CHAPTER NINE

AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGES IN MALAYSIAN BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS BROCHURES

9.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from the analysis of the images placed on the front pages of the Malaysian business-to-business brochures. Image is one of the semiotic modes that bring out the meaning and the function of the brochures analysed. This chapter starts with a brief outline of the framework adopted for analysing images in this study which is drawn from two important elements in 'visual grammar' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996): representation and interaction (Section 9.1). Subsequently, Section 9.2 describes the place of visual images in Malaysian business-to-business brochures while Section 9.3 presents the representation and interaction analyses of the images depicted on the front pages of the brochures. The analyses will describe the represented participants in the images of the brochures and the kinds of processes used to portray these represented participants. A discussion of their interaction with the viewers of the images is also included. The chapter ends with Section 9.4 in which a summary of the findings regarding the analysis of images of the brochures is presented.

The aim of the image analysis of this study is to provide information about the kind of images typical in the Malaysian business-to-business brochures, the processes used to portray the images and to describe their interaction with the readers of the

brochures. Not only will the information draw the meaning and the function of the images in the brochures, it will also be a reference to the producers of such brochures.

9.1   The Framework for Analysing Images in the Malaysian B2b Brochures

This section will recap briefly the framework adopted in analysing the images of the brochures. A detailed discussion of the framework is provided in Chapter 4. The images in the Malaysian business-to-business brochures were analysed based on two elements of 'visual grammar' namely **representation and interaction** as described by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006). The other element of visual grammar, composition, was discussed in the context of the layout of the brochures as undertaken in the previous chapter.

Representation is the resource, firstly, to identify the represented participants, which can be people, things and places, and how the participants are depicted in the texts. Secondly, representation is also the resource to analyse the processes use to portray the participants of the brochures. Thus, representation is like the concept of transitivity in systemic functional linguistics (SFL) for the components are also participants and process types and this means that representation realises the ideational metafunction of SFL. With regard to the process types, it could be that of the conceptual process described as the process of 'being' or 'having' or the narrative process described as the process of 'happening' or 'doing' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006). This is described in detail in Section 3.4.2.2.

In summary, representation is the resource that realizes ideational metafunction of SFL. The aims of this analysis include identifying the meanings and functions of the images on the front pages of the brochures by investigating what the images are concerned with through analysing the represented participants and the kinds of processes involved in portraying them.

Apart from analysing the representation of the images, the images will also be analysed in terms of their interaction with the viewers of the images. This analysis will determine the relationship between the represented participants and the readers, the two groups of participants involved in the act of communication (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996:46). The relationship will be identified in terms of contact, power, involvement and social distance. A detailed description is provided in Section 3.4.2.3.

Interaction, therefore, is the resource that realises the interpersonal metafunction in SFL, and, in this study, interaction is used to examine the relationship between the images and the readers of the brochures.

9.2   The Place of Visual Images in Malaysian B2b Brochures

In print advertising, readers will spot the visual images first, then read the headline before reading through the body copy (the text) and as such, visuals carry much responsibility for the success of an advertisement (Arens and Schaefer, 2007). Thus, it can be deduced that visuals are obligatory elements in advertisements and are salient, for example, in terms of size, placement and modality in order to be able to

carry out this responsibility. However, it is found otherwise in the Malaysian business brochures.

In the Malaysian b2b brochures that advertise human resource training programmes, it is found that not all of the brochures have visuals on their front covers. Only forty or 63.5% of the brochures have images on their front covers. This shows that images are optional elements in these brochures. Apart from being optional elements, the images are also not very salient. This is another factor contributing to the fact that images in these brochures do not carry as much responsibility as expected in other types of advertising texts. Most of the images in the Malaysian brochures take up only about one-eighth to a quarter the size of the front pages and they are usually placed on the left of the pages. Being placed on the left connotes that the images are 'given' information which readers of the brochures are assumed to have knowledge of as opposed to 'new' information, information which readers need to pay attention to (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006). However, bigger sized images, which take up a third of the page, are also found and are usually placed in the centre of the page. Nevertheless, this constitutes only 10.8% of the brochures that have visuals in them. Visuals, therefore, are not very salient elements in Malaysian b2b brochures.

In visual communication, the concept of modality is important in describing visuals for "visuals can represent things as though they are real… (or) as though they are imaginings, as fantasies, caricatures, etc." (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:156). Modality is about truth value or credibility of statements about the world. In visual description, the dominant criterion for what is real or has truth value or what is not "is based on the appearance of things, on how much correspondence there is between

what we can normally see of an object in a concrete and specific thing, and what we see of it in a visual representation" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:158).

The visual images of these brochures are depicted through photographs and illustrations. Sixteen of the brochures are found to have photographs as visual images, seventeen have illustrations as visuals and another four brochures placed both photographs and illustrations as images on their front covers. Thus, almost equal number of photographs and illustrations are used as visuals in the brochures. Photographs depict real people in real situations. However, most of the photographs in the brochures look less real for they have soft focus and only monochrome colours are used. This lowers the modality and reality value of the images. In fact, some parts of the photographs are superimposed by the very salient title of the programme and/or the incentive attention-getter clusters that the images are seen as background images rather than the primary elements to draw attention to the brochures. Thus, the position of images in the Malaysian business-to-business brochures is one of lesser importance. Figure 9.1 is a typical photograph depicting an image in a brochure. The photograph exemplifies the size, placement, modality and subsequently its relegated role in the brochure.

