the good life: A rhetorical examination of the
persuasive techniques on the New Zealand Immigration
Service website**

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning”.

Signed

Abigail Fonseca Kalinowski

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ABSTRACT

This research study sought to analyse key web-pages on the New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) website so as to understand what persuasive techniques were being employed by the text, in an attempt to appeal to potential migrants. New Zealand is a country that looks to immigration to assist in its population growth and economic development. Attracting potential migrants to our shores (when they have the option to migrate to Australia other countries) is vital.

Two of Sonja Foss's (2004) approaches to rhetorical criticism were used, namely, the narrative approach and the metaphor approach. Text was analysed to explore both its dimensions and explanation. Examining the text's dimensions allowed for the exploration of design features such as sentence structure and tone, while exploring the explanation of narrative assisted in the analysis of what the text was trying to communicate and how it was doing so. Foss's metaphor approach was used to analyse the images and colours present on the web-pages so as to discover their metaphoric meaning and to understand how their inclusion either supported or disagreed with the persuasive messages put forth by the text.

The findings of this thesis indicated that the key persuasive messages communicated by text, images and colour centred on several themes. The first theme was concerned with conveying a sense of informality and friendliness as key characteristics of the NZIS website, and by association its representatives as well. The second theme focused on communicating messages about New Zealand's natural beauty – the message of a “clean, green New Zealand” is still an important persuasive message being promoted overseas. The image of a “clean, green New Zealand” is also complemented by a message that focuses on New Zealand's outdoor lifestyle. The third theme focused on the presentation of people of different ethnicities on the NZIS website, as a method of either pointing to their inclusion in New Zealand society already or reflecting the NZIS's intention to attract migrants from these ethnicities. The use of colour appeared to support the above assertions,

particularly with regard to promoting New Zealand's natural diversity and also as a design and style feature.

Limitations of the research study included the fact that only four web-pages were analysed as part of this research study, as the time-frame did not allow for an analysis of the entire NZIS website. These web-pages were chosen because they offered the best chance of yielding rich findings, after applying Foss's two approaches to rhetorical analysis to their text. This research study would also have benefited from primary research conducted on the effect of text on readers if the NZIS website would have allowed for a comparison of migrants experiences of text on the NZIS website and their real life experiences. This is potentially an area for future research. In addition to this, an analysis of "plain English" and its effect on sentence composition is another area of future research.

Chapter 1

Introduction

According to Bedford and Ho (2006), New Zealand has the highest per capita rate of immigration amongst the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. The accessibility of the internet has meant that the New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) website is a significant port of call for potential immigrants seeking information about New Zealand. The NZIS website contains information about New Zealand's people, climate and potential work opportunities and promotes key messages about New Zealand's lifestyle. This research study seeks to examine the messages that are communicated to potential immigrants and how they are framed to persuade people to emigrate to New Zealand.

The purpose of this study was to explore how text on the New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) website frames New Zealand as a potential destination for future migrants.

Selected texts from the NZIS website were subjected to rhetorical analysis and the findings contextualised within the field of public relations. This study reviews the persuasive techniques employed on key web-pages on the NZIS website and discusses the messages advanced by the text. The implications of these messages, in terms of their portrayal of New Zealand as a desirable migrant destination are discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.

This thesis is made up of five chapters. The second chapter reviews relevant literature in key fields. The third chapter presents the method and methodology of this research study, and examines Foss's (2004) narrative and metaphor approaches, while also outlining the practical steps taken to analyse the text on the chosen web-pages on the NZIS website. The fourth chapter details the analysis of text on the key web-pages and what was discovered when Foss's

two approaches were applied. Finally, the last chapter of this thesis discusses the findings identified in chapter four and the implications of the same, outlines the limitations of this research study and also references future research opportunities.

Significance of immigration to the New Zealand economy

Immigration is vital to the growth and development of New Zealand's economy. Skill shortages in certain sectors of our economy have demonstrated the need for skilled migrants to meet this shortfall so as to ensure continued growth and to meet future work-force demands. Tertiary education that caters to international students, particularly from Asia, is another important component that affects the immigration debate and contributes to New Zealand's development in a major way. International students have become an important source of skilled migrants for New Zealand. From 2000-2010, one in five international students gained permanent residence in New Zealand within five years of being issued their first student visa, according to the *Migrations Trends and Outlook* report published by the Department of Labour (2010-2011). Underpinning this research is the assumption that the immigration process has evolved into a necessary process that supports the growth of New Zealand's economy and is now a marketable commodity.

The decision to migrate to a country is influenced not only by the government's immigration policy but also by migrants' perceptions, prior to the migration process beginning. These perceptions can be influenced by hearsay, personal research on the migrants' part or by direct contact with an official source such as the country's immigration website.

The process of immigration as presented by government agencies such as the NZIS needs to address questions a migrant might have regarding moving to New Zealand, rather than to countries such as Australia or Canada, which also favour migration to grow their economies. This process includes promoting New Zealand as a migrant destination, through the presentation of carefully tailored messages that highlight what New Zealand has to offer in terms of lifestyle, career and other opportunities. These messages communicate an ideal of what to expect when one moves to New Zealand and therefore need to be persuasive, informational and specific to the circumstances that a migrant finds

himself or herself in – as a student, visitor or a person wishing to work or reside permanently in New Zealand.

Research such as the *Longitudinal Immigration Survey (LIS)* (Department of Labour, 2008) shows that attracting migrants to New Zealand shores is pivotal to the country's continued development. Making New Zealand seem an attractive migrant destination is therefore essential and potential migrants need to be persuaded to move here. This research study uses some secondary research including the LIS report of 2008 to illustrate migrants' experiences once they have moved to New Zealand.

Public relations and persuasion

The creation and maintenance of the “right” kind of image that a target public finds appealing can be very powerful (Grunig, 1984). Tymson and Sherman (1996, p. 25) call this the “wish image”. The “wish image” is what an organisation wants its image to be. It is created through careful research and constant dialogue between an organisation and its target public (Tymson & Sherman, 1996). The power of this image lies in its ability to persuade the target public of potential migrants to accept the viewpoint of the organisation in question, which is, in this case, the viewpoint communicated by text on the NZIS website.

Image is important particularly from a public relations point of view. Oliver (2001) suggests that through written, online, graphic or audio-visual means, image is “a representation of our reality and what is important in understanding the world around us” (p. 56). It can be a problematic phenomenon as well. Presenting a country's image to an external audience can be complicated, because different societal groups project different characteristics that enrich the overall national image portrayed. Oliver (2001) further notes that “more current studies show that image does not consist of a single reality held by individuals but that they hold a series of linked pictures, consisting of many elements or objects, which merge together and which are interpreted through language” (p. 57).

The different parts of New Zealand's public image translate into communication directed at potential migrants to attract them to New Zealand. This complete

image, or a component of it, may leave an impression in the minds of potential migrants. This research study will look to identify the key messages about New Zealand that are likely to have the most appeal to potential migrants and how these are created and communicated to them, with particular emphasis being given to text on key web-pages on the NZIS website.

The next section briefly describes the relationship between e-rhetoric or online persuasion and visual text and the role they both will occupy in this research study.

Online persuasion

The internet has spawned “more channels of communication than the combined channels invented by man-kind up to the 20th century” (Phillips, 2001, p. 14). As a result, the online space occupies an important role in facilitating communication and by association, e-rhetoric is a key concept for researchers of rhetoric and rhetorical practice. A formal definition (Hammerich and Harrison, 2002) is that “e-rhetoric is the act of bringing text, photographs, illustrations, typography, animation, navigation, link and audio and video clips for the purposes of persuasion on the web” (p. 102). E-rhetoric is, therefore, a term that refers to the replacement of traditional support mechanisms of print and oral rhetoric by web support mechanisms. Support mechanisms of print rhetoric include the use of persuasive text through the choice of words, emphasis on the audience and an understanding of the situation in which the words are presented. Support mechanisms of oral rhetoric include stance, hand gestures and eye contact (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002). The internet is a combination of the oral and written traditions of rhetoric as espoused by the 4th century Greek philosopher Aristotle (Berger, 1998, p. 67) – verbal, written and visual elements working together to communicate and persuade the intended audience. Hammerich and Harrison (2002) also define e-rhetoric as “text to include, as part of the repertoire of persuasive strategies, all the advantages of multiple media and interactivity” (p. 101). E-rhetoric, according to Hammerich and Harrison, operates on the assumption that the intended audience is not one with a great deal of time on its hands – rather it is a ‘drive-through’ reader who has a need for information to be communicated swiftly.

Visual text

Because the internet is a global entity and is therefore influenced, by global perspectives and interactions, there is not simply “one truth” but rather “different truths” (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002). What this means is that a visual image may represent different realities to different readers, based on their backgrounds or personal experiences.

Hammerich and Harrison (2002), suggest that every text, including visual text, becomes persuasive. Sosnoski supports this idea that the internet is not just about text, but “also employs the use of graphics, colour and images”. The use of graphic, colours and images in visual text may also be defined as “visual language”(p. 132). According to Horn (2002), visual language can be defined as “the tight coupling of words, images and shapes into a unified communication unit” (p. 137). Visual text could be perceived to be as important as written text in creating persuasive content on websites. This is because visual images can allow for “messages to be communicated instantly” (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002, p. 102).

Linking the analysis of visual text to rhetoric is important because as Foss (2005) suggests, the study of visual images is a significant component of modern rhetorical studies for a number of reasons. Foss’s approaches to rhetorical analysis combine to provide the key method of analysis used in this research study. According to Foss, the “pervasiveness of the visual image and its impact on contemporary culture” is of particular importance (2005, p. 141). The concept that images have impact, and therefore, must also have meaning, suggest that images can also be “visual metaphors”, wherein they “perform a persuasive function as they influence the manner in which society perceives or understands a concept or message” (Kaplan, 2005). Images, therefore, contain meaning within text. This research explores the possible meanings conveyed by the images on key web-pages on the NZIS website and how their use in text is yet another persuasive technique.

At this stage, it is relevant to note that the scope of this research study covers the fields of immigration, textual analysis and public relations. The reason for including public relations is that there is some scepticism (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000) regarding the concept of persuasion and its connection to public

relations. A commonly held view is that public relations operates on a model of one-way communication that works simply to persuade others to a single point of view (Cutlip et al., 2000). According to Grunig (1984), a fine line exists between presenting the best possible picture to a target public and ensuring that this picture is honest and transparent.

The purpose of this research is therefore to examine the text on the NZIS website and determine how it is attempting to persuade potential migrants that New Zealand is a desirable country to live in. By employing Foss's approaches to rhetorical analysis, this research study shows how text on the NZIS website portrays a picture of New Zealand that is attractive to potential migrants. The next section outlines the importance of the research methods employed in this research study, namely rhetorical analysis.

Rhetoric and the use of metaphor

In broad terms, several working definitions of rhetoric exist. One of these is that rhetoric is the "art of persuasion or the analysis of the acts of persuasion or a world-view about the persuasive power of discourse" (Leach in Bauer & Gaskell, 2000, p. 205). In the 4th century, Aristotle wrote an educational treatise, *On Rhetoric*, and noted that "rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Berger, 1998, p. 67). Selzer (2003) understood rhetoric to be "both a productive and interpretive exercise – the study of language and the study of how to use it" (p. 280). Foss, Foss and Trapp (2002) acknowledge a broader definition where rhetoric is "about broadly the human ability to use symbols to communicate to each other" (Blair, p. 44 in Hills & Helmers, 2004). Toth and Heath (1992) views rhetoric as "one way, manipulative communication, but it can also be understood as contested examination of issue and action – as dialogue" (p. 24). The primary method of analysis in this research study is rhetorical analysis, which Kuypers and King (2009) define as "the strategic use of communication, oral and written to achieve specifiable goals" (p. 4). Specifically, this study will employ rhetorical analysis, through the use of "metaphor".

While Toth and Heath's definition defines rhetoric as one-way communication that is meant to manipulate, Foss, Foss and Trap (2004) offer a broader definition that places rhetoric within the sphere of communication, by the use of

symbols. This definition does not note that communication needs to be manipulative, only that its primary function is to facilitate communication between two parties. Kuypers and King (2009) place rhetoric in a strategic setting, making its main function the design of communication that needs to fulfil a desired goal. Berger's (1998) definition links rhetoric to the thinking of the Greek philosopher Aristotle and situates it as a persuasive tool of communication. Finally, Selzer (2003) notes that rhetoric is about both communicating and interpreting that communication, to find out how to use it to the best effect. Of all these definitions, Foss's (2004) definition is most closely linked to the key theme of this research study, which is the analysis of text constructed by authors to put forth a persuasive message about New Zealand as a migrant destination.

Metaphor creates meaning and "metaphoric criticism" is one school of rhetorical analysis that focuses on language. De Mille (in Foss, 2004) defines metaphor as "an implied comparison between two things of unlike nature" (p. 12). Foss (2004) proposes that "metaphors are nonliteral comparisons in which a word or phrase from one domain of experience is applied to another domain" (p. 299).

In addition to the metaphor approach, this research study also follows Foss's second approach to rhetorical analysis of text known as narrative analysis (2004, pp. 335-6), which analyses an artefact according to the dimensions of the narrative and by discovering an explanation for the narrative.

Foss's approach to rhetorical analysis will be applied to text that exhibits characteristics that are 'New Zealand' in nature. By 'characteristics', I refer to text that helps build a picture of New Zealand's people, culture, landscape and identity. This text could may also include symbols, pictures, colour and language that re-enforces a sense of 'New Zealand-ness'. This text will be analysed as it appears on the NZIS home-page and the subsequent web-pages Apply Now, Find a Visa and About New Zealand as these sections will contain content that is both informational and descriptive, with relation to New Zealand as a country to migrate to.

Limitations and boundaries of research

This research study involved some limitations and challenges. The analysis of web-pages on the NZIS website meant that I had to contend with the possibility that the web-pages might change during the research time-period, thus affecting either my research methods or findings. This occurred in July and August 2012 when the About New Zealand web-page underwent a dramatic change in terms of its content and design and the stronger positioning of the NewZealandNow brand, within the existing NZIS brand space. To maintain a level of consistency across both my research methods and findings, I chose to analyse the key web-pages (the NZIS home-page, Apply Now, Find a Visa and About NZ web-pages), as they appeared in April 2012.

While conducting the analysis of the selected web-pages, it would have been useful to review any opinions of the audience reading text on the NZIS website, i.e. potential migrants, so as to compare their opinions with observations being made in the discussion chapter. Although there was some secondary research that examined migrants' settlement experiences in New Zealand, I was unable to locate specific research that matched their settlement experiences with the expectations that might have been created after reviewing text on the NZIS website specifically. I chose to not pursue primary research owing to the time-frame for completion of the thesis. This limitation meant that I was unable to test my assumptions about the persuasive nature of text analysed or the techniques being used, against real life findings.

It was also problematic locating research on the use of colour that was not linked to website usability and design theory. I assumed that the use of certain colours on key web-pages on the NZIS website was a deliberate decision by the authors of the text. While I was able to access theory on the impact of certain colours and their use in the print, digital and graphic design fields, it was harder to locate research on the emotiveness of colour on immigration websites particularly. As such, this area was beyond the scope of this research study and might be a focus for future research.

Personal statement

It is important to declare my position in this research at the outset and I would like to highlight several reasons why this piece of research is of particular significance to me. I am Indian by birth, but was raised in a westernised part of the Arab Middle East for 18 years before moving to New Zealand. I have attended American, British, Indian and New Zealand educational institutions and have been exposed to various cultures. My outlook is, therefore, global and I am genuinely fascinated by the differences and similarities between people from different cultures who come together to form a single society. My level of cultural awareness has been further heightened by the fact that I was once an international student, and have therefore experienced both the highs and lows of embracing a new country, people and ways of thinking. The experience has taught me much about acceptance, widening my knowledge and communication horizons and the ability to look beyond to the wider picture. Most importantly though, I now look at New Zealand as a place I call home and am therefore interested in the manner in which it is evolving as a migrant country with a multi-cultural outlook arising out of its growing migrant population that is varied and constantly evolving.

Finally, I come from a public relations background. The tools and techniques of public relations – targeted and well defined communication, image creation and the use of rhetoric – are at the core of this thesis. My understanding of how public relations practices affect the construction of text on key web-pages on the NZIS website so as to attract potential migrants is central to the thesis and forms the backbone for my motivation and interest in this particular topic.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the structure of this thesis, the key concepts that will be addressed in later chapters as well as situating my personal background and interests within this research study.

The next chapter is the literature review that explores the concepts of public relations and persuasion, the relationship between text and the creation of meaning and the importance of rhetorical criticism to this research study. It will discuss immigration trends in New Zealand and finally it will also detail the

theory behind Foss's two approaches to rhetorical criticism that were used in this thesis.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter discusses the five subject areas that are significant to this research study. It outlines historical immigration trends in New Zealand, the importance of public relations (PR) and persuasion theory, the significance of text and the importance of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism. It examines the relationship between text and the creation of meaning and how this affects the persuasion process. In addition, it reviews the two critical approaches to the study of persuasion, the key methods by which persuasion can be achieved and the role that metaphor plays. Finally, it introduces in persuasive text some methods of rhetorical criticism, in particular Sonja Foss's (2004) approaches to the rhetorical analysis of text, two of which are the chosen methods of analysis employed in this research.

Immigration trends in New Zealand

Immigration trends have shifted over time in New Zealand. From the beginning to the middle of the 20th century, it was considered essential to attract mainly British immigrants to New Zealand's shores (Kasper, 1990, p. 21), although Asian workers had arrived in the 1800s, and large numbers of Yugoslavians and Dalmatians also emigrated to New Zealand in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Immigrants from Tonga and Samoa arrived in large numbers in the 1960's and 1970's (Kasper, 1990, p. 23) and what was termed the "Asian Invasion" occurred in the late 1980's and early 1990's (Reid, 2000). These immigration trends reflected the belief of policy makers that it was necessary for New Zealand to be receptive to Asian migrants from countries such as China and Korea and the Immigration Act of 1987 opened New Zealand to significant immigration from Asia (Bedford, Ho & Bedford, 2010, p. 1). This shift in

immigration policy in the late 1980's and early 1990's also reflected a changing perception of New Zealand's loyalties. More and more, New Zealand would look to its closest neighbours in the Pacific and Asia to fill the gaps in its slowing population growth (Kasper, 1990, p. 31), rather than to traditional sources such as the United Kingdom.

In 2006, 23% of all New Zealanders were born overseas according to the *Longitudinal Immigration Survey* (Department of Labour, 2009b, p. 46). Immigration is considered necessary to supplement the country's population growth and to assist in the development of New Zealand's economy.

These population trends also point to the evolution of New Zealand society to reflect the presence of immigrants in the country. According to Spoonley and Gendall (2010), this evolution includes an assimilation of cultures, practices, norms and traditions, which is also balanced out by rejection of those practices, norms and traditions that are not seen as desirable. They also note that certain demographic characteristics of migrants have an impact on attitudes towards them. "Gender has not been shown to produce significant attitude effects, much more important is ethnicity and education. The more highly educated a migrant is, the more tolerant people are towards them" (p. 137). Spoonley and Gendall also go on to note that "those who share the characteristics of ethnic difference from the mainstream are most likely to feel some sympathy for those immigrants who are seen as different" (p. 137).

The long-term impact of migrant assimilation is the effect on the immigration flow itself and how New Zealand's immigration policy changes in response to what is perceived as desirable or non-desirable. Legislation passed in 2009 would "provide a framework for more flexible policy responses in a world where the global competition for human resources is more intense than at any time in the past" (Bedford et al., 2010, p. 1).

The next section in this chapter looks at public relations and its link to persuasion and the creation of persuasive text. It also outlines the history of PR and propaganda and its evolution as a profession in modern times.

The reason for the inclusion of PR as a subject area is because text on the New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) website is created by authors motivated to

portray both the immigration process and immigration to New Zealand particularly in a positive manner. It is likely that this text has been carefully constructed with the aim of appealing to a wide range of potential migrant groups. The NZIS website functions as one of the public relations (PR) platforms for New Zealand and accordingly it is likely to contain characteristics in its text that can be linked to PR and its tools of persuasion and image creation.

Public relations and propaganda

To understand the nature of the public relations profession today and the function that it serves in modern organisational and public communication, it is necessary to review its historical roots. Historically, the term public relations was synonymous with “publicity”. In a corporate or government setting, public relations began “as a curative response to unfavourable public opinion; its initial use implied the public defence of certain actions” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 167). By and large, public relations in the late 1800’s in America consisted of publicity generated to “brunt the attack of another, with a somewhat wary eye focused on both the public and the activity adopted to reach them” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 166).

Public relations was thus a tool of one-way communication. It was originally conceived as a discipline whose main focus was the conveyance of one idea, message or opinion to a target public on behalf of an organisation or the government. There was no provision made for the opinions of the public itself, their thoughts on the particular message or issue or how it affected them personally. The emphasis was on “telling the government’s side of the story and on counter-attacks designed to influence public opinion and to prevent government policy changes calling for increased regulation of business” (Cutlip et al., 2000, p. 3).

The relationship between propaganda and public relations can be traced back to one of the founders of public relations, Edward Bernays. Bernays stated that “Propaganda will never die out. Intelligent men must realise that propaganda is the modern instrument by which they can fight for productive ends to bring order

out of chaos” (Bernays in Moloney, 2006, p. 45). Moloney noted that Bernays maintained this view until the early 1980s.

Moloney (2006) observes that the confusion surrounding public relations and propaganda stems from the belief that public relations “has always been a device for gaining people’s compliance in a way that is less open or trustworthy” (p. 41). Both of the above definitions lay emphasis on a type of communication that is not transparent or mutually beneficial to the parties involved. Moloney (2006) also notes that even in the 20th century “major conclusions remain that PR has manipulated public opinion in favour of ideas, values and policies that economic and political elites (some elected) have favoured” (p. 41).

Thus, confusing public relations and propaganda is a legacy of the profession’s initial beginnings when it was used as a tool of one-way communication. It was necessary that “only one message be communicated, that only one side of the story be told” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 174). According to Tymson and Sherman (1999): “Public Relations seeks to persuade by stating the facts truthfully. Propaganda seeks to persuade by stating anything that suits its purpose, whether it is true or otherwise” (p. 6).

Both propaganda and public relations have the power to influence a target public. Johnston and Zawawi (2000) argue that there is an intrinsic difference between them, which is the existence of rhetoric. “A useful distinction to make at this point is between the persuasion of rhetoric, which seeks to find compelling arguments to convince people, and the coercion of propaganda, which insists people believe certain things or act in certain ways by using communication techniques to end discussion” (p. 402).

The term propaganda came into its own following the onset of World War II. It was used as a persuasive communication and information tool by the governments of Nazi Germany and the Allied Forces in America and Britain. In Germany, “it was used so successfully that it completely controlled and directed the tide of public opinion as employed by the Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels” (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 402). Goebbels used propaganda in his attempts to create and shape public opinion sympathetic to the interests of the Nazi regime. He “took charge of all mass media in Germany” (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 402) in order to use these

channels as direct means of communication with the German public. The content of his messages was constructed to “tailor propaganda” (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 402) that would provoke a certain response from both the German public and the Allies. “Goebbels conceived propaganda as the production of a total world view that, once indoctrinated in the populace, would produce instinctual responses that matched the requirement of the regime” (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 403).

During World War II, the public relations establishment in the United States worked for the government. “Public relations counsellors were employed by the US government to further hone and develop foreign propaganda” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 170). Public relations professionals primarily focused on influencing the American public to support America’s intervention in the war, even though their own lives were being radically impacted by their government’s decision to enter into the war. The main aim behind the communication endeavours of public relations professionals was persuading the ordinary American that the war and America’s involvement in it was necessary and justified.

It is this historical background of the public relations profession that is behind some of the present scepticism about the work that public relations practitioners do. This scepticism stems from the popular misconception that PR professionals are “spin doctors” who “describe a reality that suits their purposes” (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 105). Johnston and Zawawi (2000) further noted that “public relations conduct is questioned, when PR campaigns such as the one that helped ‘sell’ the Gulf War of 1991, are brought to the attention of the media. It is looked at as an industry that alters perceptions, re-shapes reality and manufactures consent”.

One of the architects of modern public relations, James Grunig supports the above assertion when he notes that representatives of the media such as journalists and other news reporters have helped enable the misconception that public relations practitioners are involved in deceptive behaviours. “The mass media people have found it easy to editorialise under the guise of news reporting by labelling any activity of which they disapprove as a public relations effort and therefore a deceptive endeavour” (Grunig, 1992, p. 38). It is

suggested that this viewpoint held by the media supported the argument that public relations as a profession was involved in one-sided truth telling, rather than the transparent communication of facts represented by any two individual parties.

