

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth description about the subjects involved in this study. It discusses the multiple research instruments such as survey, audio-recordings of conversations, ethnography observation and semi-structured interview used to collect data from the subjects. These research instruments serve as tools to answer the research questions. This chapter also presents the summary of the development of research design and methodology applied and frame of data analysis in this study.

3.1 Subjects

To begin with, twenty young professional Malaysian metrosexuals were involved in this study. They were Malaysian men (19 Malay and 1 Chinese), aged between 24 to 39 years old. All of them live within the Klang Valley area. Sixteen respondents worked in the white-collar (professional) industry such as engineers, doctors, lecturers and managers. On the other hand, the remaining four respondents were semi-professionals involved in the airline, entertainment, health and marketing industries. The majority of the subjects were single men, while two were married and one subject was divorced. All of them were involved in answering a survey (see Appendix A) designed to answer RQ3 of this study.

Meanwhile, a group consisting of six subjects was drawn from the pool for ethnographic observation, in which their conversations were tape-recorded and observed and later transcribed for analysis. This group of young male comprised of six metrosexuals. Cohen *et al.* (2000) state that the number of minimum samples that needs to be extracted from the population, especially in qualitative study should be at least six subjects.

In order to adhere to the research ethics, the researcher decided to protect their confidentiality and anonymity (Cohen *et al.*, 2000.) and thus, used pseudonyms instead in the results and findings section. The six men who took part in all of the conversations, Dato', Eriq, Kuntum, Tobey, Bambam and Fifi were demographically a homogenous group: Malay, upper middle-class Malaysian urbanites aged 28 to 39, who shared the same interests and regularly met up at their own willingness and belonged to the same social network classified as metrosexuals. The findings of the Demographic Questionnaire confirmed that all of the subjects met the criteria for being metrosexuals. Table 3.1 describes the demographic information about the prime subjects of this study.

Table 3.1 Information about the subjects

N (subject)	Name	Age	Marital Status	Qualification	Occupation
1	Bambam	29	Single	M.A in Hairstyling (Germany)	Celebrity Hairstylist/Business man
2	Dato'	39	Single	MBA (London)	Executive Director
3	Eriq	31	Single	B. Sc. (Hons.) in Environmental Studies (UPM)	Diplomatic Administrative Officer
4	Fifi	33	Single	B. Sc. Engin. (Hons)	Engineer
5	Kuntum	35	Single	MBBS (Ireland)	Physician/Doctor
6	Tobey	36	Single	B.A in Performing Arts (Akademi Seni Kebangsaan)	Flight Attendant (Assistant Cabin Manager)
Total (N): 6					

All of the subjects worked in Kuala Lumpur, except for Tobey (Subject 6), who worked and lived in Abu Dhabi for one of the most established airline company of Middle East and Eriq (Subject 3) who lived in the Federal Territory of Putrajaya and worked at one of the ministry departments. Subject 2 (Dato') was working in an established local company based in Bangsar, while Subject 5 (Kuntum) was a doctor cum specialist in beauty and health centre located in Kampung Baru, Kuala Lumpur. Bambam (Subject 1) was a celebrity hairstylist and the owner of his own hair salon located at The Curve shopping centre. Finally, Subject 6 (Fifi) was an engineer with a local petroleum company (Petronas) and has been working there for nine years.

From the survey, it was found that all of the subjects have completed their education with at least a first degree qualification. An interview with the group revealed further in details about their qualification background. Two subjects have got master's degree qualification. Subject 1 has got a first degree and a master's degree in The Art of Hairstyling from higher education institutes in Germany and Austria, while Subject 2 has a degree in B.B.A and MBA from one of the universities in London, United Kingdom. On the other hand, Subject 3 graduated with a first degree in Environmental Science from University Putra Malaysia. Subject 4 graduated with a degree in engineering from one of the local universities in Malaysia. Meanwhile, Subject 5 received his degree in Medicine from one of the universities in Ireland and finally Subject 6 read Music and Performance Art at Akademi Seni Kebangsaan and has got a first degree in the said field.

