

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

Name of Candidate: **Deborah Ashabai a/p S. Fredericks John**
(I.C No: **690823-10-5614**)

Registration/Matric No: **TGB 100007**

Name of Degree: **Master of English as a Second Language**

Title of ~~Project Paper~~/Research Report/~~Dissertation~~/Thesis (“this Work”):

Identity Construction and Code Switching in English Newspaper Advertisements

Field of Study: **Sociolinguistics**

I do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) I am the sole author/writer of this Work;
- (2) This Work is original;
- (3) Any use of any work in which copyright exists was done by way of fair dealing and for permitted purposes and any excerpt or extract from, or reference to or reproduction of any copyright work has been disclosed expressly and sufficiently and the title of the Work and its authorship have been acknowledged in this Work;
- (4) I do not have any actual knowledge nor do I ought reasonably to know that the making of this work constitutes an infringement of any copyright work;
- (5) I hereby assign all and every rights in the copyright to this Work to the University of Malaya (“UM”), who henceforth shall be owner of the copyright in this Work and that any reproduction or use in any form or by any means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of UM having been first had and obtained;
- (6) I am fully aware that if in the course of making this Work I have infringed any copyright whether intentionally or otherwise, I may be subject to legal action or any other action as may be determined by UM.

Candidate’s Signature

Date: 29 May 2012

Subscribed and solemnly declared before,

Witness’s Signature

Date: 29 May 2012

Name: **Dr. Francisco Perlas Dumanig**

Designation: **Supervisor**

ABSTRACT

Identity construction and code switching in print advertising has become an area of growing interest. However, studies on this topic in the Malaysian context are limited. Globally there are significantly more studies conducted, but most scholars investigate the occurrence of English lexical items in local language advertising. Thus, an examination of code switching in advertisements in the Malaysian context would be significant. This study aims to examine the construction of identity through the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. Specifically, this study examines how code switching is used to construct identity, determine the types of identities constructed and explore the reasons for the construction of such identities in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. To achieve the aims of this study, 121 food, finance, motoring, energy and telecommunication English advertisements with Malay, Tamil and Chinese code switching occurrences were selected. The advertisements were taken from the three local English newspapers with the highest circulation, namely, *The Star*, *The New Straits Times*, and *The Sun* over a period of six months from 1st August, 2011 to 31st January, 2012. The data was analyzed using Bhatia's (1992) four structural components of advertisements, Piller's (2001) identity theory of similarity and difference and Woodward's (1997) theory of difference and representation. The findings reveal that advertisers construct identity through code switching during festivals which are found in the headline and body copy components of their advertisements. Through code switching, different types of identities are constructed, namely, Islamic identity, ethnic identities, National (Malaysian) identity and interest group identities. The main reason for advertisers to construct these identities through code switching is to persuade multilingual consumers. Therefore code switching is used as a marketing strategy. The advertisers aim to persuade consumers through the construction of these identities to accommodate the bilingual

consumers, attract consumers through affective means, and build credibility and solidarity with the consumers. The findings are consistent with previous studies on language choice and advertising.