Even though most of the photographs on the front covers are of lesser modality, the fact that photographs are used to depict images show that the brochures are providing visuals of credible modality and thus conveying messages of credibility and reliability in the brochures. Nevertheless, there are about as many illustrations used as visuals in the brochures. Illustrations are considered of lower modality than photographs for they are usually devoid of background setting or decontextualised, with lesser pictorial detail.
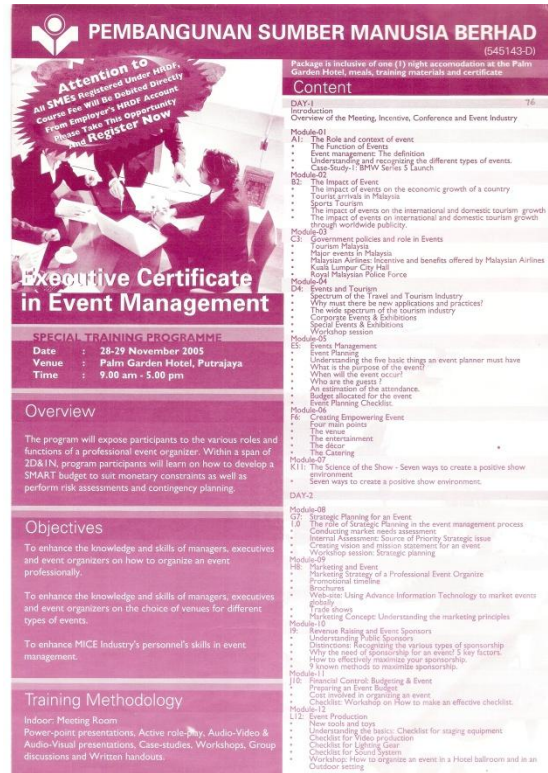
Figure 9.1
An example of a photograph depicting the image in Brochure 39

With regard to colours, the illustrations in the brochures have monochrome colours usually taking on the main colour of the brochures or that the images are illustrated in black and white. These are markers of low modality and in turn would suggest that these brochures are conveying messages of lesser credibility. However, reality and thus credibility or reliability is in the eye of the beholder; or rather, what is regarded as real depends on how reality is defined by a particular social group (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

Recent literature about advertising states that illustrations are used probably to take out some of the seriousness in such business advertising texts or to inject humour in them for "in recent years…business ads have introduced warmth, humour and creativity into their messages. The philosophy behind this movement is that business

people are consumers and that they respond as consumers to business and trade ads"
(Dominick, 2007: 340).

In summary, visual images are of lesser importance in Malaysian business advertising brochures for they are optional elements and, if present, are not very salient in terms of size, placement and modality. Nevertheless, its functions and meaning plays a role in delivering the message of the brochures as depicted in the following sections which will discuss the representation and interaction analyses of the images.

9.3   The Representation and Interaction Analyses of the Images in the Malaysian B2b Brochures

The representation analysis involves identifying the participants, the subject matter of the images, and the processes involved in portraying the participants. Therefore, the first aim of this analysis is to identify represented participants which can be people, things (including abstract things) or places. Secondly, the aim is to identify how the participants are depicted whether the visual images illustrate conceptual process, the process of 'being' or 'having' or narrative process, the process of 'doing' or 'happening' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996).

In the Malaysian business-to-business brochures that advertise human resource training programmes, it is found that people and things are commonly depicted as represented participants while places are not found in the brochures. People is a more common type of represented participants as they can be found in thirty-four (53.9%) of the brochures while only six (9.5%) brochures have images of things. Out of these forty brochures, three (4.8%) brochures have both people and things in the images.

The following sections will discuss the two types of represented participants found in the brochures.

9.3.1 The Representation and Interaction Analyses of 'People' in the Images of the Malaysian B2b Brochures

The large percentage of brochures with just people depicted in them is expected as these brochures are advertising training programmes that focus on human resource development. The brochures that depict people in the images can be further categorized into those that depict a single person, two persons and those that show groups of people. Out of the three categories, the images of groups of people is more commonly found as they are present in 28.6% of the brochures while images depicting two persons are found in 14.3% of the brochures and one-person images constitutes only 11.1% of the data. Each of these categories will be discussed separately in the following sections.

9.3.1.1 The Representation and Interaction Analyses of One-person Images

The images of a single person can be found in seven (11.1%) of the brochures namely Brochures 8, 10, 12, 20, 21, 28 and 33. The seven images are shown in Figure 9.2. In four of the brochures, the images are in the form of illustrations, considered to be of low modality, while in the remaining three brochures the images are depicted in photographs. Nevertheless, the photographs are also of low modality due to their monochrome colours and soft focus. Two of the illustrations are seen to be of even lower modality because of their cartoon-like images. Therefore, images of lower modality that is less naturalistic images are preferred in the one-person images of the brochures.
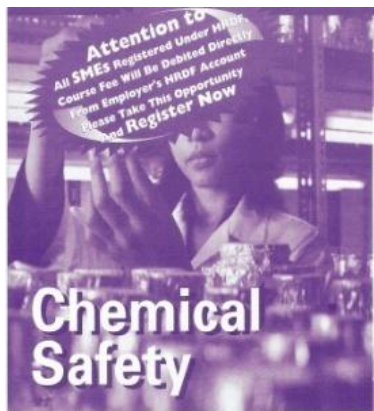
Brochure 10
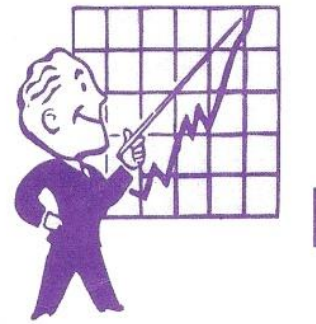
Brochure 20

Brochure 28

Brochure 21

Brochure 33

Brochure 8

Brochure 12

Figure 9.2
The one-person images on the front covers of the brochures

The images in four of these brochures depict individuals in formal business suits while one brochure shows a man presumably in a mechanic outfit since he is seen

wearing an overall, a cap and holding a spanner. Another brochure shows a woman most probably wearing a laboratory coat since she is seen in a lab probably working on an experiment. Apart from what is seen in the image, the title of the brochure in which the image is placed, 'Chemical Safety' provides hints of what the woman might be wearing, what the woman might be doing and where she might be. Interestingly, one brochure depicts a person on horseback holding a flag.