Moving from propaganda to modern public relations

During World War II, major corporations were in the uncomfortable position of denying goods and services to their consumers, in the interest of war rationing. However, these same businesses “needed to nurture and hold on to some form of a tenuous relationship with their consumers, in preparation for “the day when the war would end and re-conversion would begin” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 170). Businesses and manufacturers in the United States realised that it was necessary to establish a relationship of sorts between themselves and the American public. This first relationship could then form the basis for the development of a second “consumer” relationship that would see the consumer public engaged in the buying and selling of post war goods and services. Cheney and Vibbert (1987, p. 170) note the shift in focus, from government to corporate practice as being a change that took place as World War II drew to a close by which time “PR was integrated into government and business strategy”. The consumer relationship, between a business and its customers, had to be therefore cultivated and nurtured before the war drew to a close. It could only be achieved by “maintaining frequent contact and ascertaining goodwill from a business’s customers” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 170).

Public relations thus evolved from being institutionalised (as was seen during World War II when it was closely aligned to government and business activity) to becoming a recognised profession in the 1950’s and 1960’s, according to Cheney and Vibbert. “Public relations counsellors came to identify themselves as a specialised culture, indeed a profession” (Cheney & Vibbert, 1987, p. 170). This development would influence the manner in which the profession evolved and cemented its place in the public vocabulary of business and business dealings in the modern age.

The definition of modern day Public Relations, as provided by the Public Relations Society (PRSA) in the United States in 1982 is “the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships

between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (Cutlip et al., 2000, p. 6). Cutlip et al.(2000) further describe public relations as the “management of communication between an organisation and its publics” (p. 3).

Both definitions place emphasis on the “mutual” nature of public relations and the fact that it aims to create reciprocal dialogue between an organisation and the public(s) it affects. The inclusion of the word “mutual” indicates that in public relations, participants are engaged in a two-way dialogue – the back and forth exchange of ideas and information between two parties is ongoing. The key participants in such a dialogue are an organisation and the public(s) it affects and communicates with.

The word “public” or “publics” is defined as “people who are somehow mutually involved or interdependent with an organisation they affect” (Cutlip et al., 2000, p. 2). Publics exist because they have an interdependent relationship with an organisation or because both they and the organisation in question face a common issue or have a similar interest. Similarly, a public might possess an opposing interest that conflicts with that of the organisation it interacts with.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) offer a different interpretation of the term “public”. “A public is a group of people who are confronted by an issue, are divided in their ideas as to how to meet the issue and engage in discussion over the issue itself” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 143). Smith (2005) defines a public as “a group of people that shares a common interest vis-à-vis an organisation, recognises its significance and sets out to do something about it” (p. 39).

Good communication planning, on behalf of a PR practitioner, “calls for the identification of an organisation’s various publics” (Smith, 2005, p. 41).

The relationship that is formed as a result is pivotal in the manner in which an organisation will operate and evolve. Smith (2005, p. 41) also notes that “a major part of developing an effective communication campaign is to identify the appropriate specific publics, called *key publics* or *strategic publics*”. Grunig as a comparison, refers to strategic publics as *stakeholders* when he notes that :

an organisation that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with publics, both external and internal, that

provide the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organisation.

These strategic publics fit into categories that many theorists have called stakeholders.

(Grunig, 1992, p. 12).

In the case of this research study the stakeholders or key publics are potential migrants to New Zealand.

Having defined the term “public” and situating its importance in the modern definition of public relations, it is also relevant to look at the four models of public relations as provided by Grunig (1992), so as to situate the model being employed by the NZIS. According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), there are four models of public relations. They are the press agent/publicity model, the public information model, the two way asymmetric model and the two way symmetrical model. These are further described as follows:

In the first model known as the propaganda model, PR practitioners spread the faith of the organisation often through incomplete, distorted or half truth information. For the public information model, the purpose of the PR practitioner is to disseminate information, not necessarily with persuasive intent. Practitioners of two-way asymmetric public relations have a function more like that of the press agent publicist, but they are more concerned with scientific persuasion. In the two-way symmetric model, PR practitioners serve as mediators between an organisation and its public and their goal is to create mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.

(Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 24)

Johnston and Zawawi (2000) explain that “both the two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric models use two way communication. In the two-way asymmetric model the communication flow is greater from the organisation to its publics, while in the two-way symmetric model, the communication flow between the organisation and its publics is considered to be equal” (p. 9).

The model adopted for the purposes of this research study is the two-way asymmetric model, where the communication flow from the NZIS website to potential migrants is greater than the other way around.

The above theory notes that public relations is about more than the cultivation of a cordial relationship between an organisation and its publics. Theorists such as Grunig (1992) and Smith (2005) frequently use the words “mutual communication” in their discussion of public relations concepts and theory. This underpins the significance for an organisation to maintain mutually beneficial communication channels. “The communication system of an organisation is an increasingly powerful determinant of the organisation’s overall effectiveness” (Farace, Monge & Russell, 1977, p. 7 as cited in Grunig, 1992, p. 70).

The next section will look at “persuasion” and the role that it plays in public relations, as the focus of this research study is the analysis of text to discover whether it is persuasive to potential migrants who may wish to move to New Zealand.

Persuasion

Modern day public relation practitioners contend with the fact that many still define the profession as “being one of merely persuasion” (Cutlip et al., 2000). Smith (2005) describes persuasion as “particularly associated with the advocacy of the asymmetric approach to strategic communication, in which an organisation presents its point of view in an attempt to convince its publics to give their agreement and support” (p. 115).

Another definition of persuasion is put forth by Herbert Simons (1991). He describes persuasion as “human communication designed to influence the autonomous judgements and actions of others” (p. 7). In other words, persuasion seeks to alter the way an audience thinks, feels or acts and it does this through communication.

Edward L Bernays, one of the founders of modern public relations noted in his 1955 novel *Engineering Consent* that: “public relations is inducing the public to have understanding for and goodwill for organisations”. A public relations practitioner therefore needs to design a message that is persuasive in order to convince a key public of an organisation's point of view or to elicit goodwill.

Smith's definition of persuasion is -

Persuasion consciously attempts to influence people, using ethical means that enhance a democratic society. Persuasion is an inherent part of social interaction, something people everywhere do. Persuasion is neither deception, which relies on miscommunication, nor is it coercion, which relies on force rather than communication. Nor is it propaganda, which is associated with half-truths and hidden agendas.

(Smith, 2005,p. 115)

Smith's definition emphasises the use of persuasion as a means of influence in organisational communication. Smith situates persuasion in a model of communication that is referenced in this chapter, in the section that discusses Grunig's four models of public relations. By doing so, he emphasises the importance of persuasion in the public relations practice, when employed strategically and ethically.

Persuasion as seen through the lens of public relations involves six steps, as outlined by Newsom, Turk and Krukeberg (2007). A persuasive PR message will need to be designed, keeping these six steps in mind and they are outlined in the following definition:

The first step is presenting. This involves the audience being in a position to receive a persuasive message. They need to be both physically and mentally receptive. The second step is attending. This means that the receiver must pay attention to the persuasive message and has to understand it. The third step is comprehending. To satisfy this step, the message must be presented in symbols and text that the receiver can understand. The fourth step is yielding, which is when the receiver accepts the message and agrees with the point of view it expresses. The fifth step is retaining the transmitted information so that when repetition of the message occurs, the receiver is reminded of it. The final step is acting where in the receiver of the message acts on it and behaves in a certain manner so as to reflect the original reason the message was sent in the first place.

(Newsom, Turk & Krukeberg, 2007, pp. 121-122)

Applying the steps mentioned by Newsom et al. (2007) to this research study reveals several points of interest. The first point of interest concerns the third step known as comprehending. The symbols and text used on the key web-pages on the NZIS website may represent different ideas and concepts as decided by the authors of the text. However, the interpretation of the same on behalf of potential migrants depends on their interpretation of the symbols and text, which in turn might be affected by their personal backgrounds and experiences. The fourth step described by Newsom et al. (2007) discusses yielding to the point of view that a persuasive message expresses. It is possible that a potential migrant might accept certain views put forth by text on the NZIS website and reject others.

Newsom et al. (2007) also discusses the four principles of persuasion, which are built on the concept of personal identification with an idea or problem (p. 127). The first principle is identification – people will relate to an idea, opinion or point of view only if they can see it as having some direct effect on their hopes, desires or aspirations. The second principle is suggestion of action – people will endorse ideas only if the ideas are accompanied by a proposed action from the sponsor of the idea or if the recipients themselves propose it, especially if this is a convenient action. The third principle is familiarity and trust; the goal of PR is to ensure that an institution deserves and obtains confidence and instils in others a feeling of trust and familiarity. People are unwilling to accept ideas from sources they do not trust. The fourth principle is clarity – the meaning of an idea or event, situation or message has to be clear in order to be persuasive.

Relating Newsom's first principle of persuasion to this research study requires an understanding of why a potential migrant would desire to migrate to New Zealand. The reasons could be varied – a change of life-style, better opportunities for their families or work and education opportunities. It cannot be assumed that all migrants will have the same hopes or aspirations. The third principle of persuasion is connected to the concept of image creation, which is explored further on in this chapter. Text on the NZIS website needs to be presented in a manner that makes it credible and part of this presentation relies on the NZIS website itself being viewed as a credible and trustworthy source. The fourth and final principle of persuasion known as clarity is a concept that is

also open to interpretation based on the personal experiences of the author and the reader and these experiences might not be compatible.

Public relations practitioners therefore are likely to employ a great deal of time in researching which persuasive techniques are more successful and why.

These techniques will also need to be refined and altered to suit each individual public's needs as what works with one public might not necessarily be effective with another. The next section looks at persuasion theory and how persuasive techniques can be designed to impact an audience.

The two approaches to studying persuasion, however, will be described in detail in the methodology section of chapter three, as they are related to the method of analysis carried out in this research study.

Persuasive techniques

Persuasion can manifest itself in the use of language or rhetorical style and is often employed by text that concerns itself with advocacy and strategic communication. However, the manner in which persuasion and persuasive techniques can be adapted to suit the needs of different audiences is discussed next so as to establish how persuasion is directly impacted by the audience it is trying to affect.

Persuasion by degree

Persuaders have the power to shape, reinforce or change a response (Miller, 1980). Response shaping occurs when people acquire new beliefs on controversial matters when they are socialised to learn new attitudes or acquire new values (Simons, Morrelee & Gronbeck, 2001, p. 30). The key characteristic of shaping is that it leads to the formation of new beliefs, values and attitudes (Simons et al, 2001, p. 138). Text on the NZIS website for example, might help develop the belief that New Zealand is a worth-while destination to migrate to. However, it cannot be assumed that the NZIS website alone has the power to influence beliefs about New Zealand as a migrant destination. Migrants' beliefs can also be shaped by their interaction with migration agents, friends and family already residing in New Zealand or research not connected to content on the NZIS website. This may occur in the lead up to elections, when political

campaigns may shape voters' attitudes to previously unknown political candidates. Response reinforcing (Simons et al, 2001, p. 30) consists of strengthening currently held convictions and making them more resistant to change. This is a concept that may prove problematic for authors of text on the NZIS website, as they would need to have some level of understanding of the convictions potential migrants already possess about New Zealand. These convictions might be positive or negative and they in turn impact on how text is interpreted and consumed by the potential migrant.

Charitable organisations also practice response reinforcing when they transform lip-service commitments into strongly felt commitment (Simons et al refer to this as intensification), then transforming those commitments into donations of time and money (Simons et al refer to this as activation) and finally working to maintain strong behavioural support and discouraging back-sliding into stopping donations all together or transferring these donations to another not-for-profit or charity (Simons et al refer to this as deterrence). The activation step that Simons refers to might be when a migrant decides to start the process to migrate to New Zealand after reviewing what it has to offer in terms of work, study or family lifestyle opportunities.

Response changing involves conversion – that is converting an audience to a response not previously held (Simons et al, 2001, p. 30). This may be seen when voters switch to voting for a different party, when smokers move to a different brand of cigarette or choose to give up altogether. This step is possibly more difficult to quantify in this research study as it is hard to ascertain what convictions were previously held by migrants, before they encountered text on the NZIS website. These convictions could be shaped by their personal histories and backgrounds. Their convictions might be partially or wholly formed and in a similar fashion their response to text on the NZIS website might be gradual. Simons does not define a time-line for response changing and how long it might take. The decision to migrate is not one that is taken lightly and it is unlikely that a single (or even multiple) visits to the NZIS website will be sufficient to impact a migrant's decision to initiate the process to move to New Zealand.

Response changing also involves three quite separate stages; depending on the context and how invested the audience is in their currently held opinion. Simons (2001 et al, p. 30) calls these three stages - defusion, neutralisation and crystallisation. According to Simons, "defusion is getting a strongly hostile audience to become less so. Neutralisation is bringing an audience from the point of disagreement to a point of ambivalence or indecision. And finally crystallisation is getting an audience who was previously uncommitted because of mixed feelings about an idea to endorse the persuader's position or proposal" Simons (2001 et al, p. 30). It is worth observing that conversions can be achieved in a single message presentation though this is not always the case. Sometimes multiple presentations are necessary to convince an audience whose ambivalence, mixed feelings or indecisions is at a crucial point. Simon's reference to multiple representations is relevant because there are multiple representations of life in New Zealand present on the NZIS website. These include working in New Zealand, studying in New Zealand or moving to New Zealand as a permanent resident. New Zealand's economic opportunities, alongside the advantages of its natural landscape are also highlighted by text on the NZIS website along with the benefits that they might provide potential migrants.

In the case of this research study, it is suggested that potential migrants to New Zealand are most probably in the stage of crystallisation - they may already possess certain opinions on whether migrating to New Zealand is a good idea or not and it is the purpose of the text on the NZIS website to persuade them to leave these mixed opinions behind and to act on the decision to migrate to New Zealand. "Audiences can resist persuasive messages or at least process them selectively, that is message recipients expose themselves to some messages and not to others" (Simons et al, 2001, p. 32).

Guiding the selection process of what they want to hear and to see are schemas (Tesser & Leone, 1977). The stereotypes associated with groups in society are examples of schemas – they influence peoples' encounters with the aged, infirm, affluent or people from other ethnic groups and races (Simons et al, 2001, p. 32). These groups are defined by a network of schema directed features that presumably apply to all their members – such as their attitudes to family, community, money or their politics. It is important to remember that while

schemas may be resistant to change, they can be altered. Because schemas are often linked to stereotypes, providing the right information to an audience in the stage of crystallisation might make all the difference, in terms of altering their perceptions and attitudes.

The previous section focused on theory that looks at “persuasion by degrees” and why it is necessary to adapt persuasive efforts to suit different audiences. The section below explores “persuasion by incentives” and “persuasion by association”, notions also put forth by Herbert Simons (2001, p. 170-172).

Persuasion by incentives and association

Persuasion theorists including Simons (2001) agree that the incentives are essential to getting people to act. As a rule the greater the incentive, the greater the likelihood of successful persuasion. One method of establishing persuasion by incentives is known as operating conditioning. Operant conditioning according to Simons (2001 et al, p. 38) involves “rewarding desired behaviour and withholding rewards or even using punishments until the desired behaviour is forthcoming”. If caught in a position where he or she cannot physically reward or withhold rewards to an audience, the persuader will need to get them to imagine what it would be like, if the recommended action or decision does not take place. In the reverse, “projecting rewards and punishments may also have the same effect of being persuasive, even if they are only projected incentives and not real” (Simons 2001 et al, p. 38.).

In the case of potential migrants and their interaction with text on the NZIS website, this point is relevant because the text on the NZIS website cannot deliver tangible rewards and benefits to the potential migrant – it can only infer the benefits to be gained by migrating to New Zealand. It does this by outlining the opportunities available to migrants in terms of employment opportunities, lifestyle options and other benefits that New Zealand’s economic and social policies can offer to families, investors or students.

Persuasion by association is when “a previously neutral stimulus was paired with a stimulus known to evoke favourable or unfavourable reactions, followed by the removal of the original stimulus. This is known as classical conditioning” (Staats & Staats, 1963, p.37). Classical conditioning theorists have developed

principles governing the acquisition of responses to new stimuli, their transfer to new situations, their extinction and so on. These responses are exhibited when a diner reads a menu and the words on the page make the food seem enticing, perhaps to the extent that the diner can almost taste what is on offer, without actually having done so. Humans form all types of associations to objects, some conscious and others unconscious. These are relevant because associating an entity with certain attributes or characteristics can also be a powerful influence tool.

It is possible that text on the NZIS website was designed so that its components would convey a certain attribute about the kind of lifestyle New Zealand has to offer potential migrants. The repeated use of the colours blue and green might create an unconscious association with New Zealand's natural landscape in the mind of a potential migrant. Images of people from different cultures might infer to a potential migrant that New Zealand society is one that is accepting of different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. The impression created by the text and its components might be a significant one, long after the potential migrant has moved on to another section of the NZIS website or has left it altogether.

The above sections examined the different ways that persuasion may be studied and also the different ways persuasion can occur – either by degrees, incentives or association. The next section looks at metaphor and its role in persuasion.

Metaphor as a tool of persuasion

While discussing persuasion methods, it is necessary to consider the power of metaphor as a tool of persuasion. Metaphor “uses analogy to create meaning” (Berger, 2000, p. 63). Simons (2001) looks at metaphor “as a comparison of sorts, a way of seeing one thing in comparison with another”. Metaphors are non-literal comparisons and can be more powerful than similes (p. 117). Some metaphors “serve only to add force or drama or life to a description, but others serve as framing devices by which to direct or redirect thought on the matter” (Berger, 2000, p. 64). Consider the use of the term ‘this is war’ as used by a political figure – this phrase could be used when referring to ‘the war on terror’,

‘the war on drugs’, ‘the war on poverty’. This term is loaded with emotional meaning and implies that considerable thought needs to be given to the action and steps required to deal with a drug problem in a nation community or poverty among some of its community members. When one expands this term further, a ‘war’ implies among other things; identifying the enemy, marshalling troops, putting together a defence strategy, gathering intelligence, creating a chain of military command and so on and so forth. While these steps are not necessarily what a government chooses to carry out in reality when fighting a war on poverty, the implication is that they might decide to deal with the issue of poverty in the same way they would deal with a war or attack on their sovereign borders. It is a way of viewing the reality of poverty and could constitute a licence for policy change and political and economic action that will result in a ‘war on poverty’. The phrase is thus a framing device for how the government views poverty – as a serious issue that needs to be combated.

In a similar fashion, one considers the recent re-branding of New Zealand as “Middle earth” following the release of ‘The Hobbit’ on an international scale. The term “Middle earth” refers to a fictional place created by JR Tolkien (1954). However, because The Lord of the Rings trilogy and The Hobbit were both filmed in New Zealand, an association of New Zealand as Middle earth has been created in the minds of audiences worldwide. It is difficult to pinpoint whether New Zealand is a ‘metaphor’ for Middle Earth or if it is the other way around. What is evident is that it is a metaphor that has actively been taken up by Tourism New Zealand, in their positioning of New Zealand as a desirable destination. This is reflected in the name of one of their international marketing campaigns called “100% Middle earth, 100% Pure New Zealand”. The following excerpt is taken from the official Tourism New Zealand website and is located in the section on sector marketing:

Tourism New Zealand's marketing strategy is focused on converting the international attention New Zealand will draw from starring in the Hobbit trilogy, into travel. Our campaign work will demonstrate how easy it is for people to come to New Zealand, see Middle-earth first-hand and experience all the country has to offer.

Tourism New Zealand. (n.d.). 100% Middle Earth, 100% Pure New Zealand. Retrieved September 21, 2013, from <http://www.tourismnewzealand.com/sector-marketing/the-hobbit/100percent-middle-earth/>

When choosing a framing metaphor, it is important to consider what will be intensified and what will be downplayed (Berger, 2000, p. 64). Both of these factors play a part in creating persuasive text and are once again based on the type of audience that the persuasive text is engaging with. Having discussed the use of metaphor and the role it plays in creating persuasive text, it is timely to consider image creation as a public relations tool of persuasion.

Image creation as a tool of persuasion

This section looks at the public relations tool of image creation. It makes references to examples covered in chapter four of this thesis, with particular emphasis given to official website of the New Zealand Immigration Service.

Image creation is very important in public relations. "It's no news to public relations professionals that organizations (such as the New Zealand Immigration Service) need a strong brand to survive and thrive in a competitive and fast paced world" (Sweeney, 2008). A strong brand is "often linked to a strong, memorable and consistent image" (Tymson & Sherman, 1996).

Image therefore, might indicate something projected by an individual or group or something perceived or interpreted by others. The perceived image of New Zealand that text on the NZIS website needs to convey is thus worth considering. Once this image is established and a frame-work in place for the manner in which New Zealand should be represented to potential migrants, the process of creating this image can begin. The image of New Zealand that is being portrayed by the language and text on the New Zealand Immigration Service website is, therefore created by using one of the core components of strategic communication - persuasion.

New Zealand's perceived image is thus communicated in a persuasive manner so as to convince the target public (potential migrants) that New Zealand is the

country that they want to migrate to. The manner in which this image is created and maintained is discussed in this research study.

Image creation can happen through the use of language, the use of distinctive pictures or images and through the use of sound and colour. An 'image' of something or someone is generally meant to convey a sense of what that person or entity stands for, what they are meant to embody, what their traits and characteristics are meant to be. The famous Nike 'swoosh' is famous the world over and is part of a global brand that is meant to represent certain unique features of the sporting goods company such as its commitment to innovation, sporting excellence and superior quality. Nike's global image took a hit when it was revealed that "while the organisation was spending approximately \$890 million a year in marketing, its shoes were being made in Asian factories where workers were being exploited" (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 152). The perception of Nike's corporate image in the minds of its consumers (its main target public) nose dived because the reality of the working conditions of its employees did not match the promoted image.

The following excerpt was taken from the official Nike website, as it appeared in February 1999 and is at odds with the revelation that an exorbitant marketing campaign was being undertaken at the cost of providing its Asian employees with adequate working conditions. "Nike employs around 23,000 people, and every one of them is significant to our mission of bringing inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world. Ours is a language of sports, a universally understood lexicon of passion and competition."

Corporate image and its conceptualisation helps evoke an impression of an organization in the minds of its key audiences or target publics. It is also known as corporate identity – "the composite personality of the company derived from its philosophy, history, culture, strategies, management style, reputation and the behaviour of employees" (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 151). Facets of the composite personality could include the corporation's logo, its staff's uniforms, the layout of its buildings, office letterhead or its business slogan. There should be no confusion in the minds of the public as to what the organisation stands for, what its individual brand is and how it is different from the businesses around it. "In tactical terms, consistency in image and actions extends right

down to grammar and spelling. Most organisations have a style manual setting out exactly how the logo and the other visual elements may and may not be used” (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 153). In other words, a corporation’s unique identity must be identified and remembered by both its target publics and the community at large.

In relation to this research study, the manner in which the NZIS presents itself is significant as it is projecting a corporate image of itself as a government agency. At the same time, because the content on the NZIS website also details the immigration process to New Zealand specifically and what New Zealand has to offer migrants, it could be suggested that the text on the NZIS website is also contributing to a sense of New Zealand’s “corporate” image as well.

Rhetoric and text

The historical origins of rhetoric will be explored in the method and methodology chapter of this thesis. This section will focus on the differences between traditional and popular text and how they are linked to persuasion. The focus of this research study is the rhetorical analysis of text on the NZIS website and a website is considered an artefact of popular culture, rather than a traditional text.

Texts of popular culture differ from traditional texts. “The four traditional characteristics of traditional text are that they are verbal, expository, discrete and hierarchal” (Brummett, 2006, p. 84). The next section discusses the differences between the characteristics of traditional text and popular culture texts.

The rhetoric of popular culture deals with text that is often non-verbal – it is not only about the words that are heard but also the words and images that are seen. Images contain within themselves a wealth of meaning and can sometimes be the sites of struggle for power – flying a national flag proudly or burning it in defiance sends a strong message to those observing these actions.

In addition to texts that are expository in nature, the rhetoric of popular culture deals with text that are metonymic and narrative. Brummett (2006) observes that “metonymy is a way of thinking that means reduction” (p. 84). Thinking about a topic or concept by reducing it to a simpler, smaller more manageable

image or idea that leaves out details of the larger whole is using metonymy. Expository text on the other hand offers the audience a larger breadth of knowledge on a topic. Metonymy can work to simplify issues that are complex and comprise of too many layers to comprehend in one sitting. This can be exhibited in reporting in the mass media on world issues that have been around for decades such as political problems in the Middle East or economic issues such as the recent economic crisis, which was 'metonymised' by images of the Wall Street collapse of 2008. It allows the audience to get a quick grasp on facts of a multifaceted issue – they assimilate only a snapshot of knowledge of the issue. Brummett (2006) further explains that "metonymy is crucial to the aspect of power management that controls meaning" (p. 85). By reducing an issue to being about something simple that elicits an emotional response, a situation can be created where the audience is persuaded to hold an opinion that might not otherwise exist, had been exposed to all the facts of the situation.

