

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the detailed description of the data which consists of local television advertisements of mobile phone service providers is presented. This is followed by methods of analysis. The analysis consists of three stages which consists of selection of advertisements, analyzing the selected gendered advertisements for their use of gender influences and finally, analysing advertisements for propaganda devices in terms of their appeal to specific genders. Both verbal and non-verbal features of the advertisements were analysed.

3.2 Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, Telco advertisements were at first collected from four local television (both national and private) channels as this study looks at the advertisements from the local perspective. The channels first identified were RTM2, TV3, NTV7 and 8TV. These channels were chosen because of the higher possibility of obtaining advertisements in English as they concur with the airing of English language programmes.

Later, the focus of the collection was on two channels - TV3 and NTV7 - which were found to have a wider range of English language programmes as well as popular series

such as CSI, Smallville, and Gray's Anatomy. The popularity of the programmes was taken into account as it may mean that there would be a more consistent or loyal audience. Furthermore, the popular time slots given to the airing of these series with a large following also meant a more regular airing of the advertisements. Thus, the extent of exposure and reach of the advertisements would be wider compared with other less popular programmes which may only gain transitory viewers.

The reasons for exclusion of the three channels –RTM2, 8TV and RTM1 – are as follows:

1. RTM2: Most of the advertisements on RTM2 are the same as those found on TV3 and NTV7.
2. The programmes aired on RTM1 are mainly local programmes using Malay language. The advertisements on RTM1 are correspondingly also in the Malay language.
3. 8TV was a new TV station and its coverage was limited to only the Klang Valley.

Thus, most of the advertisements were recorded as they appear in conjunction with popular TV series as well as during prime viewing time of TV3 and NTV7.

3.3 Time Frame for Data Collection

The advertisements of Telcos X, Y and Z were recorded from October 2003 to December 2006. Recording was carried out over a long period of time in order to allow tracking of changes in the advertisements for the three Telcos. Another reason for the

long duration is that the same advertisements were aired throughout a period of up to several months. Therefore, the extended data collection period was to ensure the number and a variety of samples could be adequately collected. The advertisements were recorded mainly from 8.30 p.m. to 12 midnight. This covered the 'prime time' slot of TV viewing and advertising time in Malaysia (as defined in the TV and advertising industry in Malaysia) which is from 8.30 pm to 11.00 pm. This time slot was chosen because:

1. more popular English language programmes are aired during this time,
2. the programmes are presumed to be aired to the general public focusing mainly on young and mature adults, who are the likely targets of Telco advertisements,
3. the purpose of consistency. Advertisements aired at different time slots cater to a different set of audience such as children, for example, may not be relevant for the purpose of this study taking into account the product advertised.

Consequently, 90% of the advertisements for this study were recorded in conjunction with the airing of English language programmes such as popular English series, movies and sitcoms, during the 8.30 pm to 12 midnight time slot.

3.4 Corpus: Telco Advertisements

The corpus of this study are samples of Telco advertisements aired over the two Malaysian TV channels, TV3 and NTV7. These are advertisements of mobile phone

and internet services of the three main Telcos in Malaysia, which are labelled as Telco X, Y and Z.

It was observed that some of the advertisements were repeats of an earlier version of the same advertisements, but modified by way of changing certain elements in them or by adding new information such as offers or special seasonal packages. Some of the advertisements also appear to be separate sections of one long copy that are aired separately. The advertisements were also recycled after a lapse of time. These strategies have been noted by Schwartz (1973) as ways to give the impression of 'newness' to the advertisements so that the audience would not feel they are seeing the same old advertisements countless of times.

As the Telco advertisements must target the people who are likely to use mobile phones and telecommunication services, it is observed that the people/models used in the commercials are mainly young people living an active lifestyle.

The advertisements promote the services of the Telcos in two formats:

- a) postpaid package subscribers
- b) prepaid package subscribers

The basic difference is that the postpaid subscribers pay for the services used at the end of a month or time of billing, while prepaid users choose an amount, which is called airtime credit and pay for it in advance.