9.3.1.1.1   The Representation Analysis of One-person Images

In terms of **representation,** the people in formal suits can be described to represent individuals in an organisation like the managers, corporate executives and officers, as stated in the target audience clusters of the brochures. Furthermore, the images could also represent the management of an organisation especially that the brochures are normally sent to the human resource department of an organisation. The department, after consultation with the other decision-makers in the organisations, usually the heads of departments, will determine programmes which would be beneficial to the employees and the organisation. On the other hand, it could also represent businessmen in general as stated in the target audience clusters of some of the brochures. The mechanic depicted in Brochure 21 which advertises competency-based training and the woman working in the lab depicted in the advertisement about chemical safety training (Brochure 33) can be described to represent the target employees of the organisations that would directly benefit from the training programme advertised. However, the image showing a person on horseback seen in Brochure 10 seems to be out of place in the brochure advertising human resource development programme. Nevertheless, it is actually quite related to the programme advertised. The brochure advertised the programme "Strategies for Winners" which

would train participants on strategies to win based on the book "The Art of War" written about 2,500 years ago. Hence, the image of the person on horseback carrying a flag probably preparing for war would symbolise that the participants of the programme would be equipped with strategies to win in any occasion. In other words, the image portrays the benefit of participating in the programme.

Therefore, the one-person images could either represent the management of the organisations to which the brochures are sent to, or the employees in the organisations who would directly benefit from the programme advertised or even to businessmen in general. The images are, thus, addressing the people who would be participants of the advertised programmes or who would make decisions on which programmes the employees should participate to meet the needs of the organisations.

The images depicted men as the majority (83.3%) of the represented participants. Nevertheless, the image of a woman employee in Brochure 33 provides evidence that women are also prospective participants of the programmes, though their number might be small.

In terms of the **processes** portrayed by the one-person images, all of the images are projecting narrative processes, the processes of doing. In Brochures 8, 12, 21 and 28, the eye line vector is evident when the people in the images are looking out of the brochures, though to whom/what the vector is directed at is not clear. It is therefore, a non-transactional reaction for there is only one participant in the image and that the action has no goal. The transactional action process in which the action has a goal can be seen in all of the images of the brochures. Goals are formed when the people

in the images are looking at items they are engaging in like a lab instrument or a pointer or when their hands are seen holding a telephone, a book, a spanner or a flag.

The image of the person on horseback can also be said as portraying conceptual process as the image, which is an illustration, is shown in a form of a silhouette. The silhouette seems to portray a generalised essence (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) of the image that gives the image a symbolic value. This kind of conceptual process is termed as the symbolic attributive process.

9.3.1.1.2   The Interaction Analysis of One-person Images

In analysing the **interaction** between the represented participants and the viewers of the images, it is found that images in Brochures 12, 21 and 28 can be considered as 'demand' images. In these images, the represented participants are looking at the viewers of the images as though they are demanding that the viewers "enters into some kind of imaginary relation" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:118) with them. However, the other four one-person images are not looking at the viewers and thus are categorised as 'offer' images. These images are the objects of the viewer's scrutiny and as such they are observed "in a detached way and impersonally as though they are specimens in a display case" (Jewitt and Oyama, 2001:146).

With regard to **power** portrayed in the images, all of the represented participants are shown at eye level. This means that there is no power difference between the represented participants and the interactive participants, the viewers (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1999:397). In terms of involvement, more images are shot from the oblique angle, where the represented participants are depicted from the side. This

signifies 'detachment' meaning that "what you see here is not part of our world, it is their world" (Kress and van Leuwen, 1999:394). However, there are also images taken from the frontal angle which means "what you see here is part of our world, something we are involved with" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1999:394).

Social distance is determined through the different ranges of shots (i.e. a long shot, medium shot or close-up shot). Close shot or close-up, where images depict head and shoulders as seen in Brochure 33, signifies a close personal relationship between the represented participants and the viewers. The medium close shot (waist and above) that signifies a distant personal relationship is seen in Brochures 8, 12 and 28 while the medium long shot (full figure) signifying a close social relationship is evident in Brochures 10, 20 and 21. None of the one-person images are taken from a long shot range. Therefore, with one-person images, the social relationship between the viewers and the depicted images could commonly be either that of a distant personal relationship or a close social relationship.

In summary, the represented participants in one-person images could be the management or employees of an organization or businessmen in general. All of the images project narrative process and one of the outcomes of the process is that some of the images are also found to be 'demanding' a relationship with the readers. Simultaneously, some of the images are only 'offering' themselves as sources of information and this in turn resulted in the viewers being 'detached' from the images. This could mean that the images are inviting viewers to interact with them but at the same time they would provide space for the viewers to observe them to obtain information the images are offering. It is also found that there is usually no power difference in the relationship between the two participants which help to forge a

distant personal relationship or a close social relationship, relationships in which both personal and impersonal business interaction would occur. These are the building blocks in establishing a positive relationship between the companies that advertise the training programme and the readers of the brochures which could help 'sell' the programme advertised. Establishing relations is also one of the functions cited by the readers of the brochures (interview data) and a function identified in the analysis of the verbal texts.

9.3.1.2   The Representation and Interaction Analyses of Two-person Images

The images depicting two persons can be found in nine (14.3%) of the brochures, namely in Brochures 15, 27, 29, 31, 36, 42, 43, 44 and 52. These images can be seen in Figure 9.3.

Like the brochures with the one-person images, there is a mix of photographs and illustrations on the front pages of these brochures. However, there are more photographs (77.8%) than illustrations showing that images of higher modality is preferred in the two-person images. Women also seem to have a higher representation (37.5%) in the two-person images than in the one-person images.