Another way that metonymy deals with complex issues that deal with them through narrative or the telling of stories (Brummett, 2006, p. 85). Instead of amassing proof or putting together complex arguments, many texts of popular culture tell a story using words, images and even sounds. Social issues such as race relations, abortion or religious conflict are often depicted in movies or through novels and even in art and music. Popular television sitcoms such as *Modern Family* and *The Middle* deal with complex social issues as gay parenting, inter-cultural relationships and making ends meet in tough economic conditions. Through metonymy and narrative, texts in popular culture participate in struggles over power and disempowerment and manage issues in a simpler manner, in comparison to other areas where they are debated at length.

In a similar manner, text on the NZIS website is a narrative of different situations specific to the New Zealand context – such as working or studying in New Zealand. The narrative that focuses on the "Kiwi" way of life emphasises the importance of 'outdoor living' and interaction with the New Zealand landscape. This is evident in multiple images of New Zealand's natural scenery and of people engaged in outdoor activities that are present on the NZIS website, particularly on the key web-pages analysed. The images contribute to the narrative that focuses on an outdoor life-style, which is a significant message being conveyed to potential migrants. There is more to New Zealand

than just an accessible outdoor life-style, but it is perhaps simpler to condense this message and portray it effectively than discussing other characteristics such as New Zealand's growing multi-cultural society or its education or political systems.

In addition to discrete text, the texts of popular culture also deal with diffuse text. Discrete text is "a group of signs that is perceived to be discrete in time and space, with clear boundaries and clearly separate from its text" (Brummett, 2006, p. 86). On the other hand, diffuse text is "a collection of signs working for the same or related rhetorical influence that is not discretely separated from its context" (Brummett, 2006, p. 86). A diffuse text may not always be recognised as a text by those who experience it, and yet at other times it will be recognised as a very complex experience. An example of diffuse text would be the experience of watching a televised event such as the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton, which took place in April 2011 – during this event, the audience watching at home can participate in a conversation among themselves, be it through tweeting or on Facebook or by texting, sharing their thoughts on what they have been watching on screen. During this time they may answer the phone, eat a meal in front of the television or text their friends and family. They may even switch channels if their attention is not held by what they see on screen. All of these signs, actions and artefacts contribute to the same rhetorical effect of enjoyment or being part of the Royal Wedding experience. However, it is difficult to define when this diffuse text begins and when it ends – however, it does have rhetorical influence.

Finally, "traditional text is hierarchal in nature whereas the rhetoric of popular culture texts is manifested in a democratic manner" (Brummett, 2006, p. 87). In the previous example, the global audience watching the televised Royal Wedding decide their text is formed, changed and experienced. The audience is actively involved in creating diffuse text. They are not in a place where their ability to experience their text is controlled or constrained by third parties. This can be the case when one is experiencing a mayoral speech at a town hall where the situation and context is highly controlled by the mayor's aides. The text of popular culture is democratic in nature in so much as it allows the audience control and choice over how they assemble, create and process diffuse text to suit their own needs and desires.

The above section looked at the difference between traditional and popular texts. The next section looks at different ways to consider rhetorical criticism. In order to do so, it is necessary to examine the significance of text as an “influence through meaning” and as “a site of struggle over meaning” (Brummett, 2006, p. 92).

Text as influence through meaning

Text influences people to think and act in a certain fashion and possesses a rhetorical dimension. By looking at text as an influence through meaning, it can be examined what motivates or drives that influence. Brummett (2006) suggests that people “think or act in certain ways, in response to texts, because of the meanings that texts have for them and the meanings that texts can attribute to our experiences” (p. 92).

Members of government are held to higher account by the public because of the office they hold. There are many opinions held about the spending of public servants and how this is represented in the media. A politician who uses tax payer funds to travel on a private holiday might be called out for inappropriately using government funds or for taking advantage of his or her position of power or influence. Some media may take this point of view, while others may put forth the opinion that this is a ‘perk of the job’ or an ‘entitlement’ due to the pressures and responsibilities that the politician endures, or in fact even acceptable behaviour given the circumstances surrounding the travel. These texts are all creating meaning when they try and explain the politician’s actions. The public’s response or their decision to either vote or not vote for the politician in question, depends on what the politician’s actions mean to you - they are either inappropriate and unjust or you concede that they are reasonable given his or her position. The texts of popular culture in this case are the media – what is written in the press, heard on the radio, reported on television or read on online blogs or editorial columns.

In other words, these texts are creating meaning about other things in our world. The context of text holds meaning for an individual, based on his or her own personal circumstances and experiences, and it is this meaning that influences thought and action.

Text as a site of struggle over meaning

Texts are also sites of struggle over meaning. As mentioned already a text's whole meaning has some power or influence. However, people also "struggle over how to construct different texts in ways that suit their own interests" (Brummett, 2006, p. 93). The music of Lady Gaga means one thing to her teenage fans and quite another to the parents and grand-parents of these fans. To her teenage fans, Lady Gaga's music represents an expression of self, sexual freedom, acceptance of differences and celebration of the same or liberation from societal conventions. To an older generation, her music might be deemed offensive, sexually explicit and inappropriate to an age group that considers her a role model. The music of Lady Gaga is made up of powerful texts, which in turn comprise of symbols, sounds and images. These texts are highly complex and their meaning is not straightforward or simple to detect.

Depending on the countries that they come from, migrants might interpret text on the NZIS website quite differently. An image of snow-capped mountains set against a backdrop of blue sky might mean something quite different to a migrant from India who is used to congested cities, than it does to a migrant from Canada or Europe who is accustomed to landscapes similar to New Zealand's. Each migrant interprets the text he or she consumes, based on his or her personal experiences but also so as to best suit their situation at the time the text is read. The meaning thus interpreted can be different to what is intended by the authors of the text.

The struggle to construct the meaning behind these texts exists because text has meaning and within the meaning, lies the power to influence. This struggle is always particularly obvious during election time as politicians jostle to place their own meaning on important issues such as taxes, health care reform, education and welfare schemes. The struggle over power occurs in the creation and reception of texts as much as they do occur at the ballot box or during a civil uprising or revolution.

In this research study, it is important to explore whether the text on the NZIS website contains a range of meanings and if the texts examined are sites of struggle over meaning. Some texts might prove to be the site of struggle over

meaning in terms of what it is trying to convey and how this is received and processed by migrants with different needs and backgrounds.

Having discussed text as having both influence through meaning and being a site of struggle over meaning, it is appropriate to look at the three key characteristics of rhetorical criticism.

The key characteristics of rhetorical criticism

Rhetorical criticism needs to be “critical in attitude and method, concerned with power and interventionist” (Brummett, 2006, p. 96). To put it simply, a rhetorical criticism of text must look beneath the surface – in its attitude, this criticism must ask questions, it must assume that things may be not what they seem; it must look beyond what is obvious. A rhetorical criticism will explore text so as to uncover ways in which people are influenced or informed by text.

A rhetorical criticism must also have method – it needs to ask certain kinds of questions. These questions are about “meaning, complexity and evaluation” (Brummett, 2006, p. 97). Meaning has been discussed already and to some degree the complexity of text in the section on text and its influence through meaning and as a site of struggle over meaning. Once these first two issues are dealt with, a rhetorical criticism can then evaluate the experience’s meaning and influence – are they positive, negative, desirable or undesirable? By revealing the meaning of texts and artefacts, a rhetorical criticism can explain the rhetoric behind that particular piece of popular culture and also demonstrate how life can be experienced or how one type of experience is validated by a particular audience.

A rhetorical criticism also needs to concern itself with power – it needs to understand what power is or what it is understood to be, how it is created, maintained, shared, lost and acquired (Brummett, 2006, p. 101). Power can be maintained and seized through government elections or force, but also through less obvious ways – in classroom layouts in school, in social norms and behaviours exhibited at public events, through entities such as the public transport system or health care system etc. Power deals with empowerment or disempowerment of groups of people. The rhetoric of texts of popular culture wields influence and is therefore powerful tools to be reckoned with.

The final characteristic of a rhetorical study according to Brummett (2006) is that it can be interventionist. A rhetorical criticism can unearth how one experiences life, which in turn implies that there are choices among different ways that people can choose to live their lives. This in turn links in with the concept that where there is choice, there is the power to influence choice. Therefore, a rhetorical criticism that is able to show how experiences can be understood or assimilated in different ways is presenting people with options to live their lives differently. By intervening in such a manner, rhetorical criticism has the potential to alter people's lives and change them in some way.

Visual rhetorical criticism is one of several schools of thought in the rhetorical criticism or popular culture. It is relevant to the analysis of an online body of text, such as the NZIS website. Brummett believes that images have structure and that they appear in contexts. Therefore they must be interpreted so as to extract meaning from them. Images, like verbal utterances are the focal points for the attribution of meaning. When someone sees an image within a context, it is possible to infer something about the image based upon the context that it exists in.

For example, an image of a piano is just that – an image of a musical instrument. An image of a piano in someone's home attributes another image to the piano. Maybe the people who live in the home are musically inclined. If the piano is expensive, it then attributes additional meaning – it could imply that the people who live in the home are wealthy. In a similar fashion, an image of the ocean or mountains or people engaged in outdoor activities on the NZIS website might have inferences about the accessibility of landscapes such as this or about the kind of lifestyle migrants might expect to encounter if they move to New Zealand.

Photographs are similarly, a bit like images. A rhetorical critic should be careful to not assume that an image "just is" or that it conveys a clear and concise image to its audience. Instead images can be thought of as "placeholders of meaning that the audience must assemble" (Brummett, 2006, p. 163). It is important to look at how photographs are organised, the context they exist in and how this context affects how they are viewed and the interpretations that can be drawn from them.

Critics of visual rhetoric need to identify the kind of logic or rationale behind the structure that orders images or classes of images, for this can tell us a lot about how the images are rhetorical (Brummett, 2006, p. 163). The question must be posed – what kind of visual world is being created (by an order of images) and how does that world affect the audience consuming the images?

Taking this point a bit further, it would be fair to say that images can be focal points of collective memory and community. The image of the Anzac poppy means something very important to New Zealanders and Australians. As a nation, New Zealanders remember those who gave their lives in the First World War at Gallipoli and the image of the poppy can give a shared focus of collective remembering, when worn on a person's clothing.

Images can gloss over differences. The image of a Christmas tree is almost a universal one – it doesn't account for the different Christian religious groups celebrating this festival, or the different ways in which they choose to do so. It allows a feeling of shared community spirit or a sense of 'we are all celebrating together' even though the actual agreement that this is the case, is probably not real. "Images are inherently more ambiguous than language and thus images can more easily resolve conflict and contradictions within the public" (Brummett, 2006, p. 164). To summarise, the rhetorical criticism of visual images "looks for ways in which the ambiguity of images allows appeals to social solidarity, seems to create collective memories and resolves social conflicts with rhetorical effects" (Brummett, 2006, p. 164).

Having reviewed the historical background for rhetoric from various critical points of view, the next part of the literature review focuses specifically on rhetorical criticism as explored by Sonja Foss. The methodology behind Foss's approach will be addressed on further in chapter four of this thesis.

Sonja Foss's approach to rhetorical criticism

Sonja Foss (2004) places rhetorical criticism in the context of sense-making. Symbols permeate peoples' everyday lives – they encounter them when they watch television, listen to the radio, read advertisements in magazines or when we discuss current affairs with our friends and family. Discovering how symbols work as a means of communication is one part of rhetorical criticism; the second part is working out how symbols affect our behaviours and perceptions.

Foss's more academic definition is that rhetoric is: "the human use of symbols to communicate" (Foss, 2004, p. 4).

Rhetoric doesn't exist on its own – it includes three dimensions. These three dimensions are symbols as medium for rhetoric, humans as the creator of rhetoric and communication as the purpose of rhetoric. To explore how a rhetorical criticism can help locate key messages within a piece of text, it is useful to briefly expand on these three dimensions.

Humans as the creator of rhetoric

The second dimension of rhetoric makes the distinction between the use of symbols rather than signs. Symbols represent or stand for something else represented by virtue of relationship, association or convention – signs are often directly connected to the object represented in some shape, way or form. "A symbol is a human construction connected only indirectly to its referent. It should be noted, however, that while rhetoric often involves the deliberate and conscious choice of symbols to communicate with others, actions not deliberately constructed by rhetors can also be interpreted symbolically" (Foss, 2004, p. 5). A person can choose to give an action or an object symbolic value, even though the sender does not see it in symbolic terms. Symbols also take on numerous forms and therefore rhetoric is not limited to just written and spoke discourse but also includes non-discursive or non-verbal symbols as well as discursive and verbal symbols. Speech, essays, film, art, architecture, plays, music, dance dress and dress all forms of rhetoric.

Symbols as a medium for rhetoric

Rhetoric involves analysing and making sense of symbols specifically created by humans, as opposed to other species of animals. This is because human beings possess the intellectual tools to use symbols to frame the way they make sense of the world. Foss (2004) supports this by stating that: "humans are the only animals who create a substantial part of their reality through the use of symbols" (p. 4).

Communication as the purpose of rhetoric

The third dimension of rhetoric is that its purpose is communication (Foss, 2004, p. 5). Rhetoric can be used as a persuasive tool and it is visible in the speeches or narrative of politicians or statesmen. Rhetoric can also be used as an invitation to understand perspectives – it can be offered out in the hope that others can better see where a communicative purpose is coming from. Rhetoric also performs the function of telling people what reality is (Foss, 2004, p. 6). Realities can change according to the symbols people use to talk about it. The framework applied to what individuals encounter in day to day life influences peoples' perceptions of what they experience and how they react to this same experience.

Foss's description of the three dimensions of rhetoric is useful in that it enables individuals to identify the different tools employed by rhetoric and also highlights the main objective of rhetoric- to persuade an audience to a certain point of view. However, it is also useful to consider rhetorical analysis from a critical perspective. It is important to consider – how does a researcher think about rhetorical criticism? What are the factors that bear consideration? And how do these factors deepen the understanding of rhetoric and the influence it holds over an audience?

To consider rhetoric, one must consider the importance of text and the influence that it wields. It is the meaning of text that influences an audience to a certain thought or action. Brummett (2006) argues that: "people think or act in certain ways, in response to texts, because of the meaning that the texts have for an individual and the meanings that texts urge us attribute to our experiences" (p. 92). In other words, text contains meaning to do with other things in the world – what people see on television, read about in the newspaper, assimilate while reading a blog or absorb when taking in an art show or a dramatic performance. This is important because it is the text that contains the most favourable meaning that has the power to shape an opinion or decision making process. In a similar fashion, text with negative meaning can be dismissed from the decision making process altogether. When it comes to a making a decision on how individuals think about a certain topic or how people respond to a call to action – people respond to the text that holds the most meaning for them.

Foss's approach incorporates three dimensions - identifying symbols as mediums for rhetoric, awareness of humans as creators of rhetoric and valuing communication as the purpose of rhetoric. Foss's method of rhetorical analysis therefore also places great significance on "meaning" and its ability to shape and influence decision making, which is linked to how persuasive a textual artefact is or isn't. Therefore, Foss's method of rhetorical analysis will help explain the possible meaning that text on key web-pages on the NZIS website is trying to convey to potential migrants.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed theory on the five key themes included in this research study – namely immigration trends in New Zealand, public relations, persuasion, text and rhetoric. By examining rhetoric and its significance in designing persuasive text, it was determined that Sonja Foss's method of rhetorical analysis was the appropriate method of analysis for this research study because it could offer insights into the persuasive nature of the website text, while taking into account images and text and allowing for a detailed examination of both these elements. Foss outlines several approaches to rhetorical criticism. Her narrative and metaphor approaches will be discussed in detail in the method and methodology chapter, which follows next.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Method

Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to explore the question – how does text on the New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) website frame New Zealand as a potential destination for future migrants? I selected rhetorical analysis as the key method of analysis for this research study because rhetoric is defined as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (Craig & Muller, 2007, p. 123). More specifically, I chose to use the symbol-oriented approach to rhetorical analysis adopted by Sonja Foss (2004). Foss’s approach incorporates three dimensions - identifying symbols as mediums for rhetoric, awareness of humans as creators of rhetoric and valuing communication as the purpose of rhetoric. Foss’s method of rhetorical analysis therefore also places great significance on “meaning” and its ability to shape and influence decision making.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section defines the rhetorical research paradigm and situates the research within its theoretical perspective. It explores Foss’s approaches to rhetorical analysis and focuses on her “metaphor” and “narrative” approaches. The second section outlines the specific methodologies of rhetorical analysis of text and symbols. The third section outlines the practical steps undertaken to study text on the NZIS website using Foss’s method of rhetorical analysis.

Foss’s approaches emphasise meaning because humans respond to symbols in either a positive or negative manner. Using rhetorical analysis can make it possible to understand why people like or don’t like a symbol by uncovering what it stands for. Essentially, the symbol itself is being analysed for meaning. As Foss (2004) explains: “rhetorical criticism enables us to become more

sophisticated and discriminating in explaining, investigating and understanding symbols and our responses to them” (p. 7). Foss notes several approaches to rhetorical criticism including the narrative and metaphor approach – both of which will be discussed in detail further on.

Situating the research – Why rhetorical analysis?

Defining the paradigm

Both approaches selected for this study sit within the interpretivist paradigm of qualitative communication research. Interpretivist research according to Lindlof and Taylor (2002, p. 8) is concerned with the following points

1. It is concerned with the study of topics of symbol use, sense making and choice making
2. It is seeking to illuminate how humans use cultural symbol systems to create shared meanings for their existence and society and also seeks to achieve a deeper understanding of human actions, motives and feelings.

Historically, rhetorical analysis examines the discourses and textual artefacts that constituted public culture, such as those created by media and government institutions from a formalist critique perspective (Lindlof & Taylor, 2000, p. 27). Modern rhetorical scholars such as Burke (1969) and Foss (2004) have broadened this approach to include sites of cultural narration and invention (including websites) and they place greater emphasis on “knowledge of the cultural members who add value to the creation of the above sites” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 27). Rhetorical analysis is therefore concerned with the “critical paradigm of research and focuses on the study of relationships among power, knowledge and discourse that are produced in situations of historical and cultural struggle” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 28).

It is necessary to identify the persuasive messages being constructed by text on key web-pages on the NZIS website. This research study is about uncovering meaning as the NZIS website is a “site for struggle over meaning” because it is an artefact wherein those who interact with it “struggle over how to construct its texts in ways that suit their own interests” (Brummett, 2006, p. 93).

Rhetoric and persuasion

Rhetoric

To justify rhetorical analysis as the key method for analysis of text on the NZIS website, it is important to situate the research in the context of persuasion theory. The original research question that prompted this study was: what does text on the NZIS website say about New Zealand and how does this text shape a persuasive image of New Zealand?

It was necessary to examine text on the NZIS website as more than just a resource for informational facts and figures about New Zealand as a destination for immigrants. This text also needed to be analysed from two viewpoints. Firstly, its structure, tone and composition were analysed to discover what “ideal” or “concept” of New Zealand was being communicated. Secondly, this “ideal” was examined to uncover its persuasive function. Rhetoric and persuasion thus need to be considered together in this research study.

The historical background of rhetoric is important to this study because it helps focuses on how text can be designed to be persuasive. The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, who lived during the 4th century B.C., is generally considered the father of rhetoric. He divided rhetoric into two general areas – public speaking and logical discussion (Berger, 2000, p. 53). Aristotle promoted the term rhetoric as “referring to the means of persuasion in all fields” (Berger, 2000, p. 53). Aristotle’s rhetoric may also be defined as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (Craig & Muller, 2007, p. 123). He was mainly preoccupied with the oral tradition of speeches that were in legal, political or ceremonial arenas. This makes sense given the way that Ancient Greek society operated and the significance that the Greeks placed on the oratory tradition in their senate and local government agencies.

Lawson-Tancred compiled an English translation of Aristotle’s work *The Art of Rhetoric*. As Aristotle saw it, “rhetoric is the counterpart of reasoning” (Lawson-Tancred, 1991, p. 66). What this means is that the rhetoric (earlier defined also as the art of persuasion) goes hand in hand with the exploration of a concept or idea. Aristotle’s view point on rhetoric supports the theory that while it is important to consider how an argument is presented and how a speech is structured, it is also important to consider the ‘proof’ within the speech or

argument that gives it prominence or weight. That is to say, it is also important to consider the enthymemes or the “flesh and blood of proof” (Lawson-Tancred, 1991, p. 67) that are part of persuasive speech. It is the proof that allows an orator, in Aristotle’s opinion, to demonstrate credence in the rhetoric that is being put forward to an audience.

As described in Lawson-Tancred’s (1991) translation, Aristotle suggested that there were three modes of persuasion available to a speaker. The first of these was ethos. Ethos refers to the “credibility of the speaker”. The second mode of persuasion is pathos. Pathos refers to “placing the audience in a frame of mind where the speaker is appealing to their emotions”. The third mode of persuasion is logos. By logos, Aristotle referred to “the proof or apparent proof generated by the words in the speech or text” (Berger, 2000, p. 54). These three modes of persuasion form what has become known as the triangle of Aristotle’s rhetoric. The above descriptions are over-simplified but serve as a starting point to consider how the Aristotelian model is linked to persuasion.

Although Aristotle’s theories addressed the oral tradition, the same three modes of persuasion may be linked to performing a rhetorical analysis on a textual artefact. Searching for credibility allows a rhetorical critic to evaluate if a sense of trust is being created by text. Investigating whether an emotional connection exists allow the critic to question if the reader of a text can connect personally with it, so as to give it significance within his or her (the reader’s) own set of circumstances. Searching for logical arguments allows the audience to make sense of the text they are consuming, so as to process the information that persuades them to make a decision.

The text on key web-pages of the NZIS website was analysed to determine the ways in which it exhibits characteristics of credibility, emotional connectivity and logic so as to persuade its audience to make the decision to enter into the process of applying for migration to New Zealand. The four web-pages analysed were the NZIS homepage, the Apply Now, Find a Visa and About New Zealand web-pages.

Persuasion

Discerning persuasive techniques is important because it allows an insight into how an audience thinks and feels and what persuades them to do so.

Discerning persuasive techniques also asks the question – is it ethical to use a particular persuasive technique on a chosen audience? Simons (1992) proposes two approaches to studying persuasion and both methods are briefly outlined below.

1. The Critical Studies Approach: Case Studies and “Genre-alizations”

The term “Genre-alizations” in the above heading comes from Herbert Simons (2001). While the behavioural approach treats persuasion as a science, the critical approach treats it as an art, one that requires attention to the distinctive feature of each persuasive message (Simons, 2001, p. 17). A critic of persuasion must first take a careful reading of the message, looking also at the context in which it has presented. Only then can a critic assess the message – its artistry, or its logic or its ethics or social consequences. Just as behavioural research and theory are interlinked, so critical case studies inform rhetorical theory and are informed by it. Therefore, the use of rhetoric as a means of studying persuasion can be placed under the umbrella of the critical studies approach.

Understanding persuasion means understanding the psychology of persuasion as a concept. The psychology of persuasion according to Simons (2001, pp. 27-28) is linked to beliefs and values as being the building blocks of attitudes.

An attitude is a judgement that a given thing is good or bad, desirable or undesirable or something to be embraced or avoided. The “thing” could be anything - a person, an event, a certain action. Attitudes pre-dispose an audience to act in one way or another while beliefs are judgements about what is true or probable (Simons, 2001, p. 28). Some values (such as happiness or self-fulfilment) are ends in themselves. These are called “terminal values” (Rokeach, 1976). Others such as fair play or generosity are a means to an end. Rokeach called these “instrumental values”.

Attitudes, beliefs and values are connected and beliefs include judgements that a given object possesses certain attributes. If a buyer’s belief is that a Japanese

vehicle is superior in performance to a European made vehicle, that belief will translate into attributing the Japanese vehicle with certain characteristics that then make its purchase valid in the mind of the buyer. In a similar vein if a potential migrant believes that New Zealand is a country that is accepting of people from different ethnicities, the migrant might then attribute certain characteristics (such as tolerance, acceptance or a curiosity to learn more about different cultures) to New Zealand.

Values also include judgements of the worth of these perceived attributes. What this means is that the buyer of a Japanese vehicle may value fuel efficiency over aesthetics – so may choose to buy a smaller, more fuel efficient car rather than its luxury counterpart that may still be fuel efficient but is much more stylish. Similarly, some migrants might value the accessibility of New Zealand's natural landscape and its natural beauty as being complementary to their lifestyle choice, rather than valuing high wages. The variation in beliefs and values among different people has great importance to persuaders. One kind of sales pitch will work with one kind of consumer but will fail with others. This is because everyone holds a different set of beliefs and values based on backgrounds, education or culture. In order for persuasion to be effective, it is necessary for the 'sales pitch' to be tailored to each prospective buyer's values and attitudes. It is logical to conclude that text and language would need to be tailored to be persuasive after taking into account the kind of audience, their informational needs, their background, their personal situation and context.