An overview and observation of the advertisements recorded are described as follows:-

a) The different peak or concentrated focus of the individual Telcos

At the beginning of the data collection which was at the last quarter of the year 2003 and the first quarter of the following year, advertisements from Telco X were more frequent and varied in terms of spokespersons. The content of these advertisements focuses on how to use the mobile phone and services with the underlying message of how the mobile has and can help in one's life in various domains such as entertainment, work, personal and interpersonal contacts.

b) Influence of seasonal events

During the second quarter to the middle of the year 2004, it was observed the seasonal focus or heavy frequency is based on specific events such as the World Cup or the festive promotional packages. In other words, as sponsors of the event, the Telco while promoting the particular event indirectly promotes itself by offering its services in conjunction with such events.

c) Competitive presence

Throughout 2004 to 2006 it was observed that there was an interchanging focus of the Telcos in their advertising campaigns. The three Telcos X, Y and Z were alternating their presence on the television. Their individual presence was clearly marked especially when the company became the sponsor of a particular event. However, it is also noted that Telco Z began to step up effort to advertise by employing a new gimmick and the frequency of these new advertisements was markedly different from the other two competitors.

d) Differentiation in strategy

From January 2007 to February 2008, Telco Z promoted its services largely with the expansion of the character/symbolic icon that it had developed previously as well as promoting a new hype that became the buzzword among certain young adults. At the same time Telco Y was observed as promoting an existing package but with additional services or monetary benefits.

3.5 Quantity of Data Collected

Telco advertisements were recorded in 7 VHS tapes of 120 minutes each, which amounts to 840 minutes of recording. The advertisements of the three Telcos from these tapes were re-recorded separately to enable easier access to each individual Telco advertisements for the purpose of analysis.

At the first stage of selection, all the 840 minutes of advertisements were reviewed and the selection was narrowed down to 172 advertisements. The selection was based on completeness and the clarity of the recorded advertisements. Table 3.1 below shows the number of advertisements recorded within the duration of 39 months. The three local Telcos were labelled as Telcos X, Y and Z.

Table 3.1 Television Advertisements of Telcos X, Y and Z Recorded

Timeframe	Oct – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Total ads
Telcos	2003	2004	2005	2006	collected
X	3	21	15	30	69
Y	4	15	23	20	62
Z	0	15	11	15	41
Total ads recorded	7	51	49	65	172

From these pre-selected 172 advertisements, 111 were identified as suitable for the actual analysis. For this second stage selection, advertisements without voice over, spokespersons/characters, repetitive samples, and those that were shorter than 10 seconds were dropped. In other words, the choice of these 111 advertisements was made based on their completeness. Only advertisements that have all the elements under study namely language (visual or verbal text), music (with voiced lyrics), and symbols (logo, colours, etc.) are included. All these elements have the possibility of influencing the interpretation of the advertisements by the viewers. Table 3.2 below summarises the distribution of the data collected and transcribed for this study.

Table 3.2 Television Advertisements of Telcos Selected for Analysis.

Timeframe	Oct – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Total ads
Telcos	2003	2004	2005	2006	analyzed
X	2	13	11	19	45
Y	1	9	15	12	37
Z	0	13	4	12	29
Total ads recorded	3	35	30	43	111

The distribution of the advertisements according to the individual Telcos is as follows:

- i) Telco X – 45
- ii) Telco Y – 37
- iii) Telco Z – 29

The selection of the advertisements for analysis was based on the criteria that each advertisement should have both verbal and visual elements. In this study, verbal

elements include words flashed on the screen, words verbalized by voice over, characters or spokespersons and the jingles/songs sung. The non verbal elements include the gender of voice over, images, actions or activities of the characters, background, and the social events/situations depicted in the advertisements.

3.6 Transcription of Data

The verbal elements of each of the recorded advertisements were transcribed following the transcription notation described in Appendix A, B and C. The non verbal elements were then described in written form next to the verbal transcription. Samples of the transcribed data corresponding to individual Telco are shown as follows:

- i) Appendix A – Sample transcriptions of advertisements from Telco X;
- ii) Appendix B – Sample transcriptions of advertisements from Telco Y; and
- iii) Appendix C – Sample transcriptions of advertisements from Telco Z.

3.7 Data Analysis

This study is fundamentally based on the qualitative examination of the linguistic and non-linguistic features of Telco advertisements. The former includes verbalized texts whether by spokespersons, characters or voice over. The non-linguistic features will include all signs which may call for interpretations which are connotative in nature. Some of the interpretations are culturally bound while others may be open to the audience with their particular personal and professional circumstances.

The advertisements are analysed in terms of their strategic appeal to audiences of a specific gender using a framework informed by theories of gender and communication

(Furnham & Schofield, 1986; Hurtz & Durkin, 1997; McArthur & Resko, 1975; Tannen, 1986; 1991; 1995). Further, the framework for propaganda analysis proposed by the Institute of Propaganda Analysis (IPA, 1939) is also used to identify the propaganda strategies used in the advertisements to enhance their appeal to audiences of a specific gender. The IPA's framework proposes seven propaganda devices through which any discourse can be examined for its propagandic elements.