In five of the photographs, the faces of some of the people in the images are superimposed with attention-getters that highlight incentives for participating in the programme advertised. This shows that in some of the brochures, the incentive is a more important element than showing a full image and this has somewhat affected the role of the images in advertising the training programme.
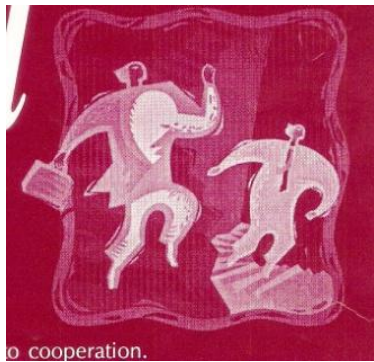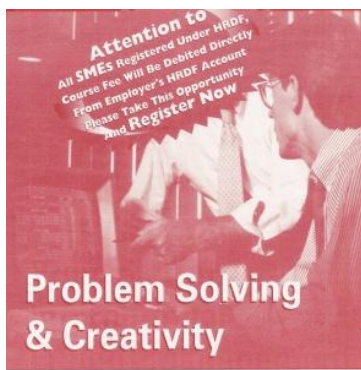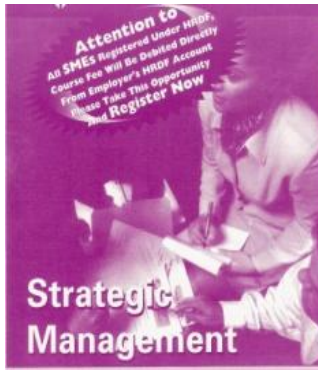
Brochure 15   Brochure 27   Brochure 29
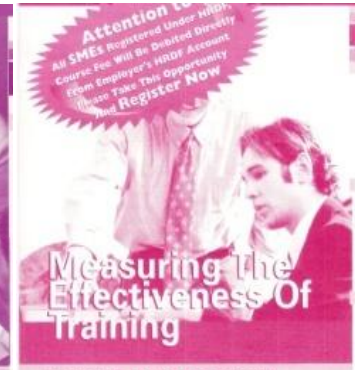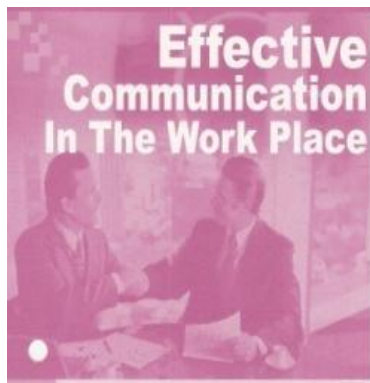

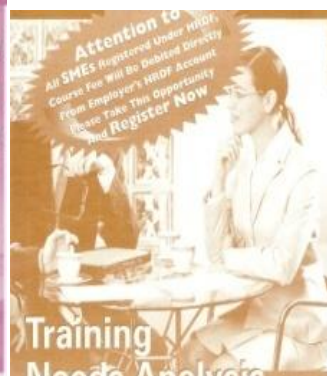Brochure 31   Brochure 36   Brochure 42

Brochure 43   Brochure 44   Brochure 52

Figure 9.3
The two-person images in the brochures

9.3.1.2.1   The Representation Analysis of Two-Person Images

Similar to some of the represented participants in the one-person images, the represented **participants** of the two-person images can either be the management such as the managers and executives or other employees in an organisation working in an office setting. This is evident in the represented participants' attire and the activities they are engaged in. They are usually portrayed sitting at a table having discussions, taking notes, referring to documents, looking at computers or shaking hands signifying the conclusion of a discussion. Even though there are images of men not in full formal suit or wearing only short-sleeved shirt, the fact that the setting of most of the images are in offices further justify the statements made about the represented participants.

In terms of **processes,** there seems to be only narrative processes present in the two-person images. Transactional reaction based on an eye line vector is evident when eye-contact is established between the two represented human participants seen in Brochures 43 and 52. Similarly, an eye line vector is also established when the represented participant is seen looking at items, such as the computer (Brochures 29 and 31) or the papers on the discussion table (Brochure 27). In addition, a non-transactional reaction is evident when an eyeline vector is seen emanating from a participant but it is not clear where it is directed at (Brochures 15, 36 and 44). This is partly because the faces of some of the people in the images are partially hidden behind the attention-getters of the brochures. Narrative process is also established when the hand of a participant is seen gesturing either at another participant (Brochure 15) or to a computer (Brochure 29), or shaking the hand of another participant (Brochure 44). Further evidence is seen when the participants placed their

hands on the table or when the hands are seen holding pens (Brochures 27, 36 and 42) or even when the hand is seen swinging a briefcase (Brochure 15).

9.3.1.2.2   The Interaction Analysis of Two-person Images

The **interaction** analysis found that all the images are 'offer' images for none of the people in the nine brochures are looking at the viewers of the image except in Brochure 15 where it is not clear where the people in the image are looking at due to the lack of facial details. Being 'offer' images, the images are offering themselves as sources of information to the viewers.

With regard to **power**, which is determined through the kind of vertical angle the shots of the images are taken, it is found that most images depict equality in power between the represented participants and the readers of the brochures as six of the nine brochures have images shot at eye-level. However, in Brochures 27 and 36, the readers seem to have power over the represented participants as the images are shot from a high angle. The two kinds of power are depicted in Brochure 15 where both high and eye-level shots are evident in the image. If power is concerned with the vertical angle shot, 'involvement' of the viewers with the represented participants is determined by the horizontal angle shot. Almost all of the two-person images are depicted from the side angle portraying 'detachment' meaning what the readers see 'is not part of our world… something we are not involved with' (Kress and van Leeuwen 1999:394).