2. The behavioural approach to studying persuasion: Social scientific

In developing generalisations of the effectiveness of various types of persuasion, "social scientists rely for the most part on research experiments conducted under carefully controlled conditions" (Simons, 2001, p. 15). This approach is behavioural in the sense of treating human judgements and actions as in some sense, akin to the predictable, controllable behaviour of lower-order animals in a laboratory. "Social scientists systematically investigate variations in source (that is, the persuader), message, medium, audience and context – in who says what to whom, when, where and how. These communication factors are known as independent variables" (Simons, 2001, p. 15). Determining the effects of independent variables on dependent variables (the variables that can

change when independent variables are manipulated) is the object of such a research exercise, according to Simons.

Considering the rhetorical audience

When discussing the persuasiveness of a particular text, it is necessary to consider the position of the “audience” within the method of rhetorical analysis. The audience is a vital element in the rhetorical act as the success of a rhetorical text is measured by the effect it has on its audience.

The persuasive power of a rhetorical text lies in establishing a link between the rhetor and the audience he or she engages. Burke (1969, p. 21) refers to this link as “identification” whereby the rhetor considers the audience’s interests, backgrounds and needs and thus constructs communication accordingly.

Berger (2011, p. 315) defines audience as a collection of individuals who watch a television program, listen to a radio program or attend a similar artistic performance. They may exist as a group or as separate individuals. Berger (2011, p. 316) also offered a technical definition, which is that audiences are “addressees” who receive mediated texts sent by an “addresser”. This definition seems to imply that an audience is not actively engaging with their content in a reciprocal fashion, rather that they are simply passive consumers.

Identifying the audience that consumes text on the NZIS website is important so as to ascertain how text is constructed to best appeal to the target audience. As discussed previously, the intended audience for the NZIS website is potential migrants wishing to move to New Zealand.

However, this audience is fragmented (as suggested by the *NZIS Longitudinal Research Survey* (Department of Labour, 2009b) and consists of migrants from different cultural backgrounds and nationalities, migrants with varying educational qualifications and skills, migrants with different language abilities and migrants with different personal, historical or cultural ties to New Zealand. Each individual migrant group is likely to consume and interpret text on the NZIS website in a different way. In addition, migrants may belong to more than one audience group (for example, migrants who first come to New Zealand on work permits only to apply for residency later move from one type of audience to another) and in other cases, they are a separate and unique audience altogether (migrants of different nationalities).

The struggle over meaning - shaping rhetoric

Earlier on in this chapter, Sonja Foss's (2004) symbol-oriented approach to rhetorical analysis was identified as the key method for carrying out the rhetorical analysis of the NZIS website. Foss's approach is significant because text is also a "site for struggle over meaning" (Brummett, 2006, p. 92). This struggle can exist both in the creation and reception of meaning. Examining the "rhetorical dimension" of text from the elements that influence its meaning is necessary because it is the perceived meaning that holds the power to persuade.

At the same time, the rhetoric employed in the text's construction or tone signifies a deeper struggle for the individual consuming it because people construct texts to suit their own needs. It is important to observe how the same text can mean something different to different groups consuming it and how this in turn, shapes its construction. For example, text on the NZIS website that refers to New Zealand's landscape and natural beauty might be more appealing to migrants from industrial cities in China or India than to migrants from the United Kingdom and the text will be consumed according to migrants' personal backgrounds and experiences. It is the "struggle over meaning" that is one of the features of this research study. There are many meanings that can be attached to a single piece of text, or an image or oft-repeated symbol – getting to the bottom of the intended meaning and what it is trying to convey is important.

Foss's method is about making sense of the use of symbols as a part of the communication process, while analysing how symbols can shape behaviours. By creating text that contains symbols, the rhetors of the NZIS website are formulating a framework of how New Zealand is perceived by potential migrants and how this framework makes sense to them (potential migrants) within their own personal experiences and interpretation of the text. Foss's approach to rhetoric essentially centres on the human use of symbols to communicate (Foss, 2004, p. 4). Symbols also take on numerous forms (such as icons or logos) and therefore rhetoric is not limited to written and spoken discourse but also includes non-discursive or non-verbal symbols and discursive and verbal symbols (Foss, 2004, p. 5). Therefore, the methods used in this research study

also need account for the use of symbols such as colour, image and branding logos (not 'logos' as defined by Aristotle). This is because these symbols on the NZIS website are possibly working together (or on their own) to communicate a message to potential migrants.

The process of studying rhetoric according to Foss

The next section outlines the process of studying rhetoric and conducting a rhetorical criticism of an entity or artefact, following Foss (2004, pp. 6-8). Foss's approach was used in analysing the relevant pages of the NZIS website and it provides a framework for understanding why certain aspects of each web-page might have been chosen and why the analysis of their symbolic meaning is significant.

Step 1 – Systematic analysis as the act of criticism

An audience responds to symbols as it encounters them, while also trying to interpret how they work and why they are effective. This is a subconscious process. However, the process of rhetorical criticism involves engaging in this natural process in a more conscious, systematic and focused way. "Instead of relying on an emotional response (i.e. 'I like' vs. 'I don't like') to a symbol, an audience may make statements about the message that the symbol is conveying by investigating it further" (Foss, 2004, p. 7). An audience thus "becomes more discriminating and sophisticated in explaining, investigating and understanding symbols" (Foss, 2004, p. 7). Therefore according to Foss, the first step in a rhetorical criticism exercise is for an audience to understand their emotional responses to symbols and to separate these out from what message the symbol is trying to convey.

Step 2 – Acts and artefacts as the objects of criticism

Foss (2004) states that: "the objects of study in a rhetorical criticism are symbolic acts and artefacts" (p. 7). The delineation between the two needs to be clear, as each adds richness to the overall findings. "An act is executed in the presence of a rhetor's intended audience" (Foss, 2004, p. 7), such as a speech or a musical performance presented to a live audience. An act has an impact on the audience and leaves behind an impression, while at the same time conveying meaning, as exhibited by the lyrics in a song or the lines of a

play for example. However, an act is not tangible and “can be fleeting and ephemeral” (Foss, 2004, p. 7). Therefore, it is the artefact of the act, “which is the text or the trace or tangible evidence of the act” (Foss, 2004, p. 7) that can be studied instead.

For the purpose of this study, the text on the NZIS website is the artefact of the NZIS’s act to invite potential migrants to come and live in New Zealand and is symbolic, in that the authors of text use language and text and colour as tools to make New Zealand seem like an attractive migrant destination. It is the visible text on the NZIS website, in words, imagery and colour, that is accessible and can be analysed.

Step 3 – Understanding rhetorical processes as the purpose of criticism

The process of rhetorical criticism begins with an interest in understanding particular symbols and how they operate (Foss, 2004, p. 7). Rhetorical critics are interested in discovering what an artefact communicates about rhetoric to ascertain if a contribution is being made to rhetorical theory. Rhetorical criticism is not undertaken to study the artefact for its qualities and features alone. “rhetorical critics are interested in discovering what an artifact teaches about the nature of rhetoric – in other words, critics engage in rhetorical criticism to make a contribution to rhetorical theory” (Foss, 2004, p. 8). A critic therefore “asks a question about a rhetorical process and how it works and provides a tentative conclusion or claim” (Foss, 2004, p. 8). Basic concepts involved in a rhetorical phenomenon are identified and the explanation of how they work contributes to rhetorical theory. Applying the basic concepts during a rhetorical criticism exercise can “help a rhetorical analyst step back from the artefact he or she is analysing and take a broader view of it, while drawing conclusions about what it is saying” (Foss, 2004, p. 8).

The overall implication of engaging in rhetorical criticism is to improve the ability to communicate. It enables an audience to become more sophisticated receptors of messages that then go on to create a certain effect. An audience is more likely to question the rhetoric that they do not see as being useful or sense making and are therefore more likely to be critical of how they respond to these messages.

The methods behind the rhetorical analysis of text

Foss's approaches to rhetorical analysis of text – metaphor analysis and narrative analysis

As established earlier, this research study adopted a method of rhetorical analysis that combined Foss's metaphor and narrative analysis techniques. Foss (2004) defines metaphor as "non-literal comparisons in which a word a phrase from one domain of experience is applied to another domain" (p. 299). A metaphor joins two terms normally regarded as belonging to different classes of experience. These two parts of the metaphor are termed as the "tenor" and the "vehicle" Foss (2004, p. 299). The tenor "is the topic or subject that is being explained; the vehicle is the mechanism through which the topic is viewed" (Foss, 2004, p. 299). Foss establishes metaphor as being "a major way in which we constitute reality" (2004, p. 230). By organising reality in particular ways, selected metaphors can also affect the way people act because they "contain implicit assumptions, points of view and evaluations" (Foss, 2004, p. 231). In other words, metaphor is another way of knowing and experiencing the world at large. This research study will follow Foss's approach using metaphor analysis, which involves the following steps:

1. Selecting an artefact (in the case of this research study, this refers to the text on key web-pages on the NZIS website)
 2. Analysing the artefact by:
 - i. examining the artefact as a whole and placing it in its relevant context
 - ii. isolating the metaphors so as to distinguish between "tenor" and "voice"
 - iii. sorting metaphors into groups so as it look for patterns in metaphor use
 - iv. explaining the artefact – by analysing the metaphors contained in the text on the NZIS website, it is possible to reveal its meaning and why those particular metaphors have been used and their significance in establishing persuasiveness of the text.
- (Foss, 2004, pp. 303-305)

Foss' second approach to rhetorical analysis involves the study of narrative. According to Foss (2004): "narratives organise the stimuli of our experience so that we can make sense of the people, places, events and actions of our lives. They allow us to interpret reality because they help us decide what a particular experience 'is about' and how the various elements of our experience are connected" (p. 333). Foss further explains that narratives are distinguished from other rhetorical forms by the following four characteristics (2004, p. 334). The first characteristic is that narrative is comprised of events that may be either active (expressing action) or stative (expressing a state or condition). A second characteristic of narrative is that the events in it are organised by time order. A third requirement of narrative is that it must include some kind of casual or contributing relationship among events in a story. A fourth requirement for a narrative is that it must be about a unified subject.

This research study also follows Foss's second approach to rhetorical analysis known as narrative analysis, which involves the following two steps.

1. Selecting an artefact (in this research study, the artefact is the text on key web-pages on the NZIS website)
2. Analysing the artefact by :
 - i. identifying the dimensions of the narrative
 - ii. discovering an explanation for the narrative(Foss, 2004, pp. 335-6)

Identifying the dimensions of the narrative also involves examining the setting of the narrative, the characters engaged in the narrative, the nature of the narrator, the events included in the narrative, the time-line of the narrative, the cause-effect relationships established by the narrative, the audience to whom the narrative is directed towards and the theme of the narrative (Foss, 2004, pp. 335-6). Discovering an explanation for the narrative of text on the NZIS website could help explain how useful it is in influencing its readers (potential migrants) and whether it is a strong or weak narrative over-all.

Foss's method (2004, pp. 336-7) also outlines several criteria that can serve as a measure of the values embedded in the narrative. Following Foss, key web-pages on the NZIS website will be analysed while considering the following questions :

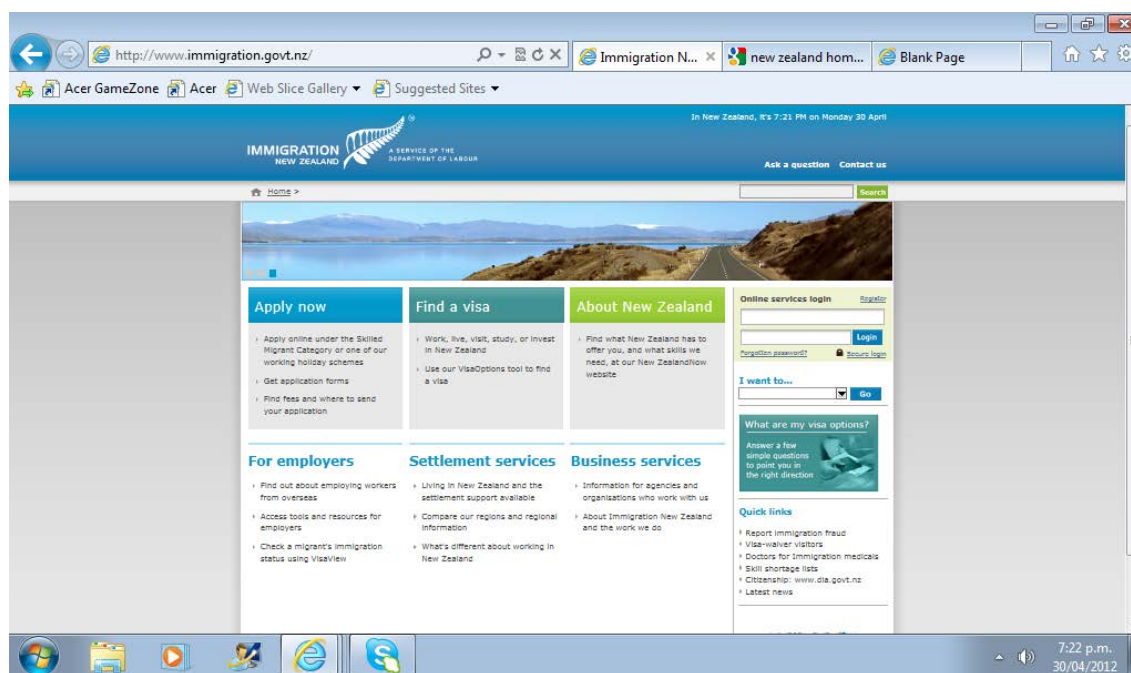
1. Does the narrative embody and advocate values that are desirable and worthwhile?
2. What ethical standards are maintained by the narrative?
3. How readily can the narrative be refuted?
4. Is the narrative coherent?
5. Does the narrative demonstrate fidelity?
6. Does the narrative fulfil the purpose of its creators?
7. Does the narrative enrich the experience of life?

Applying the chosen research methods to the analysis of text on the NZIS website

This part of the chapter outlines how the research process was carried out. The textual artefacts identified will be categorised keeping Foss's rhetorical approach in mind. The reasons for including some sections of the NZIS website in the research study and omitting others are also discussed.

The three main headings that appear on the NZIS homepage (namely Apply Now, Find a Visa and About New Zealand) and the pages that these sections link to were examined in this research study. Figure 1 below shows how these sections appear on the NZIS homepage.

Figure 1 Screenshot of the NZIS homepage – version 1



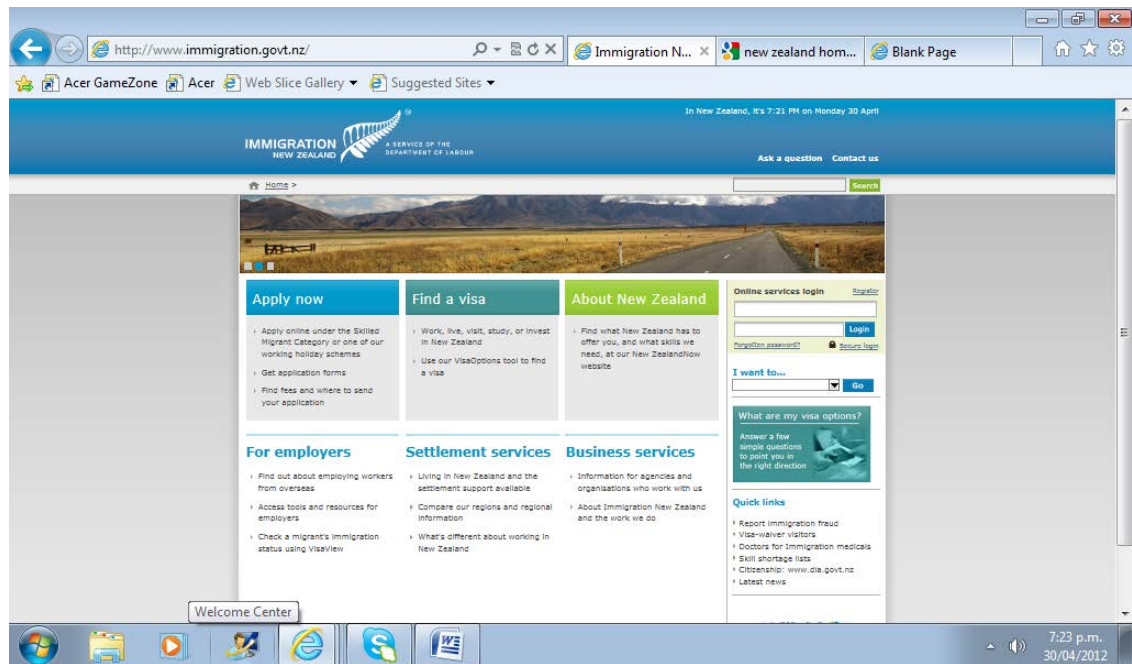
The sections that the headings link to also needed to be analysed because their content is made up of text that details the subject matter that the headings summarise on the homepage. It was, therefore, not possible to contain the research study to simply the home-page of the NZIS website as that would have been limiting in terms of the findings that could be gleaned. The homepage is an important web-page to consider as it is the very first page (and, therefore, the first contact) that a potential migrant engages with. In terms of creating a first impression, the text on the NZIS homepage could form the very beginning of a persuasive argument as to why a potential migrant might be influenced to migrate to New Zealand.

The following steps were used to analyse the images, colours and logos that appear on the NZIS homepage, the Apply Now, Find A Visa and Life in NZ web-pages.

1. Text consisting of headings, sub-headings and copy included in navigation menus was analysed using Foss's metaphor and narrative approaches.
2. Images related to people, landscape images or images depicting a way of life in New Zealand were grouped together so as to isolate them from the text. The presence of these images and the implication of their use is commented on in the discussion chapter.
3. The different colours that were incorporated into a particular web page were grouped together so as to isolate them from the images and text. The presence of these colours and the implication of their use is commented on in the analysis chapter, but the analysis of the same is a limitation of this research study in that there it was difficult to locate theory about the usability of colour to create an emotional response or to signify a certain concept, on web portals.

Any logos appearing on a particular web page (for example, the official NZIS logo that appears on the top left hand corner) were analysed using Foss's symbol oriented approach to rhetorical analysis. It is important to distinguish the difference between the word logo referred to here (as a branding device on the NZIS website) and the term "logos" as used by Aristotle meaning the use of logical argument or facts and figures to persuade an audience.

Figure 2 Screenshot of the NZIS homepage – version 2



The diagram above, a screenshot of the second version of the NZIS homepage, includes an image of snow-capped mountains somewhere in New Zealand and is sub-categorised an icon: it (the image) resembles these snow-capped mountains. The blue border that appears on the top half of the web-page that also includes the image of the snow-capped mountains might be construed as a symbol of the natural landscape (i.e. the blue sky that forms the backdrop for the snow-capped mountains) of New Zealand, but it (the blue border) does not resemble the actual image of the snow-capped mountains.

The point to note from the above observations is the relationship between the symbol (the blue border) and the icon (the image of snow-capped mountains) and also the overall effect of viewing these two entities together. Is there a message being conveyed about New Zealand, as depicted by the use of this particular image and the use of the blue border? Is this message one that is highlighting the natural beauty of New Zealand? These questions will be explored further in chapter four and the implications of what is discovered will be discussed in chapter five.

Observations regarding the Foss approach

A combination of Foss's narrative and metaphor approaches formed the main method of analysis chosen for this research study. However, Foss's method

should not be considered a “perfect” method of rhetorical analysis as it possesses certain limitations.

One of the limitations lies in the nature of the artefact itself. The NZIS website is a changing body of text that responds to the needs of the audience it is communicating with, but also in response to changes in immigration policy. The changes in immigration policy can be both significant (such as a policy decision to attract Asia migrants instead of European migrants) and minor (such as changes to how application forms are filled, an increase or decrease in application fees or the re-definition of a skill or labour task to allow for further clarification). Any of the above circumstances can alter the text on the NZIS website, though any alterations are dependent on how the authors of the text wish to present the changes. Foss (2004) mentions that importance of dividing an artefact into symbolic acts and artefacts because “an act is not tangible – therefore, it is the artefact of the act, which is the text or the trace of the tangible evidence of the act that can be studied instead”.

However, a point to consider is whether the artefact being studied reflects the change that impacts it, to the same degree of importance. If the authors of the text wish to interpret a change in circumstances disproportionately to the magnitude of the change itself, it is possible that findings thus uncovered, might not be reflective of the intention of the author or the circumstances themselves. Zednek (2009, p. 190) also raises the importance of the nature of the critic conducting a rhetorical perspective. While Foss’s approach to rhetorical analysis allows for the appreciation and awareness of an audience’s background and their personal circumstances, it is also important to consider the viewpoint of the critic. It is possible that critics choose curious artifacts in order to generate insight for themselves only? Foss’s two approaches to rhetorical analysis suggest that a critic is objective from the artefact he or she is analysing. Does this suggestion also imply that the critic is also objective from the method itself?

In the analysis of web-pages on the NZIS website, seven questions detailed in Foss’s approach to narrative analysis were considered. These questions call upon the critics’ own personal experience of what he or she interprets as being “desirable” and “worthwhile”. The definition of “worthwhile” might differ from one

critic to the next, not only in the context of the artefact being analysed but also in how they apply their personal experiences to the method of analysis. Zednek (2009, p. 194) asks if it is “possible for the critic to remain more detached and objective by choosing methods that are less overly politicised? What role does the personality of the researcher play in the act of criticism”?

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the selected methods of rhetorical analysis following Foss (2004). Foss’s narrative and metaphor approaches and the results of the analysis are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

As previously mentioned, the method of analysis applied in this research study uses two of Foss's (2004) approaches to rhetorical analysis – the narrative and metaphor approaches. As this research study focused on the analysing the persuasiveness of textual artefacts such as text, images and colour, the use of Foss's two methods were considered appropriate for the analysis of the four key chosen web-pages from the NZIS website.

The purpose of this research study was to determine whether and if so, how text used on the NZIS website is persuasive. In the following sections, each web page that was analysed is presented as a screenshot. The screenshot was first analysed to locate its textual artefacts. These artefacts were then analysed using the selected research methods from Foss (2004).

The About New Zealand web-page was analysed as it appeared in April 2012. Since this time, the web-page has undergone a design overhaul and looks different from the screenshots included in this chapter. To maintain a level of consistency across both the applied analysis methods and the findings they allowed, all the web-pages included in this research study were analysed as they appeared in April 2012.

In addition to this, the Apply Now and Find A Visa web-pages were analysed using only Foss's narrative approach to rhetorical analysis and by only examining the dimensions of the narrative. This was done because these web-pages contain content that is largely informational and functional in nature. In order to apply Foss's metaphor approach it would have been necessary to explore the textual content on both of these web-pages in greater detail. The links on the Apply Now web-page direct the user to either download online application forms or to source information about where to acquire paper forms. The decision to exclude Foss's metaphor approach was made because the

findings from the analysis of the functional and informational web-pages did not yield any rich or meaningful insights, with regard to identifying the persuasive nature of content on these two web-pages. It is possible that these two web-pages were designed to achieve a functional purpose by directing migrants to the pages that contained information useful to their individual circumstances or to fulfil the practical purpose of making online and paper application forms accessible. However, both images and colour on the Find A Visa web-page have been analysed using Foss's metaphor approach later on in this chapter because their inclusion presented interesting points to consider.

It is also significant to note that the Life in New Zealand web-page, which is being referred to as the 'web-page with heart' and is a link from the sub-heading Live that appears on the About New Zealand web-page, is analysed separately from the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now, Find a Visa and About New Zealand web-pages. This was done because this web-page appeared to offer more interesting insights into the persuasiveness of text that promoted New Zealand as a favourable migrant destination.

Finally, it is also relevant to mention that during the period of research the About New Zealand web-page re-directed the user to what appeared to be a separate website outside the existing NZIS website, branded NewZealandNow, when the user clicked on any of its sub-headings such as Live. The NewZealandNow website featured branding characteristics that were also included on the main NZIS website. The NewZealandNow website also maintained a strong emphasis on the re-building of Christchurch, a major city in New Zealand devastated by separate earthquakes in September 2010 and in February 2011 respectively. This research study does not investigate the reasons for having two different brands appear under the same umbrella as the New Zealand immigration service. However, the web-page Live was also analysed as part of this research study because the text on this web-page offered the possibility of richer findings.