From their occupations, it was noted that all of them are professionals who work in different industries. Although flight attendant is considered as a semi-professional occupation, it should be noted that Tobey's ranking (Subject 6) in his industry has

placed him at professional level as his position is as equivalent to manager's position which requires him to perform duties as a Cabin Crew Manager for short-haul's flights and as an Assistant Cabin Crew Manager for all long-haul's flights. Based on the subjects' jobs, they were also interviewed by the researcher about their monthly income. Looking at their monthly income, it can also be concluded that all of the subjects are of high-middle and high income background, ranging from RM5000 (Subject 2) to RM15000 (Subject 6). Since all of them were single, most of them have fairly high amount of disposable monthly income to be spent on.

The subjects are native speakers of Malay language; however, all of them are proficient users of English language too as they speak and use English as their second language in Malaysia setting. Ever since these subjects are bilinguals, they employed code-switching in most of their speech in the conversations. This was mainly because of all the subjects were highly educated, receiving their education up to tertiary level. In addition to that, all of the subjects use English because of the career's demands (e.g. communicating with clients, colleagues and friends).

As for the selection criteria, the researcher adopted Simpson's definition of metrosexual. As mentioned by Simpson (1994), metrosexuals are 'young'. By 'young', the subjects are selected accordingly with reference to Erickson's stages of psychosocial development (1950), which stated that a young adult is generally a person between the age of twenty to forty years old. From the interview and researcher's observation, this group of young males also possess the criteria stated by Simpson (1994) in his definition of metrosexual; they are young men with a high disposable income who spend their money for services, goods and products which they deem beneficial to enhance their appearance and to cater to their modern lifestyle, are seen as 'walking

billboards' through their projection of pleasant images and personalities of modern gentlemen by the public, who have a well-paid job and live in the city.

The rationale for selecting these subjects was to analyse the spoken language of metrosexuals, particularly on their styles of language and speech patterns and while interacting within the same group. Therefore, the results would describe what kinds of speech patterns and styles being used by metrosexuals and perhaps may explain how Communities of Practice's model contributes toward the construction and development of linguistic and non-linguistic practices of the metrosexuals.

The sampling technique used for the selection of these subjects is non-probability samples (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Since this is a case study research, it is sufficient to use non-probability samples "because despite the disadvantages that arise from their non-representativeness, they are far less complicated to set up, are considerably less-expensive, and can prove perfectly adequate where researchers do not intend to generalize their findings beyond the sample in question" (Cohen *et al.*, 2000, p. 102). The type of non-probability sample used for this study is convenience sampling, where the subjects are the nearest individuals to the researcher to serve as respondents. According to Cohen *et al.*, although the parameters of generalizability in this type of sample are negligible, it is the most widely used sampling strategy selected for a case study or a series of case studies (p. 103).

3.2 Instruments

The instruments used in this study were divided into four categories. The first one was a survey as aforementioned (see Appendix A), served to find out some background information about the subjects and to confirm whether they fulfilled the criteria for

being a metrosexual. The survey was adapted from Conseur, (1994), and Cheng, Ooi and Ting (2010), and constructed using the definition of metrosexual man coined by Simpson (1994). The second instrument administered in this study was the audio recorded conversations between the subjects in this study. The third instrument used was the ethnography observation, in which the perimeter was built and based upon the Communities of Practice model by Wenger (1998). The fourth instrument that was implemented in this study was the semi-structured interview (see Appendix B). The questions for the interview were developed after the survey was administered and throughout the course of observation by the researcher.

3.2.1 Survey

The survey consisted of six demographic questions in Section One, fifty items in Section Two, and was divided into five parts on lifestyle and factors influencing the emergence and development of language practice of metrosexuals (see Appendix A). The survey was carried out to provide information about the subject's background that fit the definition of a metrosexual given by Simpson (1994).