In terms of the **social distance** evident through the ranges of shots, most of the images (88.9%) are seen from the waist and above thus signifying a distant personal

relationship. A far social kind of relationship is also evident as the image depicting the full figures of two persons in Brochure 15.
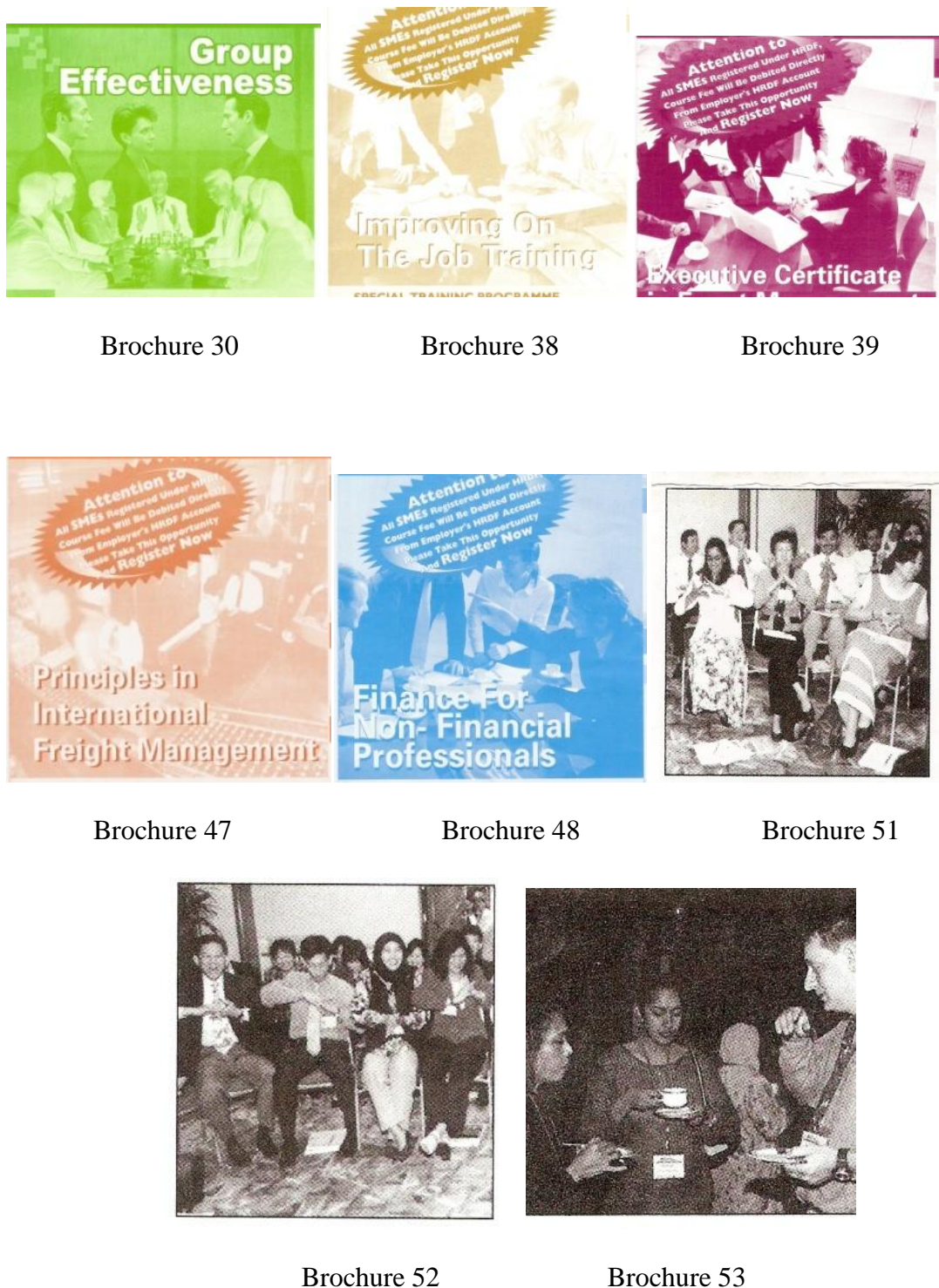
In summary, the people in the two-person images represent people who could be the management or office employees of the organisations and these represented participants project narrative process structure. They usually 'offer' themselves as items of information to the viewers with whom they mostly share equal power in their relationship with them. Even though, the viewers are usually 'detached' from the images, a majority of the images portray a distant personal relationship between the participants, in which subjects of personal interest and involvement could be discussed. With such a relationship and the fact that there is equality of power between the participants, the climate for a favourable partnership to be developed between the company providing the training (the producer of the brochure) and the viewers of the images is highly probable. This would ease the 'buying' process of the advertised programme.

9.3.1.3 The Representation and Interaction Analyses of Images Portraying Groups of People

The images of groups of people are placed in eighteen (28.6%) of the brochures. In eight of these brochures, images are depicted in actual photographs while in another eight the images are shown in illustrations. In two other brochures, there are both photographs and illustrations to depict the images. Therefore, the images in the two brochures will be referred to twice, one in the discussion regarding the photographs and the other in the discussion concerning the illustrations. The discussion regarding images of people in groups will begin by describing the photographs followed with a description about the images in the illustrations.

298

9.3.1.3.1   An Analysis of the Photographs Showing Images of Groups of People

The photographs of groups of people can be seen in eight of the brochures that is in Brochures 30, 38, 39, 47, 48, 51, 52 and 53. The images can be seen in Figure 9.4.

Brochure 30   Brochure 38   Brochure 39

Brochure 47   Brochure 48   Brochure 51

Brochure 52   Brochure 53

Figure 9.4
The photographs of groups of people in the brochures

The reference to this group of people is also found in the brochures which usually have statements about the target audience of the programmes. Examples of such statement can be seen in Figure 9.5.