ABSTRAK

Minat terhadap pengajian konstruksi identiti dan penukaran kod di dalam pengiklanan cetak ketara meningkat. Namun begitu, kajian dalam bidang ini dalam konteks Malaysia masih terhad. Walaupun terdapat lebih banyak kajian dalam bidang ini dalam konteks global, sebahagian besar daripada kajian-kajian tersebut hanya menyiasat penggunaan item leksikal bahasa Inggeris dalam pengiklanan bahasa-bahasa tempatan. Oleh itu, kajian tentang penukaran kod yang melibatkan bahasa-bahasa tempatan dalam iklan bahasa Inggeris dalam konteks negara Malaysia adalah signifikan. Justeru, kajian ini bertujuan untuk memeriksa pembinaan identiti melalui penggunaan penukaran kod di dalam iklan-iklan akhbar bahasa Inggeris di Malaysia. Khususnya, kajian ini meneliti bagaimana penukaran kod digunakan untuk membina identiti, menentukan jenis identiti yang dibina dan juga meninjau sebab-sebab di sebalik konstruksi identiti berkenaan di dalam iklan akhbar bahasa Inggeris di Malaysia. Bagi mencapai matlamat kajian ini, 121 iklan tentang makanan, kewangan, permotoran, tenaga dan telekomunikasi dalam bahasa Inggeris dengan kejadian penukaran kod di dalam bahasa Melayu, Tamil dan Cina telah dipilih. Iklan-iklan ini diambil daripada tiga akhbar tempatan bahasa Inggeris yang mempunyai edaran tertinggi, iaitu, *The Star*, *The New Straits Times*, dan *The Sun* dalam tempoh enam bulan dari 1 haribulan Ogos, 2011 hingga 31 haribulan Januari, 2012. Data ini telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan empat komponen struktur iklan oleh Bhatia (1992), teori identiti persamaan dan perbezaan Piller (2001) dan teori perbezaan dan perwakilan Woodward (1997). Kajian ini mendapati bahawa pengiklan membina identiti dengan menggunakan penukaran kod terutamanya semasa musim perayaan dan penempatan kebanyakan penukaran kod terdapat pada tajuk utama dan komponen salinan badan iklan. Melalui penukaran kod, pelbagai jenis identiti dibina, iaitu identiti agama Islam, identiti etnik, identiti Nasional (Malaysia) dan identiti kumpulan berasaskan minat. Apabila dibandingkan konstruksi identiti-identiti tersebut

dengan kajian-kajian yang lepas, didapati sebab utama pengiklan membina pelbagai identiti melalui penukaran kod adalah untuk memujuk pengguna pelbagai bahasa untuk membeli produk atau servis yang ditawarkan. Oleh itu, dapat disimpulkan bahawa penukaran kod digunakan sebagai strategi pemasaran. Pengiklan bertujuan untuk memujuk pengguna melalui pembinaan identiti ini untuk menampung pengguna dwibahasa, menarik pengguna melalui cara afektif, membina kredibiliti dan membina solidariti dengan pengguna. Penemuan kajian ini adalah konsisten dengan kebanyakan kajian lepas mengenai pilihan bahasa dan pengiklanan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This journey would not have been possible if not for the support of many individuals along the way.

First and foremost, I would like to give thanks to the Lord God Almighty, without whose strength I would have surely floundered.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to my Supervisor, Dr. Francisco Perlas Dumanig, for his patience, wisdom, expertise, and for never being too busy to answer my questions. His thoughtful guidance has helped shape this research report and enabled me to complete my course on time.

I am deeply grateful to my husband Augustin, who has supported and encouraged me throughout the course. He is truly my tower of strength in the oft-stressful world of the Master's student. I would also like to acknowledge Timothy and Noel, my ever-hungry sons, for their patience and support throughout this journey and for understanding that baking cakes must take a back seat to the Master's programme at times.

I am also grateful to my late Father, who taught me the importance and value of education. It is his sense of discipline that has carried me thus far. I also thank my mother and the rest of my family for times of laughter and fun that has helped me go on. I am especially thankful to my sister Andora for the many Starbucks days and for believing in me.

Finally, I am indebted to my mother-in-law and my sister-in-law, for the many times they have upheld me in prayer during times of great stress.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.3 Rationale of the Study	6
1.4 Objectives	7
1.5 Research Questions	8
1.6 The Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Scope and Limitations	9
1.8 Conclusion	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 The Linguistic Context of Malaysia	12
2.3 Code Switching	13
2.3.1 Motivations for Code Switching	15
2.4 Language and the Media	17
2.4.1 Code Switching in Print Advertisements	18
2.5 Identity Construction	20
2.5.1 Identity Construction and Code Switching	22