The demographic data collected consisted of the subjects' name, age, and levels of education, occupation, marital status, sexual orientation and race. In order to understand the subjects' background and lifestyle, the researcher relied on the definition of metrosexual men defined by Simpson (see Section 1.0). Eventually, the items in the questionnaire were constructed, adapted and adopted from Simpson's delineation. This survey was also employed to supply additional information about the subjects' metrosexuality and its impact on men's language. The rationale of giving this survey to the subjects was that we could understand the findings better as their habitual

behaviours and practices actually affect their language use in the metrosexual community.

As for Section Two of the survey, the items were adapted from two other studies: “Metrosexual behaviour and identity factors contributing to this current trend in society” by Conseur, (1994) and “Factors affecting consumptions behaviour of metrosexual men toward male grooming products” by Cheng *et al.* (2010). Items for the questionnaire are constructed, adapted and modified due to their suitability in extracting the desired information from the participants. The scale for measurement for each response was adopted from the Likert scale, using a four-point scale with responses ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’ (1), ‘Disagree’ (2), ‘Agree’ (3) and ‘Strongly Disagree’ (4). ‘Neutral’ response which represents the cut-off point was removed as it was found to distract subjects’ judgment to respond more accurately to each item in the survey (Conseur, 1994). Further details on the items of the questionnaire used in this study is further simplified and explained in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Sections, contents and sources of questionnaires

Section/ Part	Content	No. of Items	Source
1	Demographic background of the participants	6	
2/A	<p>Factor 1 (Self –image)</p> <p>i. The awareness of self-esteem among metrosexual men is high and therefore, good physical appearance and presence is the key factor to socializing.</p> <p>ii. How men feel about themselves and their levels of assurance are related to how they look.</p>	13 (Q1-13)	Cheng, Ooi and Ting, (2010), Amanda Alison Conseur, (1994)
2/B	<p>Factor 2 (Consumption)</p> <p>i. The consumption of health and beauty products and branded items, especially the ones which are endorsed by metrosexual celebrities had made men more comfortable to consume beauty products for men.</p>	10 (Q14-23)	Cheng, Ooi and Ting, (2010).

	ii. This new spending habit had positively changed men's attitude toward the idea of indulging themselves with expensive products and goods.		
2/C	Factor 3 (Societal expectation) i. Social expectation is pressuring contemporary men to want to look better and stay vibrant.	7 (Q24-30)	Cheng, Ooi and Ting, (2010).
2/D	Factor 4 (Perception) i. The various perceptions of metrosexual indicate that the term is 'limiting' and 'confusing' because "it doesn't describe how men are and how men are feeling today". (Fenley, 2004) ii; Perception is therefore seen to influence how people perceive the metrosexuals	10 (Q31-40)	Cheng, Ooi and Ting, (2010). Amanda Alison Conseur, (1994)
2/E	Factor 5 (Leisure and interests) i. The development of new-age leisure has contributed towards metrosexual men's awareness to keep them updated with their surrounding. ii. Media and reading materials like men's magazine contribute toward a better language use and practice among metrosexual men.	10 (Q41-50)	Researcher
Total		56	

Sections A, B, C, D and E consist of five factors that may contribute towards the emergence and development of linguistic and non-linguistic practice by metrosexuals (see Table 3.2). This survey served to answer RQ3 (What are the factors that may influence the use of linguistic features of the metrosexual men in their discussions?) in this thesis.

3.2.2 Ethnography Observation

In order to find out speech patterns and styles of the metrosexuals, the researcher conducted a series of ethnography observations and observed the conversations as one

of the participants (Participant Observation). Abbot and Bordens (2008) state the ethnography technique is used primarily to study and describe the functioning of cultures through a study of social interactions and expressions between people and groups (p. 230). Meanwhile, Cohen *et al.* (2000) describe linguistic ethnography “focuses upon the use of language and the ways in which conversations in everyday life are structured” (p. 25).

The researcher observed a total of ten conversation sessions of the subjects. While listening attentively to the conversations, the researcher jotted down notes pertaining to any interesting behaviour, mannerisms and unique utterances of the subjects as field notes. This observation also served to answer RQ1 and R2, which will further describe and explain the most talked-about topics among the members in the group and the distinguished features and styles of their speech patterns.