Who Should Attend
HR Managers Training Managers Dept/Technical/Operations Trainers All managers and executives

Brochure 48

Recommended For
All frontline personnel to executives and managerial officers in Freight forwarding, Logistics and Supply Chain, Purchasing and Procurement, Store and Warehousing, Import Export, International Trade, Finance, Customer Services and Marketing.

Brochure 47

Figure 9.5
Examples of the target audience statements in Brochures 47 and 48

However, the photographs in Brochures 51, 52 and 53 show women dressed in less formal attire and that the groups are seen in a typical workshop/seminar setting. The people are seen engaging in activities during a workshop and are also seen enjoying tea/coffee, another typical setting in a seminar where tea breaks are scheduled during sessions. The people in these photographs can be deduced as representing participants of a training programme who could be managers, human resource trainers/officers or anyone who are interested to equip themselves with the skills that will be taught in the programmes advertised. Similarly, the reference to this group of people is stated in the brochures. The photographs also depict more women (75% of the brochures) than in the two-person and the one-person images. There could be several possible readings to this representation. It could mean that there is an increase number of women involved in group activities of the organisations or that more women are targeted to be the prospective participants of the programmes. Another potential meaning is that women are becoming important readers of the brochures.

In terms of the **processes** portrayed by the images, it can be seen that all are projecting narrative processes whereby there are evidence of vectors in the images to depict the process of 'doing' and 'happening'. Firstly, there is eye contact between the represented participants of Brochures 30, 39 and 47. This process is described as a transactional reaction between human represented participants (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Even though some of the faces of the persons to whom the contact is made are hidden behind the attention-getters (Brochures 39 and 47), their body posture and their hand gestures are evidence to suggest that eye contact has been established between the represented participants. Another kind of narrative process, the non-transactional reaction, is evident when the represented participants are seen looking at documents on the discussion table (Brochure 38), looking at their hands (Brochures 51 and 52) and looking at the cups they are drinking from (Brochure 53). Vectors are also established when the people depicted in the images placed their hands on the table, pointed at items they are referring to in the discussion or to a colleague involved in the discussion or merely gesturing with their hands to express themselves in discussions.

With regard to **interaction** between the images and the viewers of the images, most of the images can be described as 'offering' themselves as sources of information to the viewers since there is no eye contact between the represented participants and the viewers of the images. However, the photographs in Brochures 51 and 52 portray both 'demand' and 'offer' images as some of the represented participants are seen looking at the viewers and some are not.

The **power** relation between the represented participants in the images and the viewers is depicted as one in which the viewers have power over the represented

participants (Brochures 39 and 47) and that in which there is no difference in power in their relationship (Brochures 30, 38, 48, 51, 52 and 53) as the photographs are taken at eye level. In addition, images in six of the brochures are shot from the side angle thus signifying 'detachment' while two images are taken from the frontal angle signifying 'involvement' meaning that the viewers are very much a part of the world of the objects. In terms of the social relation that exists between the two kinds of participants, it can be described as one that portrays a distant personal relationship since most of the people in the images are depicted from the waist and above. However, a far social relationship in which a public distance is kept between strangers is also evident in one brochure.

In summary, the groups of people depicted in the photographs can be concluded as representing not only the management and employees of an organisation but also actual participants of the training programmes. The represented participants usually project narrative processes and are normally portrayed as 'offer' images. As such, the viewers of the images seem to be 'detached', or are not part of the represented participants' world. The equality of power that exists in the relationship between the represented participants and the viewers paves the way for a distant personal relationship to be established between them. In this kind of relationship, matters of personal interest and involvement could be discussed. It could mean that the viewers, who are personally involved in an organisation by virtue of being employees of the organisation, could discuss the needs of the organisation in terms of training with the training providers (the producers of the brochures), who in turn could suggest ways in which to meet the needs.

9.3.1.3.2   An Analysis of the Images Depicting Groups of People in Illustrations

The illustrations depicting groups of people can be found in ten of the brochures, namely in Brochures 7, 16, 22, 23, 26, 41, 51, 53, 57, 58 and 59. The framing of the images in Brochures 57, 58 and 59 warrant them to be considered as images of groups of people even though they portray individuals engaging in different activities. Much like the photographs, the illustrations depict images of groups of people wearing formal, office attire although the setting is not clear as most of the illustrations are decontextualised, in other words, there are very little background details. The illustrations are shown in Figure 9.6.

Nevertheless, the activities engaged by most of the participants in the illustrations are quite similar to those in the photographs as discussed in the earlier section. Based on what they wear and their activities, it can be said that the people illustrated in the images represent personnel of an organisation which could be the management or other employees in an organisation that usually work in an office setting.

In these images, **women** are depicted in 40% of the brochures, a much lower percentage compared to the images in the photographs. Nevertheless, taking into account the images of women in both photographs and illustrations that portray groups of people, women are depicted in 57.5% of the brochures. This is a higher representation of women compared to the one-person images and the two-person images. Even more encouraging is that there is also an image portraying an all-woman group (Brochure 51) in the illustrations. This finding further justifies the statements made in the previous section about women representation in an organisation and as readers of the brochures in general.
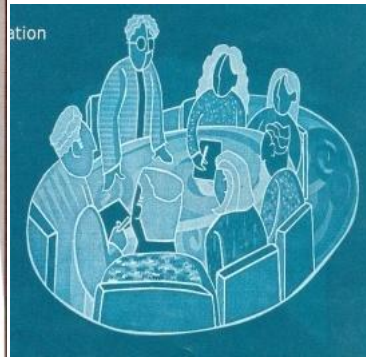
Brochure 7 Brochure 16 Brochures 22 & 23

Brochure 51 Brochure 53

Brochure 26 Brochures 57, 58 and 59

Figure 9.6
The illustrations showing groups of people in the brochures

The lack of physical details on most faces of the depicted people makes it difficult to determine whether eye line vectors are present to suggest evidence of the narrative **process** or if not, evidence of the conceptual process. Nevertheless the posture of the represented participants who are seen facing each other or sitting at a round table

would suggest that there is eye contact between the represented participants. This is described as a transaction reaction, a type of narrative process. A non-transaction reaction is seen in Brochure 26 when the reactor's (the represented participant) eye line is not directed to a particular goal. Another kind of vector, formed by limbs of the represented participants, is also present in the images. This is evident when the represented participants' hands touched the shoulders of others or are placed on the table or are seen pointing to a 'goal'. This is described as a non-transactional action.