2.5.2 Identity Construction and the Media	23
2.5.3 Identity Construction and Multilingual Print Advertisements	24
2.6 Conclusion	27
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
3.1 Introduction	28
3.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework	28
3.3 Data Management	31
3.3.1 Corpus	31
3.3.2 Selection Criteria	34
3.3.3 Data Collection	34
3.4 Data Analysis	35
3.5 Conclusion	37
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS & DISCUSSION	38
4.1 Introduction	38
4.2 Code Switching Occurrences in Newspaper Advertisements	38
4.2.1 Code Switching Occurrences and Advertisement Categories	40
4.2.2 Code Switching and Language Choice	42
4.3 Code Switching in Temporal and Spatial Contexts	45
4.3.1 Proximity to Celebrations and Festivals	46
4.3.2 Code Switching and Structural Components of Advertisements	50
4.4 Identities Constructed through Code Switching	55
4.4.1 Code Switching and Islamic Identity	55
4.4.2 Code switching and Ethnic Identities	58
4.4.2.1 Code Switching and Indian Identity	59

4.4.2.2 Code Switching and Chinese Identity	60
4.4.2.3 Code Switching and Malay Identity	63
4.4.3 Code Switching and National (Malaysian) Identity	65
4.4.4 Code Switching and Interest Group Identities	72
4.5 Reasons for Constructing Identities through Code Switching	74
4.5.1 Accommodation	75
4.5.2 Affective Reasons	77
4.5.3 Building Credibility	79
4.5.4 Building Solidarity	80
4.7 Conclusion	82
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	84
5.1 Introduction	84
5.2 Summary of the Results	84
5.2.1 Research Question 1	84
5.2.2 Research Question 2	87
5.2.3 Research Question 3	89
5.3 Implications	92
5.4 Recommendations	93
REFERENCES	94
APPENDIX A: Languages in Peninsular Malaysia	98
APPENDIX B: Newspaper Circulation Data	99
APPENDIX C: Advertisement Analysis Charts & Tables	100
APPENDIX D: Advertisement Samples	104
APPENDIX E: Advertisement Index	121

LIST OF TABLES

3.1 Readership & Circulation Details of Local English Newspapers	32
4.1 Code Switching Occurrences in Newspaper Advertisements	39
4.2 Language Choice and Advertising Category	43

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework	30
Figure 3.2: Data Collection	34
Figure 3.3: Plan for Analysis	35
Figure 4.1: Code Switching Occurrences and Advertisement Categories	40
Figure 4.2: Language Choice in Advertisements	45
Figure 4.3: Temporal Context of Code Switching Occurrences	46
Figure 4.4 Spatial Context of Code Switching Occurrences	50

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The idea of constructing identity through language choice is not new. Various studies over the years have linked code switching to identity construction (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006; Leung, 2010, p. 418). In recent years, with the growing phenomenon of code switching occurrences in advertisements, interest has also been rising in the study of identity construction through code switching in advertisements (Piller, 2001). The current study follows in this vein by focusing on the construction of identity through the use of code switching in print advertisements in the Malaysian context.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the related literature and moves on to state the rationale of the study. This is followed by the purpose statement, the objectives and the research questions. The significance of the study is discussed and the chapter ends by delineating some of the limitations of this study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Identity construction has been a topic of great interest for research spanning various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, gender studies and linguistics (Romaine, 2010, p. 1). There have been many differing views on identity and how it is constructed through language. Labelle (2011, p. 174) states that identity is “one’s conception of self in the world”. Romaine (2010, p. 1) explains that identity concerns how people relate to their surroundings as well as their own place in it. These two viewpoints on identity reflect the essentialist view, which holds that identity is relatively fixed and stable, and the non-essentialist view, which holds that identity is fluid, and changes with time, context and relationships (Woodward, 1997, p. 11).

Identity can be marked through similarity, difference and representation (Piller, 2001; Woodward, 1997). In other words, our concept of who we are can be derived through our similarities with others, through our differences with others, through symbols that are representative of who we think we are, or even a combination of these. Language use is one way of marking those similarities and differences.