Analysis in action

The four figures below depict the four web-pages that will be analysed in this section of the chapter, by applying both Foss's narrative and metaphor

approaches to rhetorical analysis. Each web-page was first analysed according to the text that appeared on it and the way this text was categorised into headings, sub-headings, incomplete and complete sentences and navigational text.

Figure 3 Screenshot of NZIS homepage

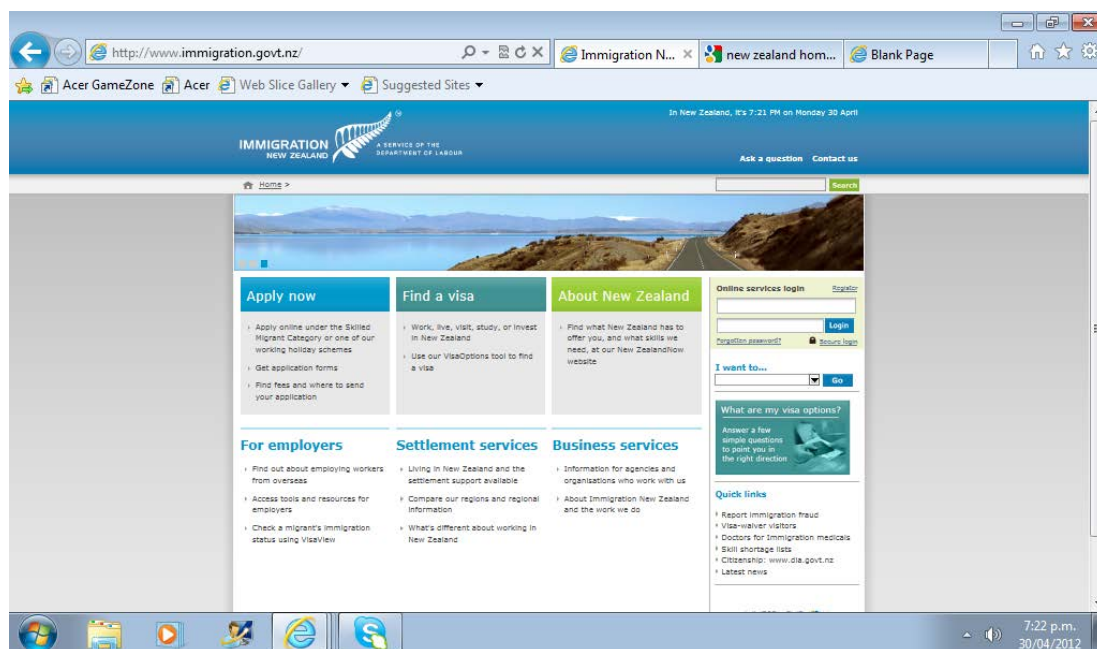


Figure 4 Screenshot of Find A Visa web-page

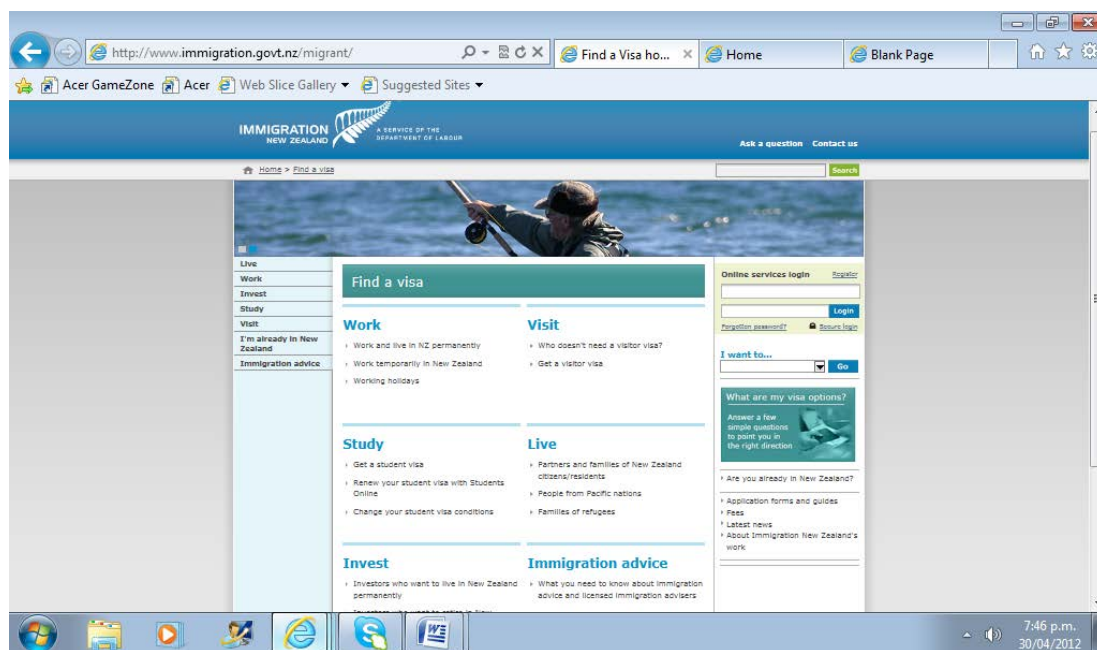


Figure 5 Screenshot of Apply Now web-page

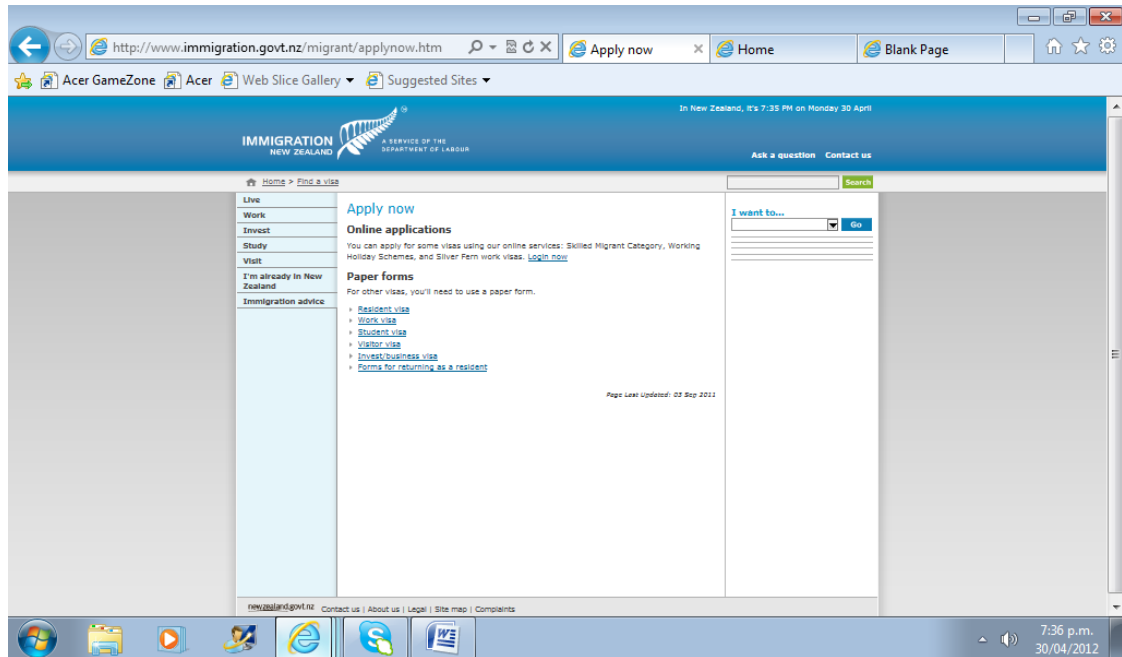


Figure 6 Screenshot of About New Zealand web-page



Identifying key characteristics of text

Sub-headings

The sub-headings that frame the content on the above web-pages organise the information on them into categories that might interest a potential migrant, based on the migrant's personal circumstances or information requirements.

There are six sub-headings present on the NZIS homepage – Apply now, Find A Visa, About New Zealand, For Employers, Settlement services and Business services. Each of these categories includes links that can take a migrant to another web-page with information on key topics within that category. For example in the category Apply Now, the links included here pertain to online visa application forms, the online process of applying for permanent residency as a skilled migrant and information about fees and where to send applications to. This category would suit a migrant who has possibly already made the decision to migrate to New Zealand and is looking for information on the process of submitting an online visa application or applying for residency.

Sentence structure, punctuation and grammar

Text on the above web-pages is made up of short, incomplete sentences and full, complete sentences. Each of the six sub-headings identified above feature short phrases such as “Get application forms” and the full sentences such as “Find fees and where to send your application” that appear under each sub-heading. Some of the sentences on the NZIS homepage, the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages do not display traditional punctuation characteristics such as full-stops or question marks. Some sentences are also abrupt and incomplete. For example, “Find fees and where to send your application” is an abrupt sentence. A more complete version of this sentence might be “Find out about application fees and where to send your application.”

On the About New Zealand web-page particularly, short phrases and sentences such as “Get updates etc...” and “Want to help rebuild Christchurch?” are observed. It is interesting to note that these questions are phrased in a conversational style. The longer sentences on this web-page appeared at the top of the About New Zealand web-page, in the same way that an introductory paragraph or sentence might appear. These sentences appear to be designed in this way, so as to convey to potential migrants the different ways they could migrate to New Zealand and the various options available to them. They are also the longest sentences observed, when comparing text on the NZIS, Apply Now and Find A Visa web-pages. These longer sentences appeared under a heading that reads “New Zealand – a great place to live, work, study and play”.

Some of the sentences on the About New Zealand web-page also feature an abbreviated version of New Zealand, which appears as “NZ”. This may be significant, as the use of the abbreviation fits in with the general structure of some of the short and incomplete sentences or phrases that appear on all four web-pages.

Navigational text

Navigational text appears on the right-hand side of the NZIS homepage under the sub heading Quick Links. This navigational text comprises of phrases such as Report immigration fraud, Latest news, Skills shortage list and Visa waiver visitors. This text is organised using bullet points and once again the absence of punctuation, namely full stops, was noted.

Navigational text appears on the left hand side of the Find A Visa web-page and echoes the main sub-headings that appear on this web-page with one exception. Apart from Work, Visit, Study, Live, Invest and Immigration advice, there is also the option to click on text that says “I am already in New Zealand”. The same navigational text can also be found on the Apply Now web-page.

Navigational text also appears on the top right hand side of the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now and Find A Visa web-pages. This navigational text is made up of phrases such as Contact Us and Ask a Question and also includes the phrase Quick Links, which appeared to be an online login and search facility that begins with the words ‘I want to’, followed by a drop down menu.

The About New Zealand web-page features three navigational menus. These menus appear at the top of this web-page in the main header and on the right hand side of the web-page as a Quick Links toolbar also and in the form of a drop-down menu under the heading “I want to...”. To some degree, the manner in which the sub-headings on this web-page are highlighted, using blocks of colour, allows them to stand out more than the navigational text on the other analysed web-pages.

To make it easier to search for the appropriate visa, a search tab appears at the bottom of the web-page under the heading ‘New Zealand visa options’. To make registering for updates easier, a Register Now tab appears at the bottom of the web-page under the heading ‘Register with New ZealandNow’. Both of

these tabs are highlighted in green so that they stand out and are easy to locate. It is suggested that this was done because the authors of text expected these tabs to be used frequently, due to the information that could be accessed by clicking on them.

Images

Three images appear in the header of the NZIS home-page (note that these images alternate on the NZIS home-page). The first is an image of the New Zealand landscape featuring a wide road, snow-capped mountains and a body of water. The second image depicts a road running alongside a large body of water with snow capped mountains visible the distance. This image appears at the top of the web-page above all the text. The third image depicts a man in the left hand corner wearing a jacket and tie, with a cup of coffee in his hand. These images are featured below

Figure 7 – Image 1 on the NZIS homepage



Figure 8 – Image 2 on the NZIS homepage

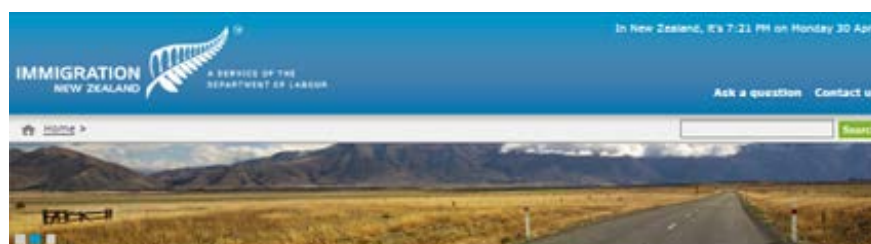


Figure 9 - Image 3 on the NZIS homepage



There are two images that appear in the header of the Find A Visa web-page and they alternate. The first is an image of New Zealand's landscape featuring a green hills and a body of water. The second image is that of a man, possibly between the ages of 50-70, holding a fishing rod with a body of water in the background. These images are featured below

Figure 10 – Image 1 on the Find a Visa web-page



Figure 11 - Image 2 on the Find A Visa web-page














A number of images appear on the About New Zealand web-page and almost all of them feature people. The images present on this web-page are classified into two groups, permanent images and changing images. The permanent images appear at the bottom of the web-page and comprise of an image of a group of people sitting around a table outdoors, next to the heading “New Zealand visa options” and an image of a couple next to the heading “Register with New Zealand Now”. Seven different images alternate in the main header of the web-page. These images comprise the following and are detailed in a table on page 77.

1. people on bikes, a man with a briefcase and a couple walking side by side against a backdrop of mountains
2. a person standing on the banks of a lake, staring out into the distance
3. snow-capped mountain peaks
4. a man of European descent wearing a jacket and suit, sitting outside surrounded by buildings
5. a group of people, made up of adults and children, walking along a sandy beach, with water close by , dressed in what appears to be waking or hiking gear and carrying back-packs
6. two women of European descent, sitting in what appears to be an outdoor café

7. a man dressed in outdoor winter gear, sitting at the top of a mountain covered in snow, with snow capped mountains visible in the distance

Table 1 – Images on the About New Zealand web-page

	<p>Image 1 (Image of People)</p>
	<p>Image 2 (Image of People) (Image of New Zealand's landscape)</p>
	<p>Image 3 (Image of New Zealand's landscape)</p>
	<p>Image 4 (Image of People)</p>
	<p>Image 5 (Image of People) (Image of New Zealand's landscape)</p>
	<p>Image 6 (Image of People)</p>

	Image 7 (Image of People) (Image of New Zealand's landscape)
	Image 8 (Image of People)
	Image 9 (Image of People)
	Logo 1
	Logo 2

Finally, an image depicting two hands reaching out for a passport and appearing on the right hand side under the caption “What are my visa options?” appears on the NZIS homepage, the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages. This image appears below.

Figure 12 - Recurring image on NZIS homepage and Find A Visa and Apply Now web-pages



Colours

The key colours used on the NZIS homepage, the Apply Now and Find A Visa web-pages are blue, white, grey and green. The colours that appear on the About New Zealand web-page are blue, black, grey, white, red, green, orange and white. The colours red and orange appear for the first time on the About New Zealand web-page.

Logos

The logo or official branding device on the NZIS homepage appears at the top left hand corner of the web-page. This logo is made up of both text and an image. An image of a white fern leaf is placed in between a phrase that says “Immigration New Zealand” on the left and the phrase “A service of the Department of Labour” on the right. This logo also appears on the Find A Visa and Apply Now web-pages, in the same position. It also appears on the About New Zealand web-page, however, it is positioned at the top right hand corner of the web-page. This logo appears below.

Figure 13 - NZIS official logo



Another logo makes its first appearance on the About New Zealand webpage. This logo is the New Zealand Now logo, which is made up of the words “New Zealand Now” and features coloured four squares that appear in the letter “O” in the word “Now” and this logo appears in the top left hand corner of this web-page. This logo appears below.

Figure 14 - NewZealandNow logo



Applying Foss's narrative approach to rhetorical analysis

Having identified the key textual artefacts in four key web-pages, I now turn to the analysis of these artefacts by applying Foss's (2004) narrative approach, which requires an examination of the text to identify both the dimension of its narrative and the explanation for its narrative (pp. 335-6). The dimensions of the text's narrative will be discussed first, and then the narrative is explained.

The dimensions of the narrative

According to Foss (2004, p. 336), identifying the dimensions of the narrative involves:

1. examining the setting that this text is placed in
2. the characters engaged in the narrative
3. the nature of the narrator
4. the events included in the narrative
5. the time-line of the narrative
6. the cause-effect relationships established by the narrative
7. the audience to whom the narrative is directed towards
8. the theme of the narrative.

Each of these eight dimensions will be discussed below.

Examining the text's setting

Text on NZIS homepage and the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages appear to function in an official and informational setting. By official, I refer to the context of the New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) itself and position as a government agency. As part of the Department of Labour, this website represents the NZIS and communicates the government's current immigration policy on immigration. The Department of Labour is largely responsible for the policies that govern employment conditions in New Zealand and as a result, the New Zealand immigration service operates under its aegis, to ensure that

migrants wishing to live and work in New Zealand are able to comply with the appropriate rules and regulations.

This is reflected in the content made available on the NZIS website—downloadable visa application forms for example, as well as information about the skills that are required by the New Zealand economy and the qualifications required for particular professions can be accessed via links on each of the three web-pages.

As well as functioning in an official setting, the NZIS homepage is also placed in an informational setting. The NZIS website is a source of information about the migration process to New Zealand. Text on the NZIS homepage therefore seeks to anticipate the questions its audience (potential migrants) might have regarding migrating to New Zealand and also about New Zealand itself. It also speaks to the motivations of the narrator of text (the NZIS service and the Department of Labour), in terms of what they are hoping to communicate to potential migrants.

Similar to text on NZIS homepage and the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages, text on the About Now web-page exists in an informational and official setting. Text on the About Now web-page has been designed to give potential migrants information on the immigration process, information about the various migrant sub-categories that they may belong to based on their individual requirements and information about New Zealand as a country to live in. This latter point is significant because the focus on “New Zealand” and the opportunities it can offer potential migrants is more pronounced on the About New Zealand web-page, than witnessed on other web-pages.

The official setting referred to earlier is also reinforced by the appearance of the official NZIS logo. Information related to various migrant visas can be accessed on this web-page and visa requirements are directly influenced by government policy and procedure.

Who are the main characters?

The characters engaged in the narrative of text on all web-pages analysed appeared to be the creators (or writers) of the text itself and the audience consuming the text, which is made up of different kinds of migrants (such as

visitors, workers or people wishing to migrate to New Zealand). The creators of text presumably were employed by either the NZIS or the Department of Labour or by both government agencies. These creators of text were not physically present in this text, in the way an actor might be present in a movie or an announcer on a radio show.

On the NZIS homepage and Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages, there didn't appear to be a forum for the audience to express his or her opinion. It is clear, however, that they are present because of the manner in which the text is structured and because of its setting, already covered above. The main purpose of all the web-pages analysed is to convey facts and knowledge to an audience that has an interest in migrating to New Zealand.

The nature of the narrator of text

The nature of the narrator of text on the NZIS homepage and the About New Zealand web-pages appears to be colloquial and relaxed. This is in evidence by the way sentences are framed and the use of short phrases such as Get application forms where the word 'Get' is used instead of the word download or access on the NZIS homepage.

Similarly the About New Zealand web-page also contains short phrases without the use of punctuation marks such as Life in NZ, Student visas, Temporary jobs and Settlement services. The use of such sentence structure implies a lack of formality. The tone of the sentence that appears in the introductory paragraph appears friendly, inviting and relaxed.

Punctuation marks (e.g. full stops), which would traditionally signal the end of a sentence and denote a more formal style of language or text, were not used. Complete sentences such as 'Find out what New Zealand has to offer you and what skills we need' appear informal in structure and have an invitational tenor about them. This tenor adds to the suggestion that the nature of the narrator is informal and relaxed. The relaxed nature of the narrator is also in evidence by the use of short headings that signal the subject matter to follow – for example, About New Zealand or Apply Now. Both these headings are brief and to the point. For example, the text could have read 'Find out more about New Zealand' or 'Apply now to become a new migrant' – both of these sentences are more

formal and verbose than the headings used. The use of short, simple and informal headings in the text may be classified as character attributes that may be assigned to the nature of the text's narrator as well.

The nature of the narrator of text on the Apply Now and Find A Visa web-pages also appeared to be informal and relaxed. This informality is in evidence by the use of short phrases on the 'Find a Visa' web-page such as 'Get a visitor visa' or 'Families of refugees'. Neither of these phrases features traditional punctuation marks such as full stops. The informal style of text is in keeping with the style of text on the NZIS homepage and About New Zealand web-page. The concise nature of text on the Apply Now web-page also appears to reflect a straightforward approach on behalf of the narrator. It is possible that the narrator wanted to make it easy for a potential migrant to locate the information he or she requires.

In addition, the narrative of text on all web-pages analysed is mediated by two government agencies – the NZIS and the Department of Labour. This mediation infers another important feature of the narrator – that of authority. The point of view put forward by the text on the key web-pages therefore supports the point of view of both these government agencies. Also significant when considering the nature of the narrator of text is reliability. According to Foss (2004) an "unreliable narrator is one whose narrative is at odds with the audience's inferences and judgements about the story" (p.337). In the case of text on the NZIS website, the reliability of the text can be linked to the fact that that the text has been created by authors with ties to the NZIS and the Department of Labour, which are government agencies and therefore trustworthy and credible.

The narrative's events

The events included as part of the text's narrative on the NZIS homepage and Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages are not immediately evident. Instead it is suggested the narrative's events are inferred by the reader, according to his or her personal circumstance. If for example a reader is ready to apply for permanent residency, he or she might visit the Apply Now section and search for information on requirements for a residency visa. Applying for residency is thus a future event that might occur. Text on all the web-pages analysed did not appear to chronicle events taking place in actual time. Neither did it detail

events that had taken place in the past. Instead, the text on the analysed web-pages appeared to be designed to anticipate the event or circumstance that the reader might find him or herself in, based on his or her situation at the time and the information he or she requires.

It is worth noting that the above observations stray from Foss's definition of what constitutes events in a narrative. According to Foss, events in a story are divided into "kernels" and "satellites". "Kernels are major events in a story that suggest critical points in the narrative and that force movement in particular directions. They cannot be left out of a narrative without destroying its coherence and meaning" (2004, p.337). Relating this theory to the text on the web-pages analysed it is suggested that the main "kernel" is possibly the immigration process itself and the various reiterations in which it is manifested – for example, a person could be a student, visitor or professional wishing to live and migrate to New Zealand. "Minor plot events are called satellites and are the development of the choices made by the kernels. Satellites are not crucial to the narrative although their omission would affect the form of narrative and the form's rhetorical effects" (p. 337). The "satellites" in the text are potentially elements that are not visible to the reader of the text. In the instance of text on the NZIS website, we do not know the impact caused by the immigration decision that a migrant makes or the impact of the immigration process itself.

The narrative's timeline

The text's timeline on all web-pages analysed appeared to be current, in so much as it reflected the most up-to-date information to do with immigration policy, government rules and regulations and the different classes of visas that migrants can apply for. What this suggests is that the text's timeline changes, to reflect changes in government policy on immigration or adjustments made to visa application processes, procedures and forms. The text's tense appears to be in the present tense on all web-pages that were analysed.

The narrative's cause-effect relationships

The cause-effect relationship established by the narrative is hard to measure on all of the web-pages analysed as part of this research study. This was due to the fact that the effect of text on the reader was not transparent and difficult to

quantify. There did not appear to be a forum where the reader could engage directly with the creator of the text, in order to express an opinion on what he or she had read. It is possible that this opinion was expressed in a different manner – possibly through a telephone call or an email to the NZIS. These interactions might have produced outcomes that may have affected the text on the NZIS web-pages or altered them in some way. However, these potential outcomes are not reflected in the text that was analysed and were, again hard to quantify.

The focus of text on the About New Zealand web-page appeared to be allowing potential migrants a glimpse into life in New Zealand, as evidenced by the sentence at the top of this web-page that reads ‘New Zealand – a great place for you to live, work, study and play’ It is suggested that the intended cause-effect relationship of the text on this web-page was to positively influence potential migrants, in terms of migrating to New Zealand. This effect might manifest itself in the downloading of application forms or a migrant getting in touch directly with the New Zealand immigration service to ask detailed questions. However, this cause-effect relationship between the migrant and the NZIS is not detailed by the text on the About New Zealand web-page either.

The audience – to whom is the narrative directed?

Text on the analysed web-pages is addressed to many different migrants groups of migrants - a student, a visitor on a working holiday scheme, a business investor, a highly skilled migrant or a person already residing in New Zealand on one type of visa and wanting to shift to another visa. Text is also directed to New Zealand employers wanting to employ migrants, business people who wish to invest in New Zealand but not wanting to live here and also new migrants who wish to learn about how to integrate into New Zealand society by accessing various settlement services. There are, therefore, multiple audiences potentially consuming the text on the NZIS website, at any given time.