In terms of the **interaction** between the participants, most of the images can be categorised as 'offer' images as they do not seem to establish eye contact with the viewers of the images. However, the image of the group of people in Brochure 7 seems to be facing the viewers and the possibly of establishing eye contact with the viewers is high. But for lack of facial details in the image, it cannot be assumed that there is contact.

Concerning **power** in the relationship between the represented participants and the viewers of the images, the three kinds of power can be seen in the illustrations that depict groups of people. Nevertheless, more of the images are shown at eye-level signifying equality of power in their relationship with the viewers. The viewers are also found to be 'detached' from the represented participants as more of the images have oblique angle. This means that the viewer is not part of the represented participant's world. Nevertheless, there are also images that have both frontal and oblique angle thus signifying that there is evidence of 'involvement' as well as 'detachment'.

With regard to **social relations**, there is an equal number of images depicting a distant personal relationship and a distant social relationship with the viewers of the images. It is stated that in these kinds of relationship, a varied range of subjects like personal, business and social matters could be discussed between the participants.

 In **summary**, the illustrations portray images of participants who represent personnel of organisations especially those working in an office setting. They are also presented as usually projecting narrative processes. The viewers are usually 'detached' from the images since they are mostly 'offer' images, the objects of the viewers' contemplation, However, the viewers are also found to be 'involved' in the world of the images. The double message would be that although the viewers are a part of the represented participants' world, they, nevertheless, offer themselves as 'objects for dispassionate reflections' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006) to the viewers. The other potential reading would be that since the images are merely offering themselves as sources of information, therefore, the viewers are not part of the images world. The three kinds of power are evident in the images but in most of the relationships between the represented participants and the viewers, there seem to be no difference in power. This healthy relationship between the participants is further enhanced by the fact that they have also developed distant personal relationship and distant social relationship in which both personal and business matters could be discussed. Thus, what is represented through the images of people in groups and what is depicted in the relationship between the participants could provide an environment for the advertised programme to be favourably accepted by the target audience, the viewers of the images.

9.3.2   The Representation and Interaction Analyses of Images of Things

The business-to-business brochures, the data of this study, advertise human resource training programmes and quite naturally the bulk of the images would be about people. Nevertheless, there are also images about things in the brochures and they can be found in only six (12.7%) of the brochures. The six brochures are Brochures 8, 9, 45, 46, 52 and 58. Figure 9.7 shows the images of things seen in the brochures.

The **things** portrayed in the images are thermometer and other measuring instruments in the brochure that advertised programme about measurement in industrial setting; images of, most probably, coins in a brochure that advertised credit management; a weighing scale in a brochure about analyzing training needs programme; some kind of machine in a brochure advertising a programme on analysis and design of modern system and calculators in brochures about debt collection and financial management programmes. Therefore, the 'things' in the images seem to represent the tangible items that are associated with the title of the training programme advertised and not about products that are usually found in other kinds of advertisements.
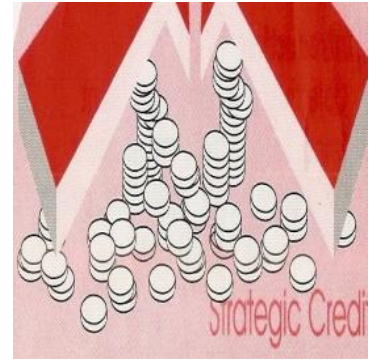
The **narrative and conceptual processes** are both portrayed in the images of things. The narrative process of the non transactional kind is evident in Brochure 8 where the pen is the 'actor' from which the vector emanated but it is not directed at anything in particular. Similar process can be observed in Brochure 9.
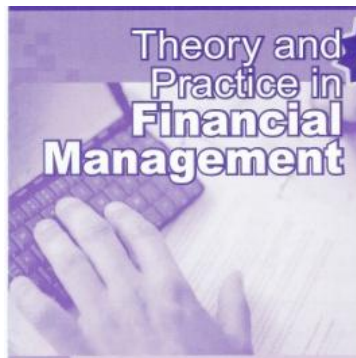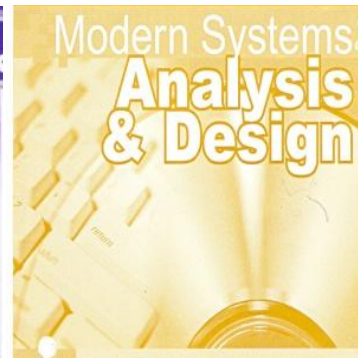
Brochure 8   Brochure 52   Brochure 9

Brochure 45   Brochure 46

Brochure 58

Figure 9.7
The images of things in the brochures.

The image of the coins can be seen stacked in varying heights which are like vectors pointing upwards, though towards no specific 'goal'. A transactional process, in which there is a goal towards which the vector is directed, is shown in Brochure 45. In this brochure a part of the 'actor', the image of a hand, is shown touching the keyboard of a computer, the goal. This process is also evident in Brochure 9 in which the two red arrows, the vectors, are directed towards the title of the programme while the tails of the arrows seems to point towards the image of the coins. 'Vectorial' relations in this image are amplified by means of the salient size of the arrows, their central position on the page and their bold red colour. The salience could indicate the arrows' importance and subsequently draw the attention of the viewers towards what the arrows are pointing at, the title of the programme advertised. Attracting attention is the first step in the 'buying' process of an advertised service or product.