Thomas and Wareing (2000, p.136) observe that “one of the most fundamental ways of establishing our identity is through our use of language”. Therefore, language and language choice is seen as an expression of identity (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006; Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 9). Language choice may sometimes occur through code switching which is seen as an expression of both individual and group identities. In other words, code switching can be used by people to construct their social identity (Thomas & Wareing, 2000, p. 136). Unlike the essentialists, the post-constructionist holds that these identities are “constantly being built and negotiated” through the use of language (Leung, 2010, p. 418). Therefore, the study of code switching could yield valuable information on how identities are constructed and negotiated.

Identity construction, particularly through code switching in print advertising, has been increasingly studied by linguists. While there are some studies that explore identity construction through code switching in print advertisements globally (Gao, 2005; Piller, 2001) similar studies in the Malaysian context seem to be limited.

Piller (2001) examines how advertisers construct identities through the use of English in German advertisements. She argues that “contemporary social identities are hybrid and complex, and the media plays a crucial role in their construction” (Piller, 2001, p. 153). She further claims that the identities constructed in the media is moving

away from political identities based on citizenship, to economic ones based on “participation in a global market” (Piller, 2001, p. 156). In general, the use of English is to construct global, successful and economic oriented identities (Piller, 2001, p. 167).

Similar findings are revealed in other studies which investigate English code switches in non-English advertisements such as the use of English in Chinese advertising (Gao, 2005), the use of English in Chinese advertising in Taiwan (Chen, 2006), and the use of English in French print advertising (Ruellot, 2011). These studies argue that English is used because it is linked with success, modernity, global economy and progress. However, studies related to code switching and identity in the Malaysian context are slightly different.

One such study is by Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006) who explains that the use of local lexis in Malaysian English could be seen as important linguistic, cultural as well as identity indicators of the users (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006, p. 7). She claims that using the local lexis in Malaysian English is not just to fill in the lexical gaps to account for local culture but rather for connotative reasons. The use of local lexis in Malaysian English is more ideological in nature than linguistic. She argues that the “choice of using a particular lexical form over another goes beyond linguistic needs” to an expression of identity. Generally, local lexis is used in Malaysian English to express political, cultural and religious identities (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006, p. 15).

Other than identity construction, code switching occurrences in multilingual advertisements have increasingly been the subject of linguistic research (Chen, 2006; Leung, 2010; Ruellot, 2011). However, most studies in this area are on code switching from local languages to English such as the use of English in French advertisements

(Ruellot, 2011), the use of English in Chinese advertisements (Chen, 2006; Leung, 2010), and the use of English in Hindi advertisements (Bhatia, 1992). To date, there seem to be few studies on local languages used as the embedded language in English advertisements. One study is that of Menke (2011) which examines the use of Spanish in English advertisements in the United States. However, the study does not explore the construction of identity through the use of code switching in advertisements.

In Malaysia, code switching has been observed in local English newspaper advertisements as well (Azirah Hashim, 2010; Dumanig & David, 2011). According to studies on code switching from an SLA (Second Language Acquisition) perspective, code switching is a sign of deficiency or interference. However, when it comes to English newspaper advertisements this view is no longer tenable as both copywriters and readers can be assumed to be reasonably proficient in English (Dumanig & David, 2011).

Three studies that examine code switching in newspaper advertisements in Malaysia are by (Azirah Hashim, 2010; Dumanig & David, 2011; Shanmuganathan & Ramasamy, 2009). However, both Shanmuganathan and Ramasamy (2009) as well as Dumanig and David (2011) do not link code switching in advertisements to the construction of identity. While Azirah Hashim's (2010) study is one of the few studies that link identity to advertisements, it does not examine in detail how advertisers use code switching to construct identity in their advertisements. However, she observes that the study of the choice of language used in advertising can offer valuable insights into the cultural, ethnic and religious pluralism of Malaysia. The choice of language, including the use of code switching, also carries culturally specific meaning as the advertisers try to persuade their target audience (Azirah Hashim, 2010, p. 392).