3.2.3 Audio Recording

The third instrument used in this study was the audio-recordings of conversations amongst the subjects. The researcher transcribed ten conversations of about 25 to 30 minutes each. Overall, a grand total of 300 minutes of natural occurring talk was recorded and transcribed using Stockwell’s (2010) transcription conventions (see Appendix D).

In order to analyse the speech patterns and styles of the subjects in this study, the researcher uses Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson’s Conversation Analysis (CA) approach (1974). According to Simpson and Myar (2010), “CA focuses on analysing the interaction at the micro-level, concentrating on the smallest details of talk without paying too much attention to the institutional context in which the interaction takes

place” (p. 61). CA has been used for the qualitative analysis of both informal and institutional conversation. Further, it is also ‘data-centred’ whereby it does not look for evidence that is not in the talk itself. CA does not begin with theoretical assumptions or frameworks, but ensues as an attempt to understand interaction as it makes sense to those involved (Simpson and Myar, 2010, p. 61). The researcher believes that CA is the most suitable approach to analyse the conversations by the subjects in this study as it analyses the verbal behaviour related to the setting in which it occurs and who the speakers are.

3.2.4 Interview

The final phase of triangulating the data was a semi-structured interview. According to Cohen *et al.* (2000), “The qualitative interview tends to move towards the open-ended and semi-structured interview, as this enables respondents to project their own ways of defining the world” (p. 146-147). In addition, other researchers such as Denzin (1970) and Silverman (1993) claim that open-ended or semi-structured interview permits flexibility rather than fixity of sequence of discussions, while enables the subjects to discuss and pursue issues and matters which are not included in a pre-devised schedule. Hence, the researcher chose semi-structured interview in order to elicit more information from the subjects in this study pertaining to their language use based from the recorded conversations.

The subjects were questioned about certain linguistics features such as interruptions, tag questions and rising intonation to name a few in their speech patterns and how being a metrosexual affected the way they spoke to one another (see Appendix E). The interview with the subject would provide further interpretation and evidence to the linguistic and non-linguistic variety used by metrosexuals while interacting within

the same community. This interview was also employed to supply additional information about the subjects' metrosexuality and its impact on men's language. The researcher intends to understand the findings better and analyse the habitual behaviours and practices of metrosexuals which could actually affect their language use in the metrosexual community.

3.3 Methodology

In this study, the researcher employs a case study method. As stated by Creswell (1998), "A case study is an exploration of "bounded system" or a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (p. 21). From the researcher's point of view, this approach enables him to focus his attention on the specific existing linguistic and non-linguistic patterns and styles which are being used by the subjects in his study. Merriam (1998) explained that a case study is an extensive study done in a specific bounded system which involves a limited number of participants. Due to limited number of participants, a case study is the most suitable approach to be adapted because it helps the researcher to collect rich and detailed information that could accurately help to describe and explain the study investigated which will develop a deeper understanding on the research matter.

Although this study is purely qualitative in nature, the use of survey was also crucial because the quantitative components in the survey will generate useful information that could be used to give support to the researcher's analysis and findings. The data extracted from the observation and survey will provide a useful framework and guidance for the researcher in conducting his research and formulating questions for the final phase of data collection which is the interview phase. Then, a traditional literature review analysis procedure is employed in describing and comparing the results of the

subjects' speech patterns and styles in this study to other studies in language and gender field. In short, the research design and methodology of this study have been carefully prepared and planned to fit the purpose and objectives of the RQs. Hence, the overall development of research design and methodology of this study is shown in Figure 3.2.