Three kinds of **conceptual processes** are used to illustrate the images of things in the brochures. The weighing scale seen in Brochure 52 is projecting the symbolic suggestive process since there is only one participant, the weighing scale, whose details are deemphasized so as to portray a 'generalized essence' of the image. This would bestow it with a symbolic value which can also be from the qualities of the object itself (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006). Another kind of conceptual process termed as the covert taxanomy is evident in Brochure 58. In this image, the things which are about the same size, are placed in a decontextualised, neutral background and are about equal distance from each other. They are also of the same category, instruments of measurement. In brochure 46, only parts of the carrier (represented participant) are visible in the image while the carrier itself is not represented. This is known as the unstructured analytical process, the third kind of conceptual process projected in the images.

In analysing **interaction** between the images of objects with the viewers of the images, the images can only 'offer' the objects, the represented participants, to the viewers as items of information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). They are, thus, termed as 'offer' images. With regard to **social distance** between the participants and the viewers, 50% of the items are shown at middle distance which means that the objects are "shown in full, but at a fairly close range…as if the viewer stands just in front" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:128). In Brochures 9, 52 and 58, they are represented as within the reach of the viewers but which are not actually touched or used. In another three brochures that depict things, the images are shown at close distance where the viewers seem to be engaging with the things. For example, in Brochure 45, there is an image of a hand on the calculator while in Brochures 8 and 46 only parts of the objects are shown meaning that they are close enough to be within range for the viewers to engage with them.

In terms of **power** in the relations between the participants, it is found that in three brochures there is no power difference between the represented participants and the viewer of the images since these images are seen at the viewer's eye level. In the remaining three brochures, the images are depicted from a high angle which signifies that the objects are 'within reach and at the command of the viewers' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:146). Even though this is a typical way of portraying objects in advertisements (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Hassan, 2006), this is not a common method used in the brochures of this study as they are not advertising tangible products but human resource training programmes, a knowledge-based entity. The viewers are also found to be rather 'involved' with the objects as 66.7% of the images are shown at the frontal angle which signifies that the things portrayed are within the realm of the viewers' world. The rest of the images are presented at an

oblique angle meaning that the objects in the images are not part of the viewers' world but only to be observed by them.

In **summary**, things are not commonly found in the Malaysian business-to-business brochures. However, if present in the images of the brochures, they represent items that reflect the title of the programmes advertised and illustrate them through both narrative and conceptual processes. Being objects, they are all considered as 'offer' images seen either at close or middle distance in the brochures, distances at which the objects seem to be within reach of the viewers and that the viewers are able to engage with them. This suggestion of 'closeness' between the objects and the viewers is also reflected in the fact that there is no power difference involved in their relationship and that the viewers are 'involved' in the world of the objects.

9.4   Summary

In Malaysian business promotional brochures, 'people' forms the majority of the represented participants who could be the management of an organisation, the employees who work in an office setting, the employees targeted to benefit from attending the programme advertised, businessmen in general or even the participants of the seminar programme. The other represented participant in the brochures, the things, depicts objects that reflect the title of the programmes advertised. Interestingly, in all the five categories of the represented participants, there is evidence of narrative process, 'offer' images, equality in power in the relationship between participants and that the viewers are not part of the represented participants' world, in other words, are detached from the images. In addition, all categories of the people images provide evidence of a distant personal relationship between the

participants. Table 9.1 provides a summary of the findings from both the representation and interaction analyses of the images found on the front covers of the Malaysian business advertising brochures.

The analysis of the images found that the represented participants are 'offer' images that project narrative process, the process of 'doing' or 'happening'. Since the images are offering themselves as sources of information, the viewers are thus, 'detached' from the images, merely looking at the represented participants as objects of their contemplation. This is in line with the aim of the brochures and the function described by the discourse community which is to provide the readers with information about the programme advertised. Thus, the function of the images is complementary to the function of the brochures established by the components in the brochures and to that cited by the discourse community. Similarly, it is evident in the verbal texts.

The analysis of the images also found that there is no difference in power in the relationship between the viewers and the represented participants and this is seen as contributing towards the distant personal relationship that is found to exist between them. In this kind of relationship, 'subjects of personal interests and involvement' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) could be matters for discussions. This 'closeness' could provide a conducive environment for persuasion to take place and to establish relationship, a function cited by the readers of the brochures and established in the verbal texts.

Table 9.10
A summary of the representation and interaction analyses
of the images in the brochures

Categories Variables	One-person images	Two-person images	Group images in photographs	Group images in illustrations	Images of things
% of occurrence	11.1% (7 brochures)	14.3% (9 brochures)	12.7% (8 brochures)	15.9% (10 brochures)	9.5% (6 brochures)
% of men / % of women	83.3% 16.7%	62.5% 37.5%	25% 75%	60% 40%	not applicable
Represented participants	management targetted employee businessmen	management employees working in office setting	management employees seminar participants	management (directors, managers), employees (executives, officers)	items that reflect title of programme
Process	narrative conceptual	Narrative	Narrative	narrative	narrative conceptual
Contact	offer demand	offer	offer offer & demand	offer	offer
Power	equal	equal viewers have power equal & viewers have power	equal viewers have power	equal viewers have power images have power	equal viewers have power
Involvement	detached involved	Detached	detached involved	detached	detached involved
Social distance	close personal distant personal close social	distant personal far social	distant personal far social	distant personal distant social	close middle

Apart from informing the readers about the training programme, the function of the brochures is also to persuade the readers to participate in the programmes advertised. The images placed in these business-to-business brochures seem to have played their

role in tandem with the functions of the brochures identified based on the visual and verbal analysis of the components and with the functions identified through interviews with the discourse community as well as through the analysis of the verbal texts.