In terms of motivations for code switching, lexical deficiency, solidarity and identity are categorized as some of the motivations (Gumperz, 1982; Kow, 2003). However, most of these findings have been in the domain of spoken discourse. There are few studies on motivations and code switching in written discourse in Malaysia, particularly in newspaper advertisements. It has been said that advertising exists for a single purpose – to persuade customers to buy or subscribe to certain products and services (Leung, 2010, p. 418). Everything within the advertisement, including language choice and code switching, is done for the sole purpose of selling (Leung, 2010, p. 418). Persuasion is seen as the prime motivation for constructing identity (Piller, 2001) in print advertisements. A study that examines motivations and code switching in print advertisements in Malaysia is Dumanig & David (2011), which adds accommodation as an important motivation for the use of code switching in advertisements.

While code switching is common in bilingual and multilingual communities such as Malaysia (Dumanig & David, 2011, p. 217), and has been the subject of many studies, there are still differing opinions on what exactly constitutes code switching (see Chapter 2). For the present study, code switching is defined as “the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent” (Poplack, 1980, p. 583).

In summary, identity construction in print advertisements is associated with code switching. Code switching in print advertisements, is a purposeful choice that expresses identity. In addition, through the use of culturally, ethnically and nationally loaded lexis, it is also used by advertisers to emphasize solidarity or rapport with the consumer in order to persuade them concerning their product or service. The current

study examines the use of local or native code switches in English advertisements and therefore seeks to understand the identities constructed in this context.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

As mentioned earlier, code switching has been studied from various perspectives and domains, particularly in spoken discourse. In spoken discourse, code switching has often been found to be an unconscious choice on the part of the speaker. On the other hand, the use of code switching in written discourse is purposefully done and therefore represents a conscious choice on the part of the writer. Thus far, research in this aspect has been limited. Therefore, a study on the use of code switching in written discourse, particularly in print advertising, would be beneficial in providing insight into the motivations and use of such code switches.

Secondly, most studies on code switching in advertisements examine English lexis embedded in local language advertisements. Thus far, there are very few studies on the use of local lexis in English language advertisements. As such, a study that examines the use of local lexis in English language advertisements in the Malaysian context would address the lack of research in this area (see Chapter 2 for details).

Thirdly, studies that explore identity construction in multilingual advertising globally have also been in the context of English lexis embedded in local language advertising. Thus, the identity constructs in these advertisements have been focused on motivations such as globalization, sophistication and modernity (Gao, 2005, p. 830). Furthermore, there are only a few studies which examine the link between code switching and identity construction in Malaysian print advertisements (Azirah Hashim, 2010; Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006). Thus, an investigation into identity construction

where code switching is done from local languages into English in print advertisements would surely be beneficial.

Therefore, it is evident that there is a gap in the literature concerning identity construction through the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. Thus, this study aims to explore the occurrences of code switching and the construction of identity in print advertisements, focusing on English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. It is hoped that this study will shed light on how and why identities are constructed through the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements. This study will also explore the connection between the theories on code switching and identity construction, particularly in the context of print media in Malaysia.

1.4 Objectives

This study examines the construction of identity through the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. Specifically, this study aims to:

- i. Examine how identity is constructed in selected English newspaper advertisements by analyzing the spatial and temporal contexts of code switching occurrences ;
- ii. Describe the types of identities constructed through code switching in the corpus; and
- iii. Explore the reasons for the construction of such identities in the corpus.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to meet the objectives, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

- i. How do advertisers use code switching in temporal and spatial contexts to construct identity in English newspaper advertisements?
- ii. What are the types of identities constructed through code switching in English newspaper advertisements?
- iii. Why do advertisers construct identity through code switching in English newspaper advertisements?