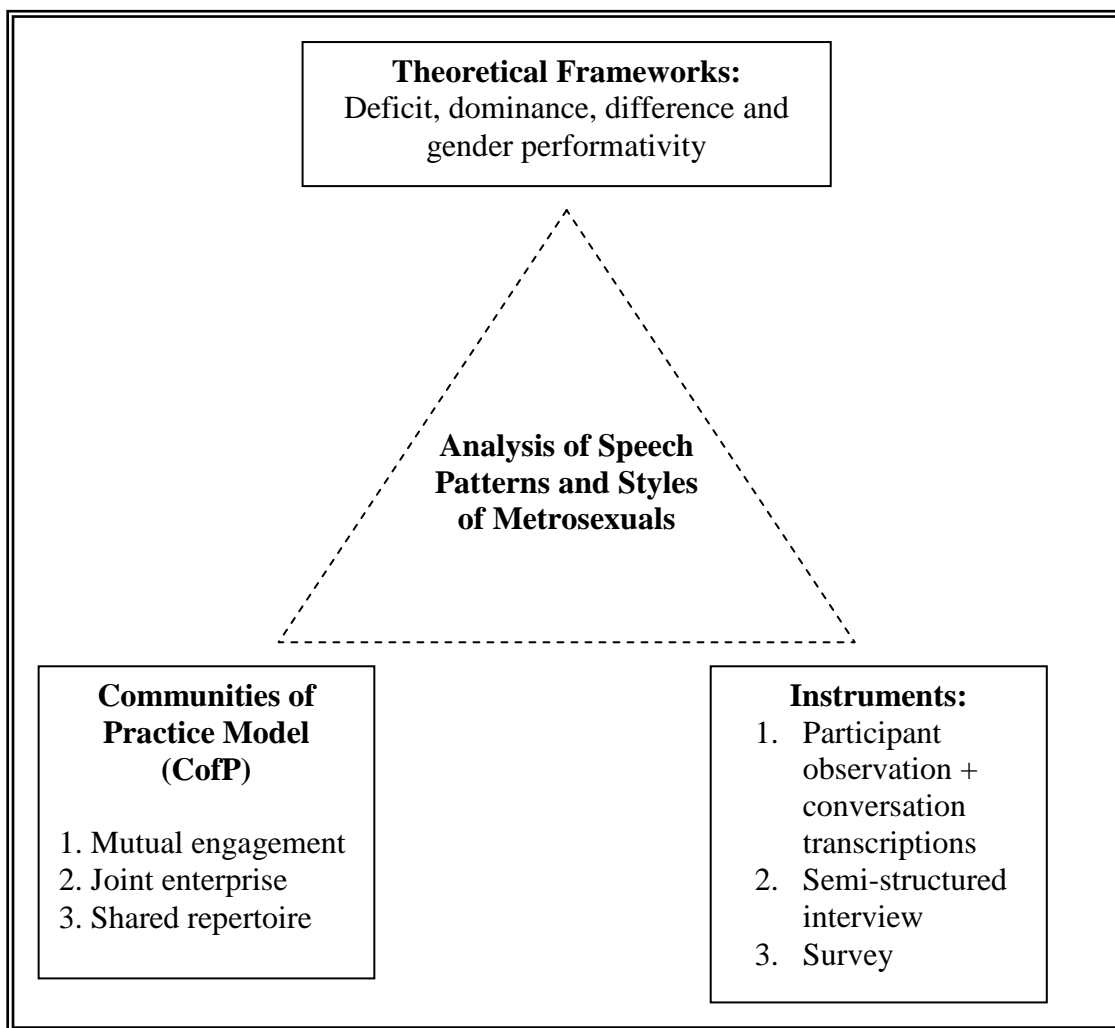


Figure 3.1: Development of research design and methodology (Perimeter of the study)

3.4 Research Framework

The researcher has chosen to implement the Communities of Practice (CofP) framework to analyse and extract the data from his observations (see Chapter 2, Section 2.8). To date, CofP has been used by several sociolinguists in language and gender field (e.g

Bucholtz, 1999; Cameron, 1997; Eckert, 1999; Kiesling, 1997; and Meyerhoff, 2003) and this framework is seen appropriate by the researcher to extract information from this group of metrosexuals. The case study presented by the researcher in this research is also a response from the proposition made by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992):

A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour. As a social construct, a CofP is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages. (p. 464)

Therefore, in this study, these three premises serve as triangulation points to ‘mould’ or scaffold the linguistic and non-linguistic practices of the metrosexual subjects who were involved in the ethnography observation. To sum up, Figure 3.1 shows the methodological framework in analyzing the speech patterns and styles of the subjects in the study.