In this section the procedure and the frameworks for analysis used in this study are described. The procedure for analysis consists of three stages: screening of advertisements that has a gendered slant, detailed analysis of gendered influences, and analysis of propaganda

3.7.1 Screening of Advertisements with Gender Influence

The first stage of the analysis was to identify the advertisements with elements of gender which are indicative of gender influence. Advertisements that contain features that appeal to or target an audience of a specific gender would count as gendered.

Both the linguistic features and the visual images found within the advertisements were looked at. Based on existing literature on gender and communication, several linguistic and non linguistic features were identified as indicative of the presence of gendered influence. Table 3.3 below presents the framework for the identification of gender influence that was developed for this study.

Table 3.3 Framework for the Analysis of Gender Influence

Gender:	Male target audience		Female target audience	
Categories:	Linguistic	Non-linguistic	Linguistic	Non-linguistic
Topic / field	Sports, finance, competitions	Visual representations	Family, friends, relationships	Visual representations
Language use	Related to activities, brief or direct		Emotive words, longer or standard or complex	
Activities / background	Lexical items related to gender stereotyped activities: - sports, outdoor, work, etc.	Visual representations - male stereotypical roles	Lexical items related to gender stereotyped activities: - family, home, friends, leisure	Visual representations - female stereotypical roles

At this stage, no detailed analysis was required. At this screening stage, the advertisements were classified as either having gender influence or not only by determining the presence or absence of any of the features presented in the framework.

The total of the 111 transcribed advertisements were screened for the presence of gender influence based on the above framework. The analysis at this stage is merely to screen and isolate those advertisements that contain elements of gender influence for further analysis.

3.7.2 Analysis of Gender Influence

In the second stage of the analysis, the linguistic and non linguistic features of gender influence in the advertisements are analysed. The aim is to provide a detailed analysis of

the features of the advertisements and to examine how these features are employed to appeal to audiences of a specific gender using the framework for analysis as presented in Table 3.3 (in section 3.7.1). Each advertisement was in turn analysed for their gender influences and the features orientating to either male or female targets were identified.

In order to identify the influence of gender used in the advertisements with the aim of targeting a specific audience, the analysis of each individual gender audience was done firstly via the elements of language used, and secondly the use of visual representations in the advertisements. To appeal to a specific audience, propagandists employ strategies that will invoke a favourable reaction from the targeted gender audience. This can be done through the portrayal of male and female gender with relevant and preferred conversational topics as well as the activities which are socially perceived as appropriate for each gender.

In line with recent research, this study will use the definition of gender that encompasses the broader sense of the word that includes the cultural, social and psychological aspects associated with the two different biological genders: male and female.

Studies on gender representation via gender stereotyping have demonstrated that the distinction of the two genders: male and female still persists although in varying degrees depending on particular country for example the portrayal of women in advertisements has not changed considerably over the years (Huang, 1995; Klassen *et al.*, 1993; Sengupta, 1995). The gender stereotyping observed includes gender role portrayals of women as dependents in that they are often portrayed in the roles of customers, wives or mothers while professionally as assistants while the male gender is portrayed in

authority roles (Hurtz & Durkin, 1997). In terms of location of the characters, women are more often portrayed in a domestic setting while their male counterparts are often seen at leisure while both genders are equally depicted in the professional settings (Furnham & Farragher, 1999). In other words, the female characters or spokespersons are often depicted as doing domestic or feminine based activities within the confines of an indoor environment. In contrast, the male spokespersons or characters are more often than not located in a professional setting while in unprofessional environment they are often located outdoors doing activities related to physical feats such as sports. As for the voice over, previous studies have demonstrated the dominance of the male voice over used in advertisements (Furnham & Farragher, 1999). The voice over is taken to represent authority and by association the predominance of male voice over implies male authority (Chandler, 1998).

Thus, the framework for analysis is based on the following criteria for representing gender:

- a) language use and topic of 'conversation' or concerns
- b) gender roles in terms of profession, physical location, activities
- c) general representations such as societal and cultural norms attached to either sex

3.7.3 Propaganda Analysis

In this third stage, the advertisements were analysed for propaganda devices used. Identification of these strategies relied on linguistic and non-linguistic elements found within the advertisements.

The framework used for the analysis of propaganda was that proposed by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) in 1939. The framework described seven devices, often referred to as propaganda devices, which can be used to examine discourses for their propagandic tendencies and strategies employed. The following is a brief description of each of the seven propaganda devices used to analyse the data.