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The current study hopes to provide new insights on identity construction in the Malaysian context and in the domain of newspaper advertisements. The subject of how identity is constructed socially through the choice of language use is new in Malaysia. Consequently, this study will help to advance the knowledge in the area of identity construction through code switching. Furthermore, since the notion of identity construction through the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia has not been investigated in depth, this study will be useful in furthering knowledge on how code switching is used to construct identity in newspaper advertisements. It will also be very valuable for sociolinguists who study code switching in different contexts and domains.

Secondly, the perspective adopted in this study will contribute to theories related to code switching in written form, particularly in newspaper advertisements. Since most studies on code switching in advertisements have been in the context of English codes switched into local languages, this study will be beneficial to sociolinguists. The study will also be useful to those who are studying the impact of the

local languages on the English language as the study will focus on code switching from the local languages into the English language in print advertisements.

1.7 Scope and Limitations

This study limits its scope to food, finance, motoring and energy & telecommunications related advertisements in local English newspapers that contain occurrences of code switching.

Advertisements related to other products and services are not considered. Infomercials, the Classifieds, as well as advertisements in other print media such as magazines are not included as well. Repetitions of advertisements are not taken into account. However, different copy (the text in the advertisement) for the same product, service or company is considered. The study adopts a textual approach in analyzing the data and does not employ a multimodal approach in its analysis.

Only advertisements with code switching occurrences into Malay, Tamil, and the Chinese languages (Mandarin, Hokkien and Cantonese) are used. The period of study is limited to six months, from 1st August 2010 to 31st January 2011. As the study does not use a multi-modal approach, only the texts of the advertisements are analyzed.

Since identity construction is a very wide topic and has been applied in many fields, the current research will limit its analysis to identity construction through code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. This study will not examine identity construction in relation to ideology and stereotypes. The analysis of identity constructions is limited to the categories of similarity, difference, and representation as specified in the conceptual framework (see Chapter 3).

Similarly, the approaches to the study of code switching in advertisements are also varied, and so the current study limits itself to examining advertisements as a single discourse, and analysing the code switching occurrences holistically. As such, the study does not examine code switching occurrences in the advertisements at word, clause or sentence level and so does not make distinctions between intra sentential and inter sentential code switching. Theories and models that attempt to explain code switching behavior such as the Matrix Language Framework model and the Markedness Model are also not discussed as these explain code switching occurrences from a structural or grammatical view and, as explained above, this paper does not examine code switching occurrences from that perspective. In addition, these models are more suited to explain code switching occurrences in conversation and may be difficult to apply to code switching occurrences in written discourse (Sebba, 2011, p.4). This is further elucidated in the Literature Review (see Chapter 2) as well as the conceptual framework (see Chapter 3).

Due to the limited scope of this study, the findings do not generalize across other print advertisements, categories, domains or time frames.

1.8 Conclusion

There are limited studies that investigate identity construction and code switching, especially in the domain of print advertisements. While code switching has been studied in various domains and contexts all over the world, including Malaysia, most of these are studies on spoken discourse, or in the conversational context. There are very few studies that focus on written discourse or print advertisements. Of the relatively fewer studies that focus on code switching in advertisements, many are in the context

of English lexis incorporated into local language advertising. Limited studies have been conducted on the phenomena of local lexis incorporated into English language advertisements.

Thus, there is a paucity of literature of identity construction and code switching in print advertising, particularly in the Malaysian context. It is this gap in the literature that this study attempts to fill in by investigating the construction of identity through the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The three main theoretical areas which inform this study are code switching, advertising, and identity construction. This chapter reviews and discusses the related literature in these areas, both in the global and Malaysian contexts. However, the literature review will only focus on those that are directly relevant to the current study.

2.2 The Linguistic Context of Malaysia

Malaysia is a land of diverse races, languages, and cultures with three major ethnic groups, namely the Malays, Chinese and Indians. These ethnic groups alone use many different languages and dialects, not to mention the other minority languages used by various groups in the country. Tan (2009) explains that the multilingual context of Malaysia consists of Malay dialects; Chinese dialects such as Mandarin, Hokkien, Hakka, and Cantonese; as well as languages spoken by the Indian community such as Tamil, Telegu, Malayalee, Singhalese, Urdu, and Bengali (p. 451).