The narrative's theme

The narrative's theme is defined by Foss (2004, p. 338) as being “a general idea illustrated by the narrative. It is what a narrative means or is about and

points to the significance and meaning of the action”. While considering other elements of text on the analysed web-pages (such as the colours and images used) it might be fair to say that the theme of the web-pages in general, appears to be about New Zealand and New Zealand characteristics. Text on these web-pages appeared to be framed in a tone that was friendly, helpful and inviting.

Considering the colours used on the analysed web-pages (the use of blue and green might be seen as representative of New Zealand’s natural landscape and its flora and fauna) adds weight to the suggestion that the narrative’s theme focuses on characteristics that might be considered as New Zealand or Kiwi in nature. The narrative is characterised by text that is informal and brief and it is possible that the text was designed in this way to make sure the information required by a migrant was easy to access. This once again appears to re-enforce a general theme of “helpfulness”, mentioned earlier.

The explanation of the narrative

Having discussed the dimensions of narrative, this section of this chapter focuses on the explanation for the narrative of text, which involves examining how useful the text was in influencing its audience. Foss (2004, pp. 336-7) suggests that this is done by evaluating the text based on the following seven criteria:

1. Does the narrative embody and advocate values that are desirable and worthwhile?
2. What ethical standards are maintained by the narrative?
3. How readily can the narrative be refuted?
4. Is the narrative coherent?
5. Does the narrative demonstrate fidelity?
6. Does the narrative fulfil the purpose of its creators?
7. Does the narrative enrich the experience of life?

Each of these questions will be answered separately in the sections that follow. Note that this method has been applied to the NZIS homepage and the About New Zealand web-page only.

Does the narrative embody and advocate values that are desirable and worthwhile?

The narrative on the NZIS homepage did not appear to exhibit values in an overt sense. It is likely that the values embodied by the narrative are closely linked to the tone or structure of the text and how it was designed – i.e. the nature of the text appeared to be relaxed, informal and colloquial. This is, potentially, a reflection of how the narrative's author wanted to position these web-pages and by extension, create an initial impression of the NZIS. What this means is that readers might interpret the values of informality and colloquialism as expressed by the tone of the text as being 'friendly and helpful' and then possibly transfer these attributes to the NZIS and its representatives.

The values of friendliness and helpfulness, might be perceived by a potential migrant as being desirable and worthwhile. However, this is difficult to judge in explicit terms. Foss (2004, p. 339) observes "all narratives express values whether implicitly or explicitly." The lack of overt values might also suggest that the text was aiming to be impartial in its tone (or potentially in its values) so as not to pre-dispose the reader to any one point of view or opinion about either New Zealand or its immigration policy overall.

Text on the About New Zealand web-page also does not exhibit values in an explicit sense. Again, the tone and design of text on this web-page appeared to be informal and colloquial. Information is bullet-pointed under the headings Visas, Work, Study and Live and one of the first sentences to create an impact says 'New Zealand – a great place for you to live, work study and play'. This tone of welcome and informality is potentially, a reflection of the author's position and the values that he or she wished to put forth as desirable or worthwhile. It is possible that the colloquial and relaxed nature of text was meant to be a reflection of the values of New Zealand and its people, on a web-page that is specifically designed to give migrants information about New Zealand as a migrant destination. Similar to observations made about the NZIS homepage, if potential migrants consider these attributes to be worthwhile and desirable, it is possible that they might have been more receptive to the content on this web-page. A key difference between the narrative on the About New Zealand web-page as compared to NZIS homepage, is the number of images

present as part of the text's narrative. These images will be examined later on in this chapter, when we look at Foss's approach to rhetorical analysis using metaphor.

What ethical standards are maintained by the narrative?

According to Foss (2004, p.339), examining the ethical standards of a narrative requires evaluating "the degrees of rightness and wrongness in human behaviour". The focus of this research study was not, concerned with the ethics of the text on key web-pages of the NZIS website. Rather the study takes a general, umbrella approach to ascertain how text on the NZIS website communicated a persuasive message to potential migrants. As such, not identifying the ethical standards maintained by the narrative is one of the limitations of this research study because primary research was not carried out to ascertain how the text was designed, formulated or presented. As there is no forum present on the NZIS homepage to capture the audience's reactions to the text, it is difficult to ascertain whether the text maintains any ethical standards as perceived by them.

How readily can the narrative be refuted?

Foss (2004) describes this criterion as "the assessment of how easy it is for an audience to refute a narrative by presenting an opposing narrative or an alternative perspective on the world" (p. 340). This is a difficult criterion to judge in this research study as the text on the NZIS website is framed from the view point of the two authors (namely the Department of Labour and the NZIS) and there does not appear to be a visible forum for the readers of the text to participate with their own opinions or concerns about the text on the NZIS homepage. Refuting a narrative involves identifying those aspects that are more or less compelling – in order to do this, primary research would need to be carried out in order to ascertain opposing narratives that could be put forth by the audience.

There does not appear to be a forum for the readers of the text to participate with their own opinions or concerns about the text on this version of the About New Zealand web-page that has been analysed in this research study.

However, as indicated earlier on in this chapter, the About New Zealand web-page underwent several significant changes in both content and appearance in August 2012. The newer version includes a direct invitation for migrants to “join in a conversation” on Facebook, a social networking site. This development means that it is possible that migrants are now able to critique, question or enhance the narrative on the About New Zealand web-page in a way they have not been able to thus far. Their contributions might also be read by other migrants, thus strengthening or potentially weakening some of the narrative’s point of view, as expressed on the About New Zealand web-page.

Is the narrative coherent?

Foss (2004) defines the narrative as being coherent when “the narrative hangs together, has internal consistency or has adequate connections within it” (p. 340). In order to examine the coherency of a narrative, Foss (2004) recommends “identifying the unified subject in the narrative, the elements that connect to one another to create a cogent and meaningful narrative and the range of possibilities that the story could fall into due to events that might have opened up earlier in the story” (p. 340). In the case of this research study, the narrative of text on the NZIS homepage, the unified subject matter is that of the immigration process to New Zealand. The various elements in the text on this webpage pertain to the different types of migrants who may wish to move to New Zealand and how they could do so – either as a skilled resident, a student, an investor or as a visitor. The texts within each sub-section (Apply Now, About New Zealand and Find A Visa) are connected to each other in that they all probably contain content that deals with the immigration process, in some manner. By virtue of the fact that each kind of migrant requires specific information related to his or her personal circumstances, it is evident that the text on the NZIS homepage allows for different possibilities or outcomes in its narrative design, to account for these individual circumstances.

Text on the About New Zealand web-page also re-enforced the fact that the immigration process was the key focus for the narrative. Text on this web-page was still designed to meet the requirements of a potential migrant based on their personal circumstances and text was organised into four sections – Visas,

Work, Study or Live. The texts within each sub-section are connected to each other in that they all deal with the immigration process, in some manner.

However, this web-page also featured text that specifically describes life in New Zealand and what it has to offer potential migrants. The section “Live” contains a sub-heading called “Life in New Zealand”, which leads a migrant to information specifically about life in New Zealand and the educational, career and life-style opportunities it offers. This section takes into account the different types of information a migrant might be after, in terms of life in New Zealand and is possibly designed to anticipate as many of their questions as possible. Therefore describing life in New Zealand constitutes another unified subject matter.

Does the narrative demonstrate fidelity?

Foss (2004) defines fidelity as “the truth quality of the narrative, which represents accurate assertions about reality” (p. 340). Text on the NZIS homepage is not a narrative of real people and real events, rather it is about events or circumstances that may occur or situations migrants might find themselves in. The criterion of fidelity relates to whether the narrative is true to life. This is a somewhat problematic criterion as it supposes that both the authors and consumers of text on the NZIS homepage hold the same definition for what is true to life. The narrative of text from the point of view of the author might be considered as exhibiting fidelity, in that text related to government policy, immigration policy, rules and guidelines to do with being eligible for certain kinds of visas, is true to life. This text is based on real facts.

What a potential migrant might experience when actually going through the exercise of migrating to New Zealand could be quite different, owing to his or her interpretation of the text and his or her personal circumstances. Therefore the narrative of text on the NZIS homepage might not necessarily exhibit fidelity from his or her point of view.

This is also a problematic concept for text on the About New Zealand web-page. Text on the About New Zealand web-page is not a narrative of real people and real events. As mentioned before, the concept of fidelity supposes that both the reader and writer of text on the About New Zealand web-page the

hold the same definition for what is “true to life”. The narrative of text from the point of view of the author might be considered as exhibiting fidelity, because text on the About New Zealand web-page details life in New Zealand and the various opportunities offered to migrants in areas of education, medical care, standard of living etc. In order for the text to be credible and reliable, this text needed to be based on actual facts about the over-all living standards in New Zealand. Because the NZIS website exists under the aegis of the Department of Labour and the New Zealand immigration service (both government departments) it is likely that the text is truthful. It is therefore highly likely that the text on the About New Zealand web-page exhibits fidelity. However, a potential migrant’s personal experience of migrating to New Zealand as permanent resident could be quite different, owing to his or her personal circumstances. This experience cannot be quantified on the About New Zealand web-page, as it is a future event. A migrant’s personal experience of life in New Zealand might not match up with the expectation presented in the text on the About New Zealand web-page and thus the narrative might not necessarily exhibit fidelity from his or her point of view.

Does the narrative fulfil the purpose of its creators?

According to Foss (2004) the “particular choices made by the rhetors in creating the stories accomplish their purposes for telling the stories” (p. 340). The text on the NZIS homepage is a good starting point for what could be assumed at this stage, the rest of the text on the NZIS website is hoping to communicate - an overview of the different immigration visas and opportunities, government policy on immigration, information about New Zealand as a potential migrant destination and relevant rules and regulations that govern the migration process. This is evident by the sub-headings present on the NZIS homepage (Apply Now, Find a Visa and About New Zealand) as well as other sub-headings such as For Employers, Settlement Services and Business Services.

Text on the About New Zealand web-page was perceived as having a New Zealand flavour – it had been designed specifically to provide migrants with an over-view of a New Zealand life-style and the potential opportunities available to them. Based on their individual circumstances, migrants could locate

information on visas that best suited their needs – as a student, a person wanting to work in New Zealand, a migrant sponsored by a family member, a visitor or a migrant able to migrate to New Zealand based on their skills and qualifications. This information can be accessed via the four main sub-headings that appear on the About New Zealand web-page – Work, Study, Live and Visas.

Does the narrative provide useful ideas for living your life?

According to Foss (2004) “rhetoric offers commands or instructions of some kind, helping us manoeuvre through life and feel more at home in the world. Rhetoric is also an individual’s solution to perceived exigencies and constitutes equipment for living – a chart, formula or map that an audience may consult in trying to decide on various courses of action” (p. 340). In essence, Foss supports the notion that rhetoric aids sense-making to our everyday lives. The rhetoric of any experience, be it textual or social, can re-enforce a decision or particular course of action based on how persuasive or influential the rhetoric is and how it fits in with a person’s personal circumstance and experience.

The aspects of the text’s narrative on the NZIS homepage that might result in action or thought include those sections that provide practical guidelines (such as Apply Now or Find A Visa) for how to apply for a migrant visa. The sub-heading ‘About New Zealand’ leads the reader to another set of web-pages on the NZIS website that provide a snapshot of life in New Zealand and what it has to offer a potential migrant, thus providing an opportunity for further thought and review.

The characteristics of text on the About New Zealand web-page were possibly focused on presenting an image or ideal of New Zealand and the New Zealand way of life, that was possibly designed to be persuasive to potential migrants. This New Zealand narrative might therefore be considered useful in the decision making process under-taken by migrants and is possibly considered at the same time as they consider the rules and regulations that govern the immigration process to New Zealand. The aspects of the text’s narrative on the About New Zealand web-page that might result in action or thought include those sections highlighted previously (Visas, Work, Study, Live), with particular

focus on the “Life In New Zealand” sub-heading, which includes detailed information on New Zealand as a place to live in and offers migrant further opportunities for reflection and decision making.

Applying Foss’s metaphor approach to rhetorical analysis

Analysing the NZIS, Find a Visa and Apply Now web-pages

Having analysed the text using Foss’s narrative approach, the same artefacts identified earlier on in this chapter will be analysed by applying Foss’s metaphor approach (Foss, 2004, pp. 302-6).

To recap briefly, the two parts of a metaphor are called the “tenor” and the “vehicle” (Foss, 2004, p. 299). Together, they form “a system of commonplaces” (Foss, 2004, p. 299) and in their interaction to create a metaphor, the characteristics associated with the vehicle are used to organise the conceptions of the tenor. According to Foss (2004, p. 299), the “tenor” is the topic or subject that is being explained. In this research study, the subject being explained is the process of immigration to New Zealand as explained by text on key web-pages on the NZIS website. The “vehicle” is the mechanism or lens through which the topic is viewed (Foss, 2004, p. 299), which in this instance is the text on the NZIS website. More specifically, it is the symbols that form parts of the text on the NZIS website that were analysed to ascertain what insights they could offer to this research study. Symbols also take on numerous forms (such as images or logos) and therefore rhetoric is not limited to just written and spoken discourse but also includes non-discursive or non-verbal symbols as well as discursive and verbal symbols (Foss, 2004, p. 5).

The symbols were identified first according to the web-page that they belong to and grouped into images, colour and logos. Each group is then individually analysed. The following symbols appear on the NZIS homepage and each were analysed separately in the section below.

1. Images of New Zealand’s landscape – there are two images in total and they rotate on the NZIS homepage
2. Images of people – there is only one image on the NZIS homepage and this image alternates with the two landscape images

3. Colours – specifically shades of blue and green
4. Logo – The official NZIS logo

Images of New Zealand's landscape

The “tenor” of the below images is the immigration process to New Zealand and the “voice” is an image of New Zealand's landscape.



The first image depicts a road running alongside a large body of water, with snow capped mountains visible in the distance. Both images do not feature people, cars or finite structures (such as houses). It is suggested that both figures are metaphors for New Zealand's natural beauty and are possibly a reflection of the significance given to the country's landscape, as an appealing image for potential migrants.

It is also suggested that both figures has been used to illustrate that New Zealand is a country of vast, wide and open spaces. The latter might be particularly appealing to migrants from countries where population density is high (e.g. Asian countries such as Korea and India). Both images also depict a road (which appears to disappear into the distance, without a finite end), which might be a metaphor for the journey that a potential migrant might have to embark on, in order to migrate to New Zealand. The body of water that appears in the Figure 8 image appears to have equal, if not slightly more significance,

than the mountains that appear in the distance – this component is potentially a nod to New Zealand’s many lakes, fiords and other water bodies. The mountains that appear in the distance in both images might be regarded as yet another metaphor for the “great outdoors” and the significance that the outdoors has as a component of the New Zealand way of life.

Images of people

Figure 15 Image on people NZIS Homepage



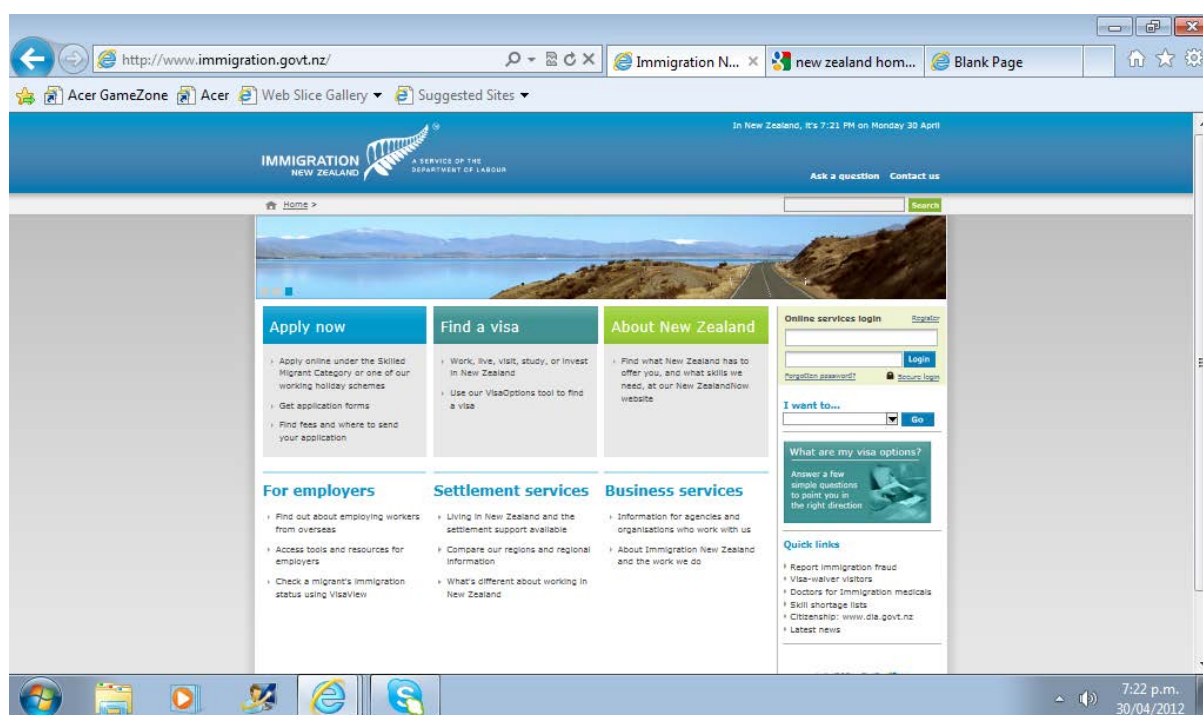
The “tenor” of this image is the immigration process to NZ and the “voice” is an image of a man in the left hand corner of the image, in a jacket and tie, with a cup of coffee in his hand. The man is potentially a migrant himself and could belong to a number of different ethnicities. Perhaps this image is a metaphor for the growing ethnic diversity of New Zealand’s labour force, due to immigration. The fact that this man appears in this image wearing a jacket and a tie might suggest that he is potentially employed in a “white collar” job. His jacket appears to be a casual jacket, rather than a suit jacket. This might suggest that the environment in the work place in New Zealand is relaxed in nature. New Zealand’s immigration policy places significance on skilled migrants as being an important group – indeed, skilled migrants have their own category and processes to follow, should they wish to come to New Zealand to work or live. The cup of coffee in his hand might be seen as a metaphor for every-day living – it is not uncommon for most people to grab a cup of coffee during their work day at some stage. This image appears next to the text “Are you a New Zealand Employer? Find out how Immigration New Zealand can help you hire migrants”.

The significance of the image of the man in the jacket and tie with a cup of coffee in his hand might be two-fold – that firstly, employers in New Zealand should be receptive to the idea of hiring migrants as part of their work-force or

that they are already hiring migrants as employees and the inclusion of this particular image on the NZIS homepage is a re-enforcement of that. This might be a heartening message for migrants to receive when they visit the very first page on the NZIS website. Research conducted by the Department of Labour and presented in the Migration Trends Report (2009) notes that “new migrants generally achieve good employment outcomes in New Zealand, both in their rate of employment and in the matching of their skills and experience to the labour market. In this survey, 68 percent of principal migrants were employed (including those approved through the Family Sponsored Stream and Pacific Category) with 81 percent satisfied or very satisfied with their job”.

Colour

Figure 16 Screenshot of NZIS homepage featuring colour



The colours that appear on the NZIS home-page are white, grey and shades of blue and green. These colours appear as background colours, text colours and as backgrounds for the three main sections on the home-page – Apply Now, Find a Visa and About New Zealand. These colours are repeated on the three variations of the NZIS homepage and appear in the same place in each variation.

As mentioned earlier, the “tenor” is the immigration process to New Zealand. However in this instance, the “voice” is the colours used on the NZIS homepage. The colours blue and green are possible metaphors for New Zealand’s landscape. The colour blue might be a metaphor for New Zealand’s water bodies and the green, a metaphor for the country’s natural flora and fauna.

It is significant to note that the link About New Zealand on the NZIS homepage appears against a bright green background. It is suggested that this is a metaphor for a ‘clean, green, New Zealand’ – in other words, New Zealand is possibly being promoted to potential migrants based on the appealing nature of its natural landscape.

Additionally as a side note, it is worth mentioning that shades of blue and green have also been used by Air New Zealand, the country’s national carrier in the past – these colours appeared on the aircraft livery. Is the use of these colours by Air New Zealand a re-enforcement of their importance to the country as a nation as well?

The use of the colour blue might also be a metaphor for the fact that New Zealand is an island nation and thus a seafaring nation as well. Apart from being metaphors for New Zealand’s natural landscape, the combination of the use of blue and green on the NZIS homepage might also be a metaphor for the “Pacific” (i.e. colours of the ocean) and might be reiterating a message that New Zealand is a Pacific nation.

It is also possible that the colours used on the NZIS home-page are not just metaphors for New Zealand’s landscape but have also been used because they affect the readers of this text in a certain way. Traditionally, the colours blue and green have also been used in marketing materials to instil trust and confidence in the mind of the reader. The use of “sky blue can convey feelings of trust, faithfulness and dependability while the use of the colour green can convey feelings of reassurance and calm” (De Long & Martinson, 2012, p. 41).

Logos



The above logo is the official logo of the New Zealand Immigration Service and appears at the top left hand corner of the NZIS homepage. This logo appears consistently on all web pages on the NZIS website, as well as on its official letterhead and on all communication and marketing documents. It is another significant voice through which to view the text related to the immigration process on the NZIS website.

The logo itself consists of a white fern leaf and the text “Immigration New Zealand”. It is suggested that this logo is a metaphor for New Zealand’s natural landscape as it features a native New Zealand fern. It is also suggested that this logo resembles the iconic logos that appear on the uniforms worn by New Zealand’s sport teams. The All Blacks, Blacks Caps, Silver Ferns and All Whites all have uniforms that also feature a fern leaf on them, in some shape or form. While the connection to sport and the importance that it plays in the Kiwi way of life might be a subtle one, it is still worth mentioning. This logo could therefore be seen as a metaphor for New Zealand’s sporting culture or prowess. A potential migrant might come to view this logo as a metaphor for New Zealand’s environment and recognise the fern leaf as a “Kiwi icon”, if they come across it elsewhere.

It is also significant to note that the NZIS logo appears at the top left hand corner of the page in a prominent position (it is the only logo that appears in the main masthead of the homepage) – the Department of Labour’s own logo does not appear alongside it. It is significant to note that the text “A service of the Department of Labour” appears to be smaller than the text “Immigration New Zealand”. This might be a metaphor for the position of power that the NZIS wields in this particular space and might also infer that the author(s) of the text on the NZIS website are closely linked to the Immigration department, rather than the Department of Labour. The other possibility is that the logos occupy

the position that they do, due to a style or design preference on the behalf of the website designers.

Note because the Apply Now webpage has already been identified as being mostly functional in nature and is not expected to offer any rich findings to this research study, it has been omitted from this part of the analysis exercise.

The following symbols appear on the Find a Visa webpage. The implications of the use of colours and the logo that appears on the Find A Visa replicate what has already been discussed earlier on, when considering these elements on the NZIS homepage. Therefore, only the first two elements below will be discussed further.

1. Images of New Zealand's landscape – there is only one such image on the Find A Visa web-page
2. Images of people – there is only one such image on the Find A Visa web-page and it alternates with the landscape image mentioned above
3. Colours – white, grey blue and green
4. Logo – The official NZIS logo

Images of New Zealand's landscape



Similar to the images that appear on the NZIS homepage, the “tenor” of the above metaphoric image is the immigration process to New Zealand and the “voice” is an image of New Zealand's landscape. This image depicts a large body of water and green hills and is possibly an image of New Zealand's varied coast. This image also does not feature people, cars or finite structures, such as houses. It is suggested that this image is a metaphor for New Zealand's natural beauty and once again a reflection of the significance given to the country's landscape, as an appealing image for potential migrants.

The body of water appears to have equal, if not slightly more significance, than the green hills that also appear in this image. This component of the image (the

body of water) is potentially an acknowledgement of New Zealand's many water bodies and the accessibility of the same.

Images of people

Figure 15 Image of people on Find a Visa web-page



The “tenor” of this metaphoric image is the immigration process to NZ and the “voice” is an image of a man fishing. He appears of European descent and has white hair and a white beard and is an older man, possibly older than 50. It is suggested that this image is a metaphor for the outdoor lifestyle that migrants could enjoy if they moved to New Zealand. It is possible that image is also a metaphor for a retired lifestyle, as the man appears to be older and possibly of retirement image. It is suggested that this image might be fulfilling a dual purpose – that of reiterating a message about New Zealand's outdoor lifestyle and also possibly making it an attractive destination for migrants who are close to retirement. These migrants might be sponsored by their family members already in New Zealand and might choose to move to New Zealand to retire.