1) Plain Folks (PF)

Here the character or spokesperson in the advertisements is identified with common people from everyday walks of life. The idea is to demonstrate that the spokesperson or character in the advertisements is just like 'you' and 'me': normal, healthy, seemingly intelligent people; the run of the mill; your everyday Joe and Jane with similar needs and problems. Therefore, if we want to fulfil our similar needs or overcome similar problems then we should do like the spokespersons do and use the product/services suggested as they have found the solution or the answers.

2) Bandwagon (BW)

The basic idea behind the bandwagon approach is to be part of the group. This is done by the suggestion that everyone is doing 'it', and so should you. This strategy evokes the conformist in us. Individuals want to be part of a group or community and not to stand out like a sore thumb or to be an outsider.

3) Testimonial (Test)

This is the concept of endorsement, particularly by well-known celebrities, to promote goods or services. This is because their fans or the public will attempt to emulate these

celebrities, their idols or heroes. The celebrity need not specifically verbalise or give testimonial for the products/services promoted. It is sufficient that they are seen using it.

4) Transfer (Trans)

Transfer employs the use of symbols, quotes or the images of famous people to convey a message not necessarily associated with them. In the use of transfer, the candidate/speaker or in this case propagandist or advertiser attempts to persuade us through the indirect use of something we respect, such as a patriotic or religious image, to promote his/her ideas.

5) Glittering Generalities (GG)

This approach is closely linked to the previous device: transfer (see (4) above). Here, a generally accepted virtue is usually employed to stir up favourable emotions. The problem is that these words mean different things to different people and are often manipulated for the propagandists' benefit. The propagandists often include words like democracy, family values (when used positively), rights, civilization, and even the word "<name of country>", to evoke the sentiment of patriotism or nationalism.

6) Name Calling (NC)

This is the opposite of the Glittering Generalities approach. Name-calling ties a person or cause to a largely perceived negative image. This can be conveyed through words or representation by way of linking symbols that evoke strong emotions of fear or hatred; for example, communism, feudalism, war, terrorists, swastika, capitalism, etc. This technique is used by the propagandist in the hope that the targeted audience will reject

the idea, product or person based upon the negative connotation interpreted by the audience themselves solely based on the provoked emotions.

7) Card Stacking (CS)

This tactic employs the persuasion by taking the information out of context or by not furnishing the audience with the complete story that is, misleading the audience with inaccurate information.

This framework of propaganda analysis is applied to the data in stage three of the analysis. The content (linguistic and non linguistic features) of the advertisements is examined to identify the propaganda devices. The devices are then subjected to a frequency count for an overall view of the extent of the different types of devices used. A qualitative description of the features used in the advertisements is then presented.

In summary, the overall aim of the three stages analysis is to examine the intersection between propaganda strategies and gender influences, that is, how the advertisements promote their wares to audiences of specific genders via devices of propaganda. First, advertisements are screened for the presence or absence of gendered influences. The set of advertisements that has gender influence are then subjected to detailed analysis of their linguistic and non-linguistic features. Finally, for each category of gender influence (whether appealing to male or female), the propaganda devices are identified.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has described the data used for this study, the data collection procedures, the transcription procedures, the method of analysis, and the frameworks for analysis. The next chapter presents the overview of the results, detailed analysis of the data and discussion.

3.9 Definition of Terms

In this section, the terms that are used in the study are presented.

1. Telecommunication companies (Telcos)

This term refers to the companies which are also referred to as the mobile service providers. They provide a system or network of communication and their specialized services to their subscribers.

2. Gender

The term “gender” while relates to one’s biological sex, is also a descriptor of the “psychological, social, and cultural features and characteristics strongly associated with the biological categories of male and female” as noted by Gamble and Gamble (2003) in referring to L.A. Gilbert’s *Two careers/One family: The Promise of Gender Equality (1993)*. In other words, “gender is an acquired, learned or socially constructed rather than biologically constructed notion, a human invention that identifies the social, psychological, and cultural differentiations between sexes” (Lorber, 1994).

3. Character

'Character' is the term employed to describe the person 'acting' in the advertisement and s/he does not verbalized any utterances. In other words, s/he acts as a visual representation of a person/human figure in general.

4. Spokesperson

This is in reference to the person in the advertisements who speaks and in most contexts giving opinions or promoting whether directly or indirectly a product or a service. The spokesperson is distinguished from voice over which is defined differently.

5. Voice over

Voice over refers to the appearance of a voice, absent of physical or visual presence of the speaker. It is used to speak on behalf of the advertisers, that is, to explain or promote objects in the advertisement, or to urge the audience to specific actions.