Bahasa Melayu (the Malay Language) is the national language, and is used as the medium of instruction in government schools. Being the national language it is used widely at all government functions and forums and most official functions, even among the private sector (Asmah Haji Omar, 2003). It is also used as a tool for intra ethnic communication (Rajadurai, 2007). Malay is also seen as the language for nation building (Kow, 2008, p. 113) while English is used widely as a Second Language, particularly for intra-national and international communications (Rajadurai, 2007, p. 414). Kow (2008, p. 113) claims that English is “the language of globalization and

upward economic movement.” Many Malaysians speak English, but have ‘varying levels of proficiency’ (Dumanig & David, 2011, p. 216).

The major languages used in Peninsular Malaysia, other than English, are Bahasa Melayu (the Malay language), the main Chinese dialects (Hokkien, Cantonese and Mandarin), and Tamil (Tan, 2009, p. 451). Therefore, these languages heavily influence the Malaysian variety of English (Azirah Hashim, 2010, p. 378; Dumanig & David, 2011, p. 216).

Tan (2009, p. 451) observes that “the regular use of English within such a linguistically and culturally pluralistic society has produced changes in the linguistic system of the variety of English used in Malaysia”. This process has resulted in a uniquely Malaysian English (ME) which is influenced by not one, but by a myriad of local languages and dialects (see Appendix A). Consequently, the occurrence of code switching has become a normal phenomenon in Malaysia. Malaysians tend to code switch from one language to another such as from English to local languages.

2.3 Code Switching

One of the most common phenomena associated with bilinguals is code switching (Myers-Scotton, 2006; Poplack, 2004). Even in multilingual Malaysia, code switching is a common feature in many communicative events (Dumanig & David, 2011, p. 215).

Code switching has been observed to “cover a broad range of contact phenomena and is difficult to characterize definitely” (Bullock & Toribio, 2009, p. 2). Gumperz (1982, p. 59) defines code switching as “the juxtaposition within the same

speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems,” while Poplack, (1980), defines code switching as “the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent” (p. 583). For the purposes of this paper, Poplack’s (1980) definition of code switching is used as it is seen to be a broader definition and is not limited to speech.

Code switching can occur at word, phrase, clause or sentence level (Valdes-Fallis, 1978, p. 1) and occurs in both spoken and written discourse. Code switching can be inter-sentential, where one clause or sentence is in one language and the next clause or sentence is in the other language; or intra-sentential, with the code switches occurring within the clause (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 240). Some studies on code switching, particularly in spoken discourse, examine code switching at word, phrase, clause, or sentence level. Consequently, the distinction between intra and inter-sentential code switching has become the focus.

While such approaches have traditionally been used to analyze code switching occurrences in spoken discourse, these may not be very suited for print advertisements. Moreover many contemporary studies on identity construction through code switching in advertisements do not take any grammatical or syntactic approach (Gao, 2005; Piller, 2001). In addition, they do not make distinctions between intra or inter sentential switching. Rather, they treat the advertisement as a single discourse and analyze the text holistically. This is evident in Bhatia’s (1992) study where he treats advertisements as a single unit of discourse.

Some studies also distinguish code switching as being between sentences, and code mixing as being within sentences (Chuchu, 2007, p. 15; Kachru & Nelson, 2011,

p. 257). However, the distinctions between code switching and code mixing are obscure and remain a matter of debate (Leung, 2010, p. 418). Distinctions have also been made between code switching and lexical borrowing in past studies. The main distinctions between code switching and lexical borrowing have been in terms of permanent morphological, syntactical and phonological integration into the matrix language (Myers-Scotton, 2006). However, this may not always be true. Poplack (2004) has sometimes referred to words embedded in the matrix language without any changes as ‘nonce’ borrowings, even though the words may seem akin to code switching (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006, p. 8; Poplack, 2004).