Analysing the About New Zealand web-page

The following symbols appear on the About New Zealand web-page and each will be analysed separately in the section below. They are drawn together in Table 1, which appeared on pages 76-77.

1. Images of New Zealand's landscape – there are four images in total and they rotate in the header on the About Us web-page
 2. Images of people – there are eight images in total on the About New web-page and these image alternates with the two landscape images
 3. Colours – specifically white, grey, blue, black, green and orange
 4. Logos – The NZIS official logo and the NewZealandNow logo
- Table 2 – Table of Images on the About New Zealand web-page

Images of New Zealand's landscape

The "tenor" of the images representing New Zealand's landscape in the above table is the immigration process that migrants undertake to move to New Zealand. The "voice" is the actual images themselves.

The images in Table 1 depict New Zealand's landscape in various reiterations. Image 3 features snow capped mountains against a seemingly endless sky. This image is a metaphor for New Zealand's natural beauty and potentially being a metaphor for New Zealand's wide, open spaces. As already mentioned in this chapter, New Zealand's natural beauty appears to be a message that is repeatedly conveyed by images on the web-pages that have been analysed. This could be because potential migrants view the country's natural beauty as being a positive characteristic and a draw-card for why they wish to move to New Zealand.

In a similar vein, Image 2 in Table 1 features a person standing by the shores of a large water body and staring out into the distance. Once again, this image might be a metaphor for New Zealand's wide open spaces. It is possible that image 2 is a metaphor for the personal relationship that migrants can have with New Zealand's natural landscape, because they have the opportunity to interact with it, in a manner that might not have been possible in their native countries. This point might hold particular significance for migrants from Asian countries that are over-populated and where space is at a premium.

Images 5 and 7 appear to echo the point made about the interaction with New Zealand's natural landscape. These two images depict people involved in outdoor activities. Image 5 depicts a group of people walking by the water's edge, with back-packs and walking poles. It is possible that these people are on a camping excursion. Image 7 depicts a person, dressed in mountain climbing gear and sitting on top of a mountain, with snow capped mountains also in the distance. While showcasing New Zealand's landscape appears to be a focus of these images, it is also possible that they are a metaphor for what migrants can hope to experience when they move to New Zealand – a closer connection to an outdoor life-style.

Images of people

The images of people in Table 1 are varied. A combination of both men and women appear in these images. There are images of people engaged in outdoor activities and images of people who appear in posed stances. Images 1, 5 and 7 are similar and feature images of people engaged in outdoor activities such as cycling, hiking, running, walking and mountain climbing. Image 1 is of interest as it also depicts a man in a business suit, amongst people who are involved in an outdoor activity of some kind. It is probable that he has been included in this manner to allude to the possibility that even people involved in traditional office jobs, also interact with the outdoors in some way. This is a very loose interpretation however, as there are possibly other reasons for his inclusion, such as a design or a style choice.

The group of people in image 5 is a combination of children and adults, whereas there is only one person present in image 7, possibly a man. A possible interpretation of this is that the New Zealand outdoors can be enjoyed by both families and by individuals. Images 4 and 6 depict people in city setting. Image 4 is of a man in a suit, without a tie with buildings behind him. This man appears to be of European descent. Image 6 depicts two women in what is possibly an outdoor café, laughing at something they are looking at. Both women also appear to be of European ethnicity. The other two images of people (Images 8 and 9) depict a couple of European ethnicity, in casual clothing and in a relaxed pose laughing at the camera and a group of people enjoying a meal outdoors, with the ocean behind them. Images 6, 8 and 9 are arguably of people who appear friendly and relaxed or who are involved in informal, casual activities. It is possible that these images are a metaphor for the type of lifestyle that migrants might expect when they move to New Zealand but they could also be interpreted as being welcoming and friendly representation of New Zealanders themselves.

All the images of people on this web-page are set outdoors. Once again, it is suggested that these images are a metaphor for the outdoor lifestyle that is a significant part of New Zealand culture. Images on the About New Zealand web-page do not feature people from different ethnic backgrounds, even though New Zealand has a diverse migrant community and a very large Pacific

community as well. However, it was observed that different ethnic groups were been represented on other pages within the About New Zealand section on the NZIS website.

Colours

Figure 18 Screenshot of About New Zealand web-page featuring colour



The colours that appear on the About New Zealand web-page are white, grey, blue, black, green and orange. These colours appear as background colours, in the header of the web-page, as backgrounds for the four main sub-sections – Visas, Work, Study and Live, as backgrounds for navigational tabs and symbols and also as coloured text.

It has already been mentioned previously in this chapter, that the use of the colours blue and green are possible metaphors for New Zealand's natural beauty, referencing the country's natural water-bodies and landscape.

In comparison to previous web-pages that have been analysed, two new colours make their appearance here. The first of these is the colour black, which makes its appearance in the header at the top of the web-page. The colour black is significant for New Zealand and New Zealanders in that it is the colour worn by most of their sports teams including the All Blacks, the Black Caps, the Black Sticks and the Silver Ferns. It is possible that the use of the colour black is a subtle metaphor that highlights the significance of the 'sporting' culture in

New Zealand but also underlines the importance of the colour in terms of it being a symbol of New Zealand as well. It is also the colour against which a previously unseen logo appears - the NewZealandnow logo. It is possible that has been done in order to enable this logo to stand out against, as it is made up of a number of bright colours and thus looks effective against a dark background.

The other new colour that appears on this web-page is the colour orange, which appears as a background against the sub-heading “Live” and also as the colour of text on the right hand side of the web-page, which reads “Want to help rebuild Christchurch?” It is possible that that this colour has been used, not as a metaphor, but to grab the attention of the reader and to highlight an important section on the About New Zealand web-page – the section about actually living in New Zealand.

Logos



There are two logos that appear in the header on the About New Zealand web-page. The NZIS logo (Figure 15) has already been analysed. Figure 13 is a new logo that has not appeared thus far in either the header or footer of any of the web-pages that have been analysed. This logo contains the words ‘New Zealand Now.govt.nz’. The words appear in varying shades of the colour grey, except the letter ‘W’, which appears in white. An interesting feature of this logo is the colour block that appears within the letter ‘O’ and this colour block is made up of the colours orange, blue, green and brown. It is possible that the use of these colours within the letter ‘O’ is a style or design element, chosen by the writers of the text.

The colours in the colour block in the letter ‘O’ also appear to partially echo the colours of the main sub-headings on this web-page, i.e. ‘Visas’, ‘Work’, ‘Study’ and ‘Live’. This logo is also brought to focus because it appears against a black

background so is quite striking. It is possible that this logo appears on this web-page first (before any of the others) because the content on the About New Zealand page is particularly concerned with 'why' a migrant should migrate here and all that New Zealand has to offer him or her. In other words, it is about making the decision to migrate to New Zealand 'now!'.

Recurring image



The image above appears on the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-page. This image features two hands, reaching out for a passport and other travel documents. It is suggested that this image is a re-enforcement of the message that appears next to it, indicating that if the user was to click on this image, it would redirect him or her to a questionnaire. This questionnaire prompts the user to answer questions regarding their personal situation so as to ascertain the kind of visa that was right for them. The language that appears in this is once more designed in a friendly and colloquial tone, thus suggesting again that the representatives of the NZIS want to be positioned as friendly and helpful, to potential migrants.

Analysing the Life in New Zealand web-page

The content that appears under the link Live on the About New Zealand web-page explores what life is like in New Zealand. This section contains the sub-headings Life in NZ, Settlement Services and Questions and Answers. The web-page that is the main focus, in terms of uncovering leanings about what is being said about Life in New Zealand, is the Life in NZ web-page, which is the first sub-heading that appears under the link Live. The screenshot of this web-page appears below.

Figure 16 Screenshot of the Life in New Zealand web-page



As already mentioned, the web-page appears to offer more insights into what is being said about New Zealand as a destination to migrate to.

This web-page is made up of the same textual artefacts as the previous web-pages – namely full and incomplete sentences, images, colours and logos. An immediately noticeable difference from previous web-pages is the inclusion of much longer sentences, as well as images that are entirely of people and not New Zealand landscapes. There is also a mix of different colours used on this web-page, the navigational menus appear entirely on the left hand side and it is immediately evident that the textual content on this page is more detailed than seen previously.

Examining the dimensions of the narrative was determined to be not as useful as analysing the explanation of the narrative, as it was unlikely to yield insights that were not significantly different to the findings that have already been discussed in this chapter.

Analysing the explanation of the narrative helped to uncover messages that are conveyed to potential migrants about Life in New Zealand particularly and if these messages are going to be useful in influencing or persuading potential migrants to migrate to New Zealand.

As already explained earlier, Foss (2004, pp. 336-7) suggests that the explanation of narrative is done by evaluating the text using the following seven criteria.

1. Does the narrative embody and advocate values that are desirable and worthwhile?
2. What ethical standards are maintained by the narrative?
3. How readily can the narrative be refuted?
4. Is the narrative coherent?
5. Does the narrative demonstrate fidelity?
6. Does the narrative fulfil the purpose of its creators?
7. Does the narrative enrich the experience of life?

Each of these questions will be answered separately in the sections that follow.

Does the narrative embody and advocate values that are desirable and worthwhile?

Unlike text on other web-pages that have been analysed, the narrative on the Life in New Zealand web-page does exhibit values in a more overt sense, based on the composition and tone of its sentences. It was observed that an invitational, friendly tone appeared to permeate much of the content on this web-page. It appeared to be relaxed, colloquial, friendly and welcoming. For instance, the following excerpts appear on the Life in New Zealand web-page

“Fantastic – of course we’re biased – but don’t take our word for it.”

“Check out our recent ranking as the third best country in the world to live in!”

“Knowing that you’ll spend far less time commuting in New Zealand than in most world cities, you’ll also enjoy far more time with your friends and family”.

“With just over 4 million people living in New Zealand, it’s easy to find - or to get away- from the crowd”.

Foss (2004) notes that “all narratives express values whether implicitly or explicitly” (p. 339). In this instance, the values expressed by the text are of hospitality, welcome, friendliness and warmth. Once more, this is possibly a reflection of how the author of this text wanted to position New Zealand in the mind of potential migrants – as a country that values the characteristics noted

above. A migrant might draw the conclusion that these characteristics are reflective of the values that are important to New Zealanders themselves. It could be assumed that a potential migrant would find these values desirable and worthwhile, regardless of their personal circumstances.

What ethical standards are maintained by the narrative?

According to Foss (2004), examining the ethical standards of a narrative requires evaluating “the degrees of rightness and wrongness in human behaviour” (p.339). However, as mentioned previously, the focus of this research study is not directly concerned with the ethics of text on the NZIS website.

How readily can the narrative be refuted?

Foss (2004) describes this criterion as “the assessment of how easy it is for an audience to refute a narrative by presenting an opposing narrative or an alternative perspective on the world” (p. 340). Thus far during this research study, this has been a difficult criterion to judge in this research study as the text on the web-pages analysed have been framed from the view point of the two authors (namely the Department of Labour and the NZIS). Also I have been unable to locate a forum where the readers of the text can participate with their own opinions or concerns about the text, in this version of the Life in New Zealand web-page. However, it was observed that a new reiteration of the About New Zealand web-page does contain links to Facebook and invites migrants to join in a discussion about their experiences with the immigration process.

While text on the Life in New Zealand web-page does not contain a forum where reader’s opinions are expressed, it does point migrants in the directions of a different viewpoint and perspective. This was observed by reading the following excerpts.

“Click here to read what recent migrants think.”

“Check out our recent ranking as the third best country in the world to live in”

“Click here to see the Longitudinal Immigration Study – the most comprehensive migrant research ever done in New Zealand.”

The above excerpts of text display a willingness on the behalf of the author to provide the reader of the text with secondary sources of information, so they can validate any observations or learnings they have made while consuming text on this particular web-page. These sources of information are external (for example in the case of the Longitudinal Immigration Survey) and also personal (for example in the case of the web-page that outlines the opinions of other recently migrants to New Zealand).

While the inclusion of secondary sources of information was seen as a positive inclusion, refuting a narrative involves identifying those aspects that are more or less compelling – in order to do this, primary research would need to have been carried out in order to ascertain opposing narratives that could be put forth by the audience of the text.

Is the narrative coherent?

Foss (2004) defines narrative as being coherent when “the narrative hangs together, has internal consistency or has adequate connections within it” (p. 340). In order to examine the coherency of a narrative, Foss recommends (2004) “identifying the unified subject in the narrative, the elements that connect to one another to create a cogent and meaningful narrative and the range of possibilities that the story could fall into due to events that might have opened up earlier in the story” (p. 340). In the case of this research study the unified subject matter was the immigration process to New Zealand.

This particular web-page was concerned with a narrative that discussed what life is like in New Zealand. The main body of the text gave the reader a snapshot of this ‘life’ by mentioning the country’s natural diversity, its outdoor life-style, its ethnic diversity as well as positioning New Zealand as a country with both cosmopolitan cities and a rural life-style. This narrative was coherent in so much that it is connected to the main theme of immigration. It places significance on text that specifically describes what New Zealand has to offer potential migrants, while the web-page exhibits adequate connections within the

narrative because of the secondary sources of information present within it, which are also linked to the over-all theme of immigration to New Zealand.

Does the narrative demonstrate fidelity?

Foss (2004) defines fidelity as “the truth quality of the narrative, which represents accurate assertions about reality” (p. 340).

As the text on the Life in New Zealand web-page is not a narrative of real people and real events, the criterion of fidelity relates to whether the narrative is true to life. This is a somewhat problematic criterion as it supposes that both the authors and consumers of text on the NZIS homepage hold the same definition for what is “true to life”.

The narrative of text on the Life in New Zealand web-page from the point of view of the author might be considered as having exhibited fidelity, in that text that touched on life in New Zealand, its cultural and ethnic make-up and its outdoor lifestyle, is based on real facts. These facts are backed up by the fact that the readers of text were provided with access to secondary sources of information that allowed them to validate the truthfulness of this information. To some degree, the inclusion of these secondary sources added credibility to what was being said about New Zealand, therefore this text could be construed as being “true to life”, from the point of view of the author.

However, a potential migrant’s actual experience of going through the exercise of migrating to New Zealand could be quite different, owing to his or her interpretation of this text (or other text that he or she consumes on the NZIS website) and his or her personal circumstances. Therefore the narrative might not necessarily have exhibited fidelity from his or her point of view, when these personal circumstances were taken into account.

Does the narrative fulfil the purpose of its creators?

According to Foss (2004) the “particular choices made by the rhetors in creating the stories accomplish their purposes for telling the stories” (p. 340). The text on the Life in New Zealand web-page touched up on why a migrant should consider New Zealand as destination to migrate to. It is suggested that the text

on this web-page was hoping to create a positive and attention-grabbing first impression in the minds of potential migrants. This is in evidence by the tone of text used in the first sentence that reads

“Fantastic – of course we’re biased – but don’t take our word for it, click here to read what recent migrants think.”

The effect of this sentence on a reader is immediate - a strong statement is being made about New Zealand as a migrant destination and this is immediately supported by highlight a secondary source of information, for the reader to investigate further.

The authors of text on the Life in New Zealand web-page had to persuade potential migrants to explore the concept of migrating to New Zealand. In order to do this, the text on this web-page had to be persuasive, credible, interesting and informative. While the rest of the NZIS website contains specific sections on employment, education or housing opportunities in New Zealand, the Life In New Zealand web-page had to convince migrants to make the decision to visit these other sections. Creating a strong first impression that encourages migrants to explore other sections of the ‘Live’ section was therefore essential.

Does the narrative provide useful ideas for living your life?

According to Foss (2004) “rhetoric offers commands or instructions of some kind, helping us manoeuvre through life and feel more at home in the world. Rhetoric is also an individual’s solution to perceived exigencies and constitutes equipment for living – a chart, formula or map that an audience may consult in trying to decide on various courses of action” (p. 340).

The aspects of the text’s narrative on the Life in New Zealand web-page that might result in action or thought are those paragraphs that describe life and community in New Zealand. This text might prompt a potential migrant to start the migration process to New Zealand, to explore it further or convince him or her that New Zealand is a destination to consider for the future. This web-page also contained links to other information that might prove useful to a migrant such as a question and answers section, a section on forms and guides and a




media centre. This information may have been of use to a potential migrant, based on the action they wish to undertake and their personal circumstances.

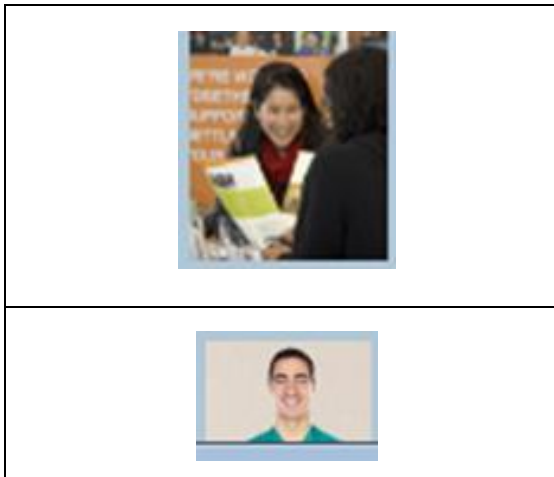
Applying the Foss's metaphor approach to the Life in New Zealand web-page

Having analysed text on the Life in New Zealand web-page using Foss's method of explanation of narrative, this section will look at analysing symbols using Foss's metaphor approach. The symbols analysed are made of images, colours and logos. The logos that appear in the header of the web-page have been analysed previously in this thesis so will not be re-analysed.

Images of people

Table 3 - Images of people on the Life in NZ web-page



The “tenor” of the images representing New Zealand’s landscape in the above image is the immigration process that migrants undertake to move to New Zealand. The “voice” is the actual images themselves.

There are only five images present on the Life in New Zealand web-page and these are all of people. There are no images of New Zealand landscape on this web-page, which is a marked departure from other web-pages that have been analysed thus far. The images of people on this web-page are varied – an Asian family are seen enjoying a meal outdoors, a young child possibly of Pacific descent is shown in the classroom, a mother and her children outdoors with one child in a pram and the other on a scooter, an Asian woman with a pamphlet in conversation with another woman, and finally a young man of possible Pacific descent in what appears to be a nurse’s uniform or green scrubs. There appears to be more ethnic diversity in the images that appear on this web-page, than on web-pages previously analysed.

This is either a reflection of the kind of migrant this web-page is meant to be appealing to, a reflection of the ethnic diversity of New Zealand (a key selling point, as per the text on this web-page as already discussed) or a reflection of the fact that the authors of the text want this page to appeal to a wide group of people, from different backgrounds. It is however not possible to identify which of the above assumptions is closest to the truth.

Colours

Figure 17 - Screenshot of colour on Life in New Zealand web-page



The colours that appear on the Life in New Zealand web-page are white, grey, shades of blue, black, shades of green, orange, yellow, purple and brown. The colour black is used at the top of the web-page and in the left hand corner, to highlight a navigational menu under the words “Life in New Zealand”. The colour of text on this web-page is black and it appears against a white background.

Shades of blue are used as background colours against the main heading “Life in New Zealand” as well as in the background against which images appear on the right hand side of the web-page. The brighter colours referenced above appear behind the coloured links that appear in small boxes in the header of the web-page and nowhere else.

To some degree, the colours on this web-page have not been used as metaphors for other meaning or inferences, but rather as style or design features to highlight the text on the web-page. It is the text that is the main focus on this web-page and for this reason it is possible that decisions on colour choice were done based on what was functional and easy to read, without being too distracting.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed four key web-pages on the NZIS website– the NZIS homepage, the Find A Visa and Apply Now web-pages and the About New Zealand web –page by applying Foss’s two approaches to rhetorical analysis using her narrative and metaphor approach. In addition to this, the Life in New Zealand web-page (which is a link that is redirected from the About New Zealand web-page) was also analysed using the same approaches. Text, image and colours were examined to uncover the key persuasive messages that were being communicated to potential migrants and the manner in which this was being done. The discussion points mentioned in this chapter will be summarised in chapter five, where conclusions will be drawn from the finding yielded.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Introduction

This research study focused on the rhetorical examination of the persuasive techniques employed by text on key web-pages on the NZIS website. Rhetoric was chosen as the lens through which to view the use of text, colour and images on the analysed web-pages because these elements are linked to persuasive communication. It was assumed that there was a reason certain images, text and colour appeared on the NZIS website – predominantly to fulfill a communicative function but also to create an “ideal” of what New Zealand is like in the minds of potential migrants. In order to form a convincing argument, the creators of text on the NZIS website had to formulate text so that it was persuasive and informative. As discussed in chapter two, persuasion seeks to alter the way an audience thinks, feels or acts and it does this through carefully constructed communication.

The purpose of this research study was to examine the text on key web-pages of the NZIS website to determine its persuasiveness. Through the use of rhetoric, this research study hopes to offer some insight into how text on the NZIS website portrays a picture of New Zealand that is likely to be attractive to potential migrants. The two research questions that underpin this thesis are:

1. What elements of text are used on the NZIS website to persuade potential migrants that New Zealand is a desirable migrant destination?
2. What are these elements saying about New Zealand and how might these messages be persuasive?

The key web-pages analyzed as part of this research project were the NZIS homepage and the Find a Visa, Apply Now and About New Zealand web-pages. These web-pages were selected because of their usefulness in terms of providing information to potential migrants about the migration process to New

Zealand but also, because they provided insights into life in New Zealand that went beyond immigration policy and procedure.

At this point, it is important to mention that only secondary research was carried out in this research study. This secondary research was used to gain an insight into what I am referring to as the umbrella effect of persuasive text on key web-pages on the NZIS website. By umbrella effect I refer to the overall, general effect of the text gained from first impressions and initial thoughts of the web-pages analysed. This research was then linked with anecdotal evidence and also research carried out by the New Zealand Immigration Service through their Longitudinal Immigration Research Surveys (Department of Labour 2008; Department of Labour 2009).

The findings that were produced as a result of the analysis carried out in chapter four will be discussed in the following section. These findings were categorised into the different types of textual artefacts observed and the function(s) that they performed. The implications of their function and design will also be discussed. These implications will be considered, in light of the theory covered in chapter two. This section will also discuss how appropriate Foss's approaches to rhetorical analysis were in this research study. Finally, this chapter will outline the limitations of this research project and opportunities for further research.

Textual artefacts and their analysis

The key artefacts that were observed and analysed in this research project were text, images and colour. A description of each element's design and placement within the relevant web-pages and the implications of the same are outlined below.

Text

The analysis of text on the key web-pages revealed that text was presented in two variations. The first variation of text was informal, colloquial and brief in structure. It was typically made up of phrases, short sentences, abbreviations and there was a noticeable lack of punctuation marks. This first variation of text

was noted on the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages.

The second variation of text was more detailed in terms of its overall structure but still retained the informal and colloquial characteristics noted in the first variation. This second variation was made up of full sentences that were longer in length and more complex in terms of their structure and composition. This latter variation was noted on the About New Zealand web-page particularly.

The use of short sentences and phrases that lacked punctuation suggested a deliberate choice on the part of the author. The author may have wanted to assign this text with a certain tone. There is also the possibility that this sentence structure was used to fulfill design, organisational and layout requirements. These requirements might include presenting complex and detailed information in a concise, accessible and attractive manner so that it is easy to comprehend.

Smith (2005) refers to the importance of the defining an organisation's key publics in the literature review. His point of view supports the notion that identifying an organisation's publics is vital to development of the relationship between the organisation and its publics and also to facilitate effective communication between the two parties. Grunig (1992), on the other hand refers to publics as stakeholders, who can provide the greatest threat or opportunity for an organisation. By identifying the different migrant groups or key publics, the NZIS can tailor its communication accordingly to meet each individual group's needs. Each migrant represents an opportunity for New Zealand – either by way of economic contribution or by enriching the existing cultural demographics of the country or even by assisting in New Zealand's population growth. It might be inferred that the threat is posed not by the migrant himself, but rather by the lost opportunity should he choose to migrate elsewhere, for whatever reason.

The information on the NZIS homepage, Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages thus needed to appeal to different kinds of migrants, based on their individual circumstances. The text therefore needed to allow multiple reader's positions, be it as a visitor, student, or an applicant wanting a work or permanent resident visa so that each type of migrant can access the information they require.

The manner in which text is presented on the analysed web-pages is also indicative of the possible public relations model that is possibly being used by the authors of the NZIS website. Grunig and Hunt (1984) discuss four models of public relations and it is the third model is relevant to my research study. The two-way asymmetric model concerns itself with persuasion (Grunig and Hunt refer to this persuasion as “scientific”) and while avenues exist for readers of the NZIS website to express an opinion or ask a question, this interaction is not explicit on the web-pages that were analysed. Johnston and Zawawi note that in the two way symmetric model, the communication flow is greater from the organisation to its publics. This characteristic is particularly evident on the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages.