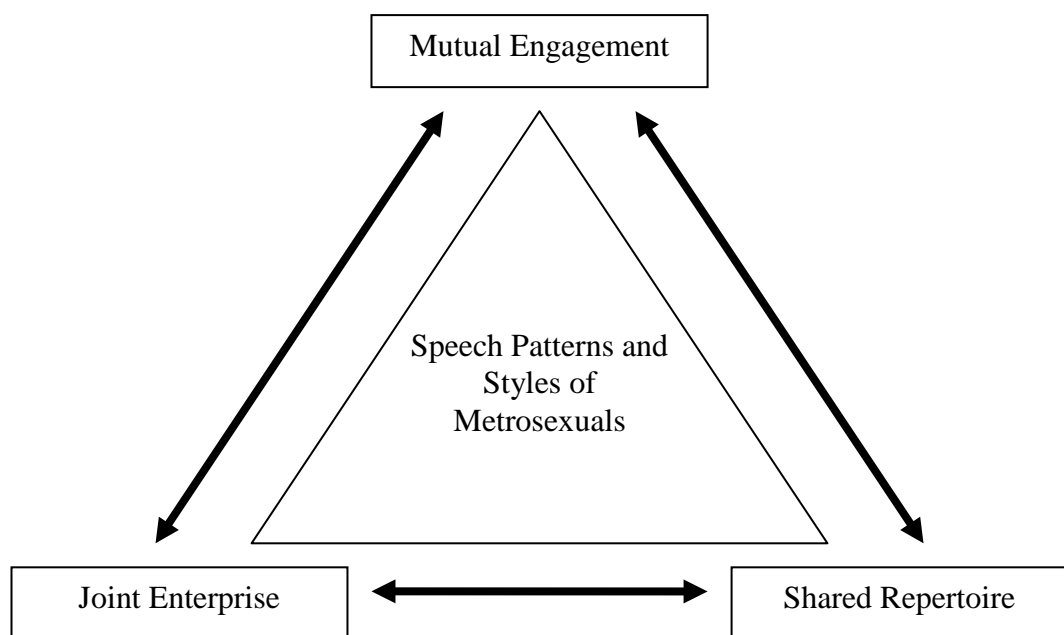


Figure 3.2: Illustration of CofP model/methodology in analysing the speech patterns and styles of metrosexual’s language

In addition, the researcher did not disregard the main objective of the study which concentrates on language and gender, specifically on the study of metrosexual's language. Therefore, the researcher had also integrated the principles of language and gender in analysing the observations. As stated in the preceding chapter, studies on language and gender concentrated under three schools of thought: deficit, difference and dominance. Recently, the emergence of gender performativity framework has geared most current researches to analyse the language usage of men and women. Therefore, the results in this study are hoped to describe the linguistic features of metrosexuals and perhaps may explain how these theories come together in the production of themes and speech patterns and styles of metrosexuals as a community of practice.

3.5 Data Collection and Procedures

There were several steps and procedures needed to be followed by the researcher before collecting data for this study. Before collection of data begins, the first procedure was to gain consent from all of the participants. The researcher approached the subjects personally and obtained verbal permission from them. As the researcher is also one of the members in this community of practice who has a direct contact to the metrosexual community, the permission to conduct the study has been granted without any difficulties. After the approval from all of the participants, the researcher started collecting the data for the study.

3.5.1 Survey

In order to obtain data for the survey, a personal meeting with the participants was held in which the objectives of the study were explained. The survey questions were distributed amongst the subjects (see Section 3.2.1). The surveys questions were completed within 15-20 minutes. The researcher was present through the survey period

to respond to any queries from the subject. The questions were collected and the process of analysis ensued.

3.5.2 Ethnography Observation

In all of the ten sessions observed, important notes were taken pertaining to the behavior, mannerism and unique utterances performed by the subjects. In order to retain the naturalistic quality of their conversations, minimal participation and responses were given by the researcher. Furthermore, the nature of the conversation was also informal as all of the subjects interacted in a relaxed and casual manner.

3.5.3 Audio-Recordings

The researcher arranged for meetings with the subjects in order to obtain the audio-recording data. The subject agreed to meet at different settings, namely at the café, bar and restaurants as well as at one of the subjects' home located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur. In each of these meetings, the researcher used an audio recorder to record the conversations. Each session took about 25 to 30 minutes. The recorded conversations were played back to get the general idea of the talk that had taken place. Transcription of the recorded conversations were made based on Stockwell's transcription convention (2010).

In addition, the group's conversations were tape-recorded on different occasions and places, namely at cafes, restaurants and at one of the participant's home where all of the subjects always get together during weekends for a weekly "chill-out" session. Overall, the researcher has spent over two months for the audio recording and observation process and recorded twenty recording sessions with the participants. The researcher also made his second dataset, which comprised of his own field notes while

recording their conversations as to supplement any missing points and data which could not be acquired from the voice recording. After every meeting with the subjects, the researcher went back to listen to the recording and transcribed the conversation, and compared any distinctive utterances and behaviours against his field notes. Nevertheless, the researcher eventually chose and concentrated on ten recordings only in which each recording lasts for 30 minutes (10 X 30 minutes = 300 minutes). Both data from the recording and field notes were used primarily to determine the list of practices to be brought up for discussions in the interview.

3.5.4 Interview

The interview process was conducted after the researcher completed collecting and analysing the data from the observations and recording. The rationale of this procedure is that the findings from the observation would help the researcher formulate and construct the questions related to the findings and therefore, the scope and perimeter of the research would not be obscured and compromised. The six subjects involved in the two-month observation were interviewed in one group. This interview was also recorded for this reason so that the researcher would be able to analyse their speech patterns and styles and therefore will confirm the findings in the previous observation.

3.6 Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed and interpreted using various methods pertaining to each instrument in the study as indicated in the following sections.

3.6.1 Survey

The data gathered from the survey were analysed using statistical data analysis SPSS version 15 so that the raw data can be processed and interpreted accurately using the

min, median and mode values. The raw data collected were then keyed-into the programme. Eventually, the results were tabulated into percentiles that represented the responses from the participants in this study.

3.6.2 Ethnography Observation

The data obtained from observation sessions in the study were analysed according to the occurrences and patterns emerging from the behaviour, mannerism and utterances from the subjects. The fields notes are used to support and supplement the findings.

3.6.3 Audio Recording

To analyse the most common topics among the group, the researcher chose and analysed ten recordings and transcribed their conversations. Based on the transcriptions, the researcher categorized the topics and codified each topic accordingly to their frequency in ascending order. From there, the researcher tabulates the topics into percentage form and provided further examples and descriptions of the most commonly talked-about topics among the subjects. As for the analysis of the speech patterns and styles by these subjects, the researcher provided examples from the transcriptions and discussed the speech events further using a traditional analysis procedure with reference to the contemporary literature of language and gender as well as the CofP.

3.6.4 Interview

To analyse data, the researcher used field notes and recording from the interview to confirmed the findings for RQ2 in this study. The subjects were interviewed and questioned about their linguistic and non-linguistic usage while interacting within the same group. Besides, the interview gave the added advantage for the researcher to explore and discover certain underlying information about the linguistic and non-

linguistic features usage among the metrosexual men as the researcher would be able to interpret them based on their responses for the questions. In addition, this procedure was hoped to triangulate and confirmed the results and findings of all the three research questions in this study through the responses provided by the subjects, which then would be analyzed and compared with existing literature review available.

3.7 Summary

In sum, the researcher has chosen to implement a case study research design to data collection. More specifically, the researcher followed the ethnography approach to observation and integrated CofP principles while doing so. As stated by Berg (1998), a researcher becomes immersed in the behavioural or social being studied in ethnography. In addition, this framework is used primarily to describe the functioning of cultures via a study of social interactions and expressions between people and groups. Other than ethnography observation, survey design was also implemented in order to gather the data.