As discussed earlier, Simons (2001, p. 175) notes that values are “judgments of relative worth”. Human beings tend to value certain qualities such as honesty, hard work and generosity for example. It is possible that the authors of text on the NZIS website believed that the “value” of informality is either one that is deemed important by the reader or it is a value that they (the authors) wish to impress upon the reader. The latter might be a function of the fact that the authors of the text wanted the reader to feel at ease within the online environment and by positioning the text in an informal manner, they aimed to create a favorable first impression. The informal tone of the text might also suggest that by association, the authors wished to imply that these same characteristics could be found among the staff employed by the NZIS.

This point is significant because as some of the theory covered in the literature review indicates, public relations practitioners use “image creation” as a tool of persuasion. While the authors of the text on the NZIS website might not have been public relations practitioners, the communication on the NZIS website is managed by parties who wish to advance positive good-will about the immigration process to New Zealand. Therefore, maintaining a consistent message about “brand New Zealand” and what this entails is likely to be important.

In order for a brand to be robust, it needs to be linked “to a strong, memorable and consistent image” (Tymson and Sherman, 1996, p.72). Image creation is about ensuring that a brand is appealing and accessible to its target audience.

Values put forth by an organization that are seen as desirable help to solidify that organisation's relationship with its audience. It is possible that a characteristic of the "brand image" being put forth by the authors of text on the NZIS website is that of informality. The characteristic of informality might also be viewed as a reflection of a characteristic of New Zealand culture. It may also have been applied as a style choice to engage and holding a reader's interest.

The structure of text changes quite markedly on the 'About New Zealand' web-page when compared to the NZIS homepage, the Apply Now web-page and the Find a Visa web-page. On the "About New Zealand" web-page, longer and detailed sentences were observed. The text's tone was still colloquial and welcoming, but the longer sentences suggested that this web-page was getting to the 'heart of the matter' (i.e. what New Zealand has to offer a potential migrant and why he or she should migrate here). By the time readers get to the About New Zealand web-page on the NZIS website, they have possibly identified the migrant group they belong to and the visa that they require, i.e. a student visa, a work visa, a permanent resident visa or other. They are possibly more interested in detailed information about employment, housing, education and life-style opportunities in New Zealand. Text on the About New Zealand web-page therefore needed to both descriptive and persuasive. While accessibility is still an important feature of its design, it is the persuasive nature of text combined with its detail that is possibly the author's focus. If the reader is in a frame of mind that is receptive to receiving information, this frame of mind might affect his or her decision to initiate the migration process. The information on a web-page that describes life in New Zealand needs to be compelling.

The initial web-pages that a reader encounters upon visiting the NZIS website (the NZIS home-page, the Apply Now and Find a Visa web-pages) need to establish credibility, usability, accessibility and interest quickly and decisively. If this is done successfully, it is possible that the text on the About New Zealand web-page will be better processed because the reader has already been placed in a comfortable and receptive frame of mind.

The establishment of such tenets as credibility, usability and accessibility and the use of a welcoming tone is vital to ensuring that the text is persuasive. By adhering to these tenets, the text on the analysed web-pages fulfil the three

modes of persuasion advocated in Lawson-Tancred's translation of Aristotle's *The Art of Rhetoric*. These tenets form Aristotle's classic triangle of rhetoric. The first mode of persuasion is *ethos*, which refers to the credibility of the speaker. This tenet is in evidence by the presence of the official NZIS logo on every web-page that was analysed that makes reference to the Department of Labour, a government agency. The second mode is *pathos*, which refers to placing the audience in a frame of mind where text appeals to their emotions. This tenet is achieved by multiple presentation factors such as the use of certain images and colours that will be explored later in this chapter. The third mode of persuasion is *logos*, which refers to the proof or apparent proof generated by the words in the text (Berger, 2000, p. 54). This last tenet is achieved by the text's narrative, in that it was discovered to be coherent, while fulfilling its informational purpose of providing potential migrants with the information they require.

Applying Foss's narrative approach to text on the web-pages analysed also revealed that three of Newsom et al. (2007) principles of persuasion were being followed. The first principle is identifying an idea that an audience can relate to. By positioning sub-headings clearly so that a migrant can work out which group he or she belongs to (i.e. a visitor or someone wanting to work in New Zealand), text on the NZIS website allows for information to be presented in a manner that suits that particular migrants' needs. The idea of migrating to New Zealand might already exist in the mind of a migrant, but it is the accessibility of information to further influence this idea that could help make the idea relatable.

Newsom's second principle advocates action on behalf of the audience – this is immediately evident on both the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now webpage. The heading alone 'Apply Now' indicates action that might be immediate – the combinations of words used is brief and to the point. Similarly, the Find a Visa web-page lists various forms and applications that a migrant might require to initiate the immigration process or to investigate it further. The headings 'Apply Now' and 'Find A Visa' are clearly visible on the NZIS homepage and could be construed as being immediate calls to action.

The third principle according to Newsom et al. (2007) is the creation of familiarity and trust. This is in evidence (as already mentioned) by the official

NZIS logo that appears on every web-page, which represents the New Zealand government's association with this website. Familiarity is attempted by the use of short, informal sentences that could be viewed as colloquial in nature on the NZIS homepage and the Apply Now web-page, and in particular by the use of personal pronouns and phrases such as "To help you take the next steps in joining us in New Zealand..." on the "About New Zealand web-page".

As mentioned in the literature review, modern public relations is meant to persuade a target public's opinion by being as informative and transparent in its communication endeavours as possible. It is possible that potential migrants to New Zealand might have pre-conceived opinions of what the migration process entails. They might also have pre-conceived ideas about New Zealand itself. Therefore, the authors of text need to carefully plan their persuasion strategy so that it effectively communicates the point of view that is reflective of what the New Zealand Immigration Service wishes to advocate.

It is unlikely that a reader of text on the NZIS website will be converted to making the decision to migrate to New Zealand immediately. It is more likely that this will be a gradual process, if that is the long term intention of the reader. Simons (2001) refers to the concept of persuasion by degrees and of particular significance is the point that he makes about response shaping. The key characteristic of response shaping is that it leads to the formation of new beliefs, values and attitudes. Therefore, if text on the NZIS website presents the immigration process as one where information can be located swiftly (as in evidence by sub-headings targeting different migrant groups) and this information is informal in tone and conveys a general feeling of helpfulness (as seemingly intended by the tone and structure of the text and the language used) it is possible that potential migrants might be persuaded to develop positive views about both New Zealand and the migration process.

The text on the web-pages analysed was also discovered to be metonymic and narrative in nature. The terms "metonymic" and "narrative" are linked with the study of rhetoric in popular culture. As previously mentioned, "Metonymy is a way of thinking that means reduction" (Brummett, 2006, p. 84). When a person thinks about a topic or concept by reducing it to a simpler, smaller and more manageable image or idea that leaves out details of the larger whole, that

person is using metonymy. Metonymy can work to simplify issues that are complex and comprise too many layers to comprehend in one sitting. To some degree, the entire focus of text on the NZIS website might be about simplifying what is actually a massive undertaking for any human-being – that of migrating from their country of birth and leaving everything that they know for the unknown. The actual process of migrating to New Zealand might not be as friendly or inviting as the text on the NZIS website would like a migrant believe, given that it is a government-regulated procedure with strict regulations to adhere to.

To combat potential resistance from a migrant (in terms of making the decision to either investigate or take the required action to initiate the immigration process), the authors of text on the NZIS website may have intended the text to be reflective of what might be called “Kiwi” characteristics. These characteristics might demonstrate themselves in the design of the text in a friendly, relaxed and informal tone. However, outlining what New Zealand has to offer potential migrants is another way of countering potential resistance. This is in evidence by the images that have been used on the web-pages that have been analysed. It is these images that are of significance to my research study, in terms of how the metaphors for meaning and how this meaning may be interpreted by potential migrants.

Images

The analysis of text on the NZIS web-pages also revealed the use of images and colour, as part of the communicative process to migrants. By images, I refer to the static images that appeared on the web-pages that were analysed and by colour I refer to the colours observed on each individual web-page. The use of colour on the analysed web-pages was examined from the perspective of how the pages or the colours functioned as a metaphor for other meanings.

The significance of the use of images as a tool of rhetoric was discussed in the literature review. Brummett (2006) believes that “images have structure and that they appear in contexts. Therefore, they must be interpreted so as to extract meaning from them” (p. 161). However, Brummett also cautions that assumptions should not be made that an image is able to convey a clear message to its

intended audience – this meaning needs to be attributed by the audience themselves.

It was observed during this research study that recurring images of New Zealand's landscape appeared alongside text on the NZIS website. Some of these images were of people interacting with the natural landscape through outdoor activities, while other images focused solely on show-casing New Zealand's natural beauty and natural diversity. These images of landscapes appear to reflect an expansive scale, possibly to denote the "large open spaces" of New Zealand. It is possible that these images are performing persuasion "by incentives" by evoking a favourable reaction in potential migrants, when they see these images. Persuasion theorists such as Simons (2001) agree that incentives can encourage people to act in a certain way. Simons goes to discuss operant conditioning, which involves "rewarding desired behaviour and withholding rewards or even using punishments until the desired behaviour is forthcoming. In the reverse, projecting rewards and punishments may also have the same effect of being persuasive, even if they are only projected incentives and not real" (Simons, 2001, pp 170-172).

Landscape images therefore present New Zealand's wide, open spaces and diverse natural fauna as incentive for migrants to move to New Zealand. These images allude to the notion that if migrants choose to move to New Zealand they will be able to interact with the landscapes that the images present. This might be a particularly persuasive message for those migrants, who value being able to live in a beautiful country like New Zealand and who might also value having access to the landscape in a way that they have not been able to experience in their own native countries. Interestingly, 63 percent of respondents who took part in the 2009 Migrants Survey conducted by the Department of Labour "found New Zealand's environment or landscape better than they had expected it would be, and just over half had been made to feel more welcome than they had expected to feel" (2009a).

Persuasion by association is also relevant to this research study because by associating an entity (New Zealand) with certain favourable attributes and characteristics (such as wide, open beautiful spaces), the authors of text are using these carefully selected images as tools of influence. The fact that these

landscape images appear on the NZIS home-page is also significant because they are the first visual impression that a potential migrant might see. One of the findings of the 2009 *Migrants Survey* conducted by the New Zealand Department of Labour (2009a) noted that 63 percent of all respondents found New Zealand's environment or landscape better than they had expected it would be.

The literature review discussed the use of metaphor as a tool of persuasion. Simons (2001, p. 117) believes that metaphors are "are a way of creating meaning and of viewing one entity, in comparison to another". Berger (2000) observes that "metaphor use analogy to create meaning" (p. 63). It is possible that the images that appear on the NZIS website are a metaphor of outdoor lifestyle that migrants might expect to enjoy when they move here. It is suggested that this is a key "persuasive" message put forth by the authors of the website's text – that a migrant could move to New Zealand and go camping, fishing, hiking or bush-walking and interact directly with the natural environment. It is also suggested that images of people occupied in outdoor activities are metaphors for a lifestyle that many New Zealanders already enjoy. The inclusion of such images on the NZIS website supports the message that an outdoor lifestyle is an important part of New Zealand culture.

Berger (2000, p. 64) also notes that when framing a metaphor, it is important to consider what is being downplayed or intensified. In this research study, images of New Zealand's landscape appeared on all the web-pages that were analysed (with the exception of the Apply Now web-page) and the majority of them featured landscape images on an expansive scale – for example images of mountains in the distance or images large water bodies. Where images featured landscape and people in the same image, these people were predominantly engaged in outdoor activities. This once again points to the appeal of the New Zealand outdoors as a key persuasive message that is being communicated to potential migrants.

Another observation relates to the ethnic background of the people that appeared in the images on the NZIS home-page and on the Find a Visa web-pages. These people appeared to be mainly of European descent and belonged to a mix of ages and genders. However, there appears to be more images of

people from Pacific Island and Asian ethnicities on the About New Zealand web-page. It is possible that these images are meant to be a very quick snapshot of the cultural demographic in New Zealand. It is also suggested that ethnicities represented in these images might be a reflection of the kind of migrant New Zealand is trying to attract and a nod to the potential migrant's own cultural or ethnic backgrounds.

In terms of the ethnicities of migrants currently being accepted into New Zealand as permanent residents, *The Migration Trends Key Indicators Report* from March this year states that of the 28,674 people approved for residence in July 2011-March 2012, 15% were from the United Kingdom followed by China (14%) and India (13%), the Philippines (8%), Fiji (7%), and South Africa (6%). Under the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC), the top source countries of SMC approvals are the United Kingdom and India (17% each), the Philippines (12%), China and South Africa (8% each), and Fiji (7%). SMC approvals from India increased from the same period last year by 18 percent. This reflects a long-term trend and the increase from India is mainly due to former Indian international students who transition to temporary work and then to permanent residence.

Logos

Two logos appear repeatedly on the web-pages analysed. The first of these is the official New Zealand Immigration Service logo, which consists of a white fern leaf and the text "Immigration New Zealand". It is possible that this logo is a metaphor for New Zealand's natural landscape as it represents a native New Zealand fern, as well as a wider metaphor that is connected to New Zealand's sport teams, as discussed in chapter four. While it is important to consider the elements that make up the logo and the implication of the same, it is also significant to note that this logo is a branding device consciously used by the authors of text on the NZIS website. As mentioned in the literature review a strong brand is necessary to survive in a competitive world. The consistent use of certain colours, a corporate logo or a corporate slogan helps makes an organisation recognisable and builds credibility. A migrant thus needs to be familiar with the NZIS logo so that they can learn to trust communication that appears alongside it.

The New Zealand Now logo appears on the About New Zealand web-page and is positioned so as to draw attention to itself. It is suggested that this logo was designed to communicate immediacy about the decision to migrate. This suggestion is based on the composition of the logo and the use of words New Zealand Now, with emphasis on the word 'now'.

Colour

The repeated use of colours such as blue and green on the web-pages analysed is also significant. It is suggested that the inclusion of these colours serves a two-fold purpose.

The first purpose is that they could be a design feature, chosen due to a style choice on behalf of the text's authors. It might be that the colour blue was chosen because it is a colour associated with feelings of calm, trust, tranquillity (DeLong & Martinson, 2012, p. 41). In a similar fashion, the colour green is associated with feelings that evoke natural harmony, reliability and compassion (DeLong & Martinson, 2012, p. 41). By using these colours frequently on the NZIS website, the authors of the text might wish to create these feelings in the mind of the reader so as to make their interaction with the text a positive one.

Their second purpose is to act as a metaphor. It is suggested that the colours blue and green are 'Pacific' colours and are symbolic not only of New Zealand being recognised as a Pacific nation but also of because these colours hold connotations that are linked to the country's flora and fauna. New Zealand is a country rich in its diverse natural vegetation and an image of being 'clean, green New Zealand' is one that it still promoted overseas. Consider the comments below, which were observed on a section of the NZIS website but not analysed as part of this research study. Note that the first and fourth comment reference New Zealand's natural landscape.

"After living in the UK for 30 years and working in London I wanted to try something new, NZ has all I need at the moment. It is a beautiful place to live and everyone is so friendly."

"Look into life here thoroughly, and update yourself regularly. Things change rapidly."

"There's a better standard of living here and a safer place to bring up my family."

“It’s an unpopulated clean, green environment.”

“I am now a New Zealand trained teacher who could not imagine going back to teaching in US schools.”

Department of Labour. (n.d.). *What do other migrants have to say about moving to New Zealand?* Retrieved June 24, 2013 from <http://www.dol.govt.nz/immigration/knowledgebase/item/3538>

The appropriateness of Foss’s methods to this research study

When considering Foss’s two approaches to rhetorical analysis used in this research study, certain elements of each approach provided different insights and some were more useful than others.

Foss’s narrative approach included two components – the analysis of the text’s dimensions and the explanation of the text’s narrative. The analysis of the text’s dimensions provided insights into some of the characteristics of the audience that text was intended for, established the text’s setting within the NZIS website and allowed for consideration of the main themes it was advocating.

It also allowed for examination of the narrator’s potential motivations when designing text on the NZIS website and what he or she was trying to infer to the target audience. It however, was not able to address concerns about effect that the text had on the reader and Foss’s definition of the narrative’s “timeline” could not be applied, due to the nature of the textual artefact being examined as events were being inferred as happening in the future, rather than being described in the body of the text.

The explanation of the text’s narrative was intended to examine its usefulness in persuading the reader and also to examine whether the text presented a strong or weak narrative. This was done on the basis of seven criteria assigned by Foss. Of the seven criteria, three of them were difficult to examine adequately due to the nature of this research study. As primary research was not carried out, it was hard to ascertain the ethical standards maintained by the narrative, and examine its coherency for either the NZIS or readers of text. Examining the fidelity of text was also problematic as it required feedback from readers to discover what their definition of “truth quality” was. This definition thus needed

to be examined to ascertain if it was complementary to the definition held by the authors of the text.

Foss's metaphor approach was useful in understanding what kind of images were used as metaphors for New Zealand's landscape, the focus on New Zealand's outdoor lifestyle and the messages these images were advocating to potential migrants. It was also helpful when examining the colours present on the web-pages, to examine how they were functioning as metaphors as well.

Upon further reflection, it might have been useful to also include Foss's (1994) visual approach to rhetorical analysis because it would have examined the images in this research study by applying three judgements namely "the identification a function communicated in the image, assessment of this function and how well it is communicated and the scrutiny of the function itself, in terms of its legitimacy and its soundness" (pp. 216-217).

Limitations

There were several limitations that affected this research study. The first of those was the lack of primary research carried out on readers of text on the NZIS website. This kind of research could have revealed insights as to whether readers found text on the NZIS website persuasive, which elements of text were more persuasive than others and to what degree. The second limitation was that it was difficult to locate secondary research on the use of colour as an emotional or persuasive tool on immigration websites particularly, rather than websites whose main focus was to communicate with consumers of products.

The third limitation was that the About New Zealand web-page underwent a design overhaul in August 2012, more than half way through this research study. Some of the changes made to the design of this web-page (such as the inclusion of an invitation to interact with successful applicants on the NZIS Facebook page) would have affected the findings of the analysis carried out, particularly with regard to examining the text's fidelity, its ability to be refuted and its ethical nature. The number of web-pages on the NZIS website and the time-frame for this research study also limited the number of web-pages that could be analysed, which may have presented different findings and implications.

Areas for future research

The application of Foss's narrative approach to rhetorical analysis did not provide adequate results, partly owing to the nature of the artefact being analysed and because primary research was not carried out as part of this research study. Questions related to the fidelity of text and the ability to refute text proved problematic. The first area for future research might include the analysis of text on the NZIS website to confirm if it does adhere to ethical standards as perceived by potential migrants and if both readers and writers of text on the NZIS hold the same definition about what is considered ethical.

The second area for future research would be to analyse the reactions of migrants on the new About New Zealand web-page, which now contains a forum that allows migrants to share their experiences. This forum is the availability of a Facebook page, which infers that migrants are able to express their opinions about their immigration experiences and that potential migrants might view this information, while considering their own decision to migrate to New Zealand. This would also assist in evaluating if the text on the NZIS website is meeting migrants needs and providing them with a true representation of life in New Zealand.

The third area of future research might also include conducting primary research to ascertain if the migrants perceive text on the NZIS website to be persuasive, in the same manner that it is intended by its author.

And finally, a fourth area of future research is the consideration of "plain English" and the role that it plays in the composition of sentence structures on the NZIS website. A definition put forth by the US government website www.plainlanguage.gov defines plain language as "communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to others. Written material is in plain language if your audience can find out what they need, understand what they find and use what they find to meet their needs".

By designing text on the NZIS website so that it embodies the characteristics of plain English, the authors of text are trying to ensure that it engages with the intended audience, while still fulfilling its main objective of communicating the

immigration process to New Zealand to them. This might also be a justification for the brevity of the text's structure and its colloquial nature and tone. Rather than confusing the reader with official jargon, the text on the web-pages analysed is framed in an inviting and welcoming manner. In other words, this text is being presented 'as plainly' as possible so as to facilitate a personal connection with the reader.

It was difficult to locate academic literature that linked the importance of the use of "plain English" on government website such as the one belonging to the NZIS, and the effects of the same on the intended audience. While I was able to locate literature by professionals in the field of "plain English" and New Zealand based researchers interested in the subject, it was difficult to locate academic theory that related to this topic and it would be interesting if this area of text analysis was considered by other researchers, in the future.

Summary and conclusions

In summary, it was observed that the text on the analysed web-pages served several functions. The first of these was as a source of information about immigration to New Zealand. The information was also designed to meet the different needs of different groups of migrants, according to their personal circumstances. From observing the how text was structured and designed on the analysed web-pages, it was also clear that the authors of text wanted the reader to be able to access the information they required, with a minimum level of difficulty. This was in evidence by the use of short sentences and bullet-pointed information, so that text could be read quickly and also comprehended easily. Multiple navigation menus were also observed and the NZIS homepage presented information on key areas (information about visas, application processes and New Zealand itself) in a concise and accessible manner.

Text analysed also conveyed an informal, friendly and colloquial tone. It is suggested that the use of this tone was a deliberate decision on behalf of the authors of text, to be persuasive to potential migrants. If migrants value the characteristics reflected by the text's tone, they might then transfer these characteristics to the representatives of the NZIS. Some of the detailed sentences on the About New Zealand and Life in New Zealand web-pages also displayed conversational text that was framed in a welcoming manner. As this

text appeared on the web-pages specifically designed to discuss life in New Zealand and the opportunities available to potential migrants, it is suggested that migrants might infer that the welcoming tone conveyed by the text, is a reflection of how the NZIS services wishes to be helpful during the immigration process. It is also suggested that potential migrants might view the characteristics of friendliness and informality as being reflective of New Zealanders and New Zealand society as well.

Images that made up the text analysed displayed multiple representations of New Zealand's landscape. It is suggested that this is reflection of the authors intent to present a persuasive message to potential migrants that centres around New Zealand's natural landscape. There are also multiple images of people engaged in outdoor activities. This research suggests that the inclusion of these images was deliberate so as to convey the importance of New Zealand's outdoor lifestyle.

While the images of people appeared to be of mostly European descent on the Find A Visa and About New Zealand web-page, images of people from different ethnicities appeared on the NZIS homepage and Life in New Zealand web-pages. It is suggested that the positioning of these images is significant. Readers would observe the presence of a person from a different ethnicity on the NZIS homepage, which might create the impression that New Zealand is welcoming of different ethnicities and cultures. This same argument is put forth for the images that appear on the Life in New Zealand web-page. This web-page was particularly designed to reflect its title – what it is like to live in New Zealand. The inclusion of images of people from different cultures might be a reflection of who the text on this web-page is aimed towards or a reflection of the predominant ethnic groups already in New Zealand.

Finally, colour played its part in supporting the assertions made above regarding the importance of presenting New Zealand's landscape as a persuasive message. It is also suggested that use of the colour black on some of the web-pages made reference to New Zealand's sporting culture and also as a reflection of its place as a Pacific nation. It is also suggested that the use of the colours blue and green was a deliberate choice to convey varying feelings of calm, tranquillity and assurance (DeLong and Martinson, 2012, p. 41).

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the persuasiveness of text on the NZIS website so as to understand what kind of messages were being communicated to potential migrants wanting to move to New Zealand. Prior to commencing this research, I assumed that the text would focus on communicating an already well known message to its readers – that of New Zealand’s natural beauty. Long has the slogan “clean, green New Zealand” been used in marketing and public relations material, particularly in the tourism sector. I was interested in finding out if this message was still a key selling point and if it was being used by the authors of text on the NZIS website. Furthermore, I was intrigued by the repetitive use of certain colours on the NZIS website and observed that the use of colour was a point of difference between the NZIS website and immigration websites of other migrant destinations such as Australia. In addition to the use of text and colour, I was also interested in understand why certain images were used on the NZIS website as opposed to others and wanted to examine how the images worked with text and colour to create persuasive messages that would appeal to potential migrants.

By applying two of Foss’s (2004) approaches to rhetorical analysis to the text on key web-pages on the NZIS website, I was able to examine the manner in which text was designed, the implications of its design (keeping Foss’s approach in mind) and the explanation of the text’s narrative. Applying Foss’s metaphor approach allowed an analysis of the images and colour to ascertain their function was and how they worked as persuasive techniques.

To summarise, the key persuasive messages communicated by text, images and colour on the analysed web-pages were concerned with three themes. The first theme communicated friendliness and informality as personality traits of the NZIS website, and by association its representatives as well. The second theme communicated a message about New Zealand’s natural environment and also focused on New Zealand’s outdoor lifestyle. Finally, the third theme presented an image of New Zealand that values people of different ethnicities .The use of colour appeared to support the above assertions, particularly with regard to promoting New Zealand’s natural diversity and also as a design and style feature.

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