In summary, then, this study does not make any distinction between code switching, code mixing, ‘nonce’ borrowings as well as between intra sentential and inter sentential switching. The study seeks to treat the text in a wholistic manner as this seems to be more in keeping with recent studies as explicated above.

2.3.1 Motivations for Code Switching

Code switching has been studied extensively from a variety of perspectives, namely, the Sociolinguistic, Psycholinguistic, Grammatical, Acquisitional, and Pragmatic perspectives. One of the critical questions in bilingualism research from a Sociolinguistic perspective is, “Why do bilingual speakers switch from one language to another in conversational interaction?” (Wei, 1998, p. 156).

Deficiency is no longer considered as the primary motivation for code switching (Valdes-Fallis, 1978). Rather, contemporary sociolinguistic studies on code switching focus more on the notion of proficiency driven code switching. Dumanig and David (2011), argue that the majority of the people in multilingual societies like Malaysia

code switch not because they have to, but because they want to, “with clearly intended purposes” (p. 216). The focus of the current research is this creative, proficiency – driven code switching in the domain of English newspaper advertisements.

In the global context, Gumperz (1982) as cited in (Chuchu, 2007, pp. 9-10), in his study on code switching between Slovenian-German, Spanish-English and Hindi-English pairs, observes that code switching is used for quotations, addressee specifications, interjections, reiteration, message qualification, and personalization versus objectification.

Code switching is a common phenomenon in Malaysia and is well researched. However, most studies on code switching in Malaysia have focused primarily on spoken discourse in domains such as the workplace (Nair-Venugopal, 2003), classroom (Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009), and social interaction . For example, Kow (2003) identifies some possible motivations for code switching, i.e., to fill a lexical gap, convey concepts or ideas which are easier to express in a particular language, clarify misunderstandings or create certain communication effects, emphasize a point, express group solidarity and even exclude someone from the dialogue. Other motivations for code switching include ensuring intelligibility, offering affective support, and express solidarity as an expression of identity (Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009; Kow, 2008).

Compared to spoken discourse, fewer studies have focused on code switching in written discourse. Among the few that investigate code switching in written discourse are Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006), Dumanig & David (2011), and Shanmuganathan & Ramasamy (2009). These studies will be examined in greater detail (see Section 2.4.2).

Due to the paucity of research in this area, the body of knowledge on code switching in written discourse in Malaysia seems limited. However, Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006) observes that code switching in written discourse may share most patterns, functions and motivations of code switching in spoken discourse, with one very important difference: code switching in written discourse tends to be pre-meditated and therefore is intentional and purposeful (pp. 8-9). Thus, one might employ some features used in the theory on code switching in spoken discourse in order to examine code switching in written discourse. One area of growing interest in studies on code switching in written discourse is the language used in media.

2.4 Language and the Media

Media is in a state of flux and is rapidly changing (Irwin, 2011, p.69). The traditional media such as radio, television, and newspapers are rapidly being challenged by the emergence of the new media such as weblogs, online news, and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. While traditional media can be thought of as being one way communication, static and somewhat more 'official', the new media is seen as being interactive, flexible and 'user generated' (Irwin, 2011, p. 69).

In spite of these rapid changes, one thing remains the same: media is seen to use language to not only report or reflect what is happening in society, but to influence society as well. The choice of language used in the media in reporting the news, for example, can influence the way society thinks about a certain event or situation (Irwin, 2011, p.70). Changes in style, register and vocabulary can lead to differences in how events are portrayed, and so, perceived by society. Studies have shown, for instance, how news reports in RP (Received Pronunciation) English are seen to be more 'truthful' by the listeners (Irwin, 2011, p. 79). The language used in media then

influences the perception of the consumer, and determines to some extent how they view the world and themselves. One of the ways that this influence is felt is through the production of identity by the media (See section 2.5). This study investigates the production of identity in media through language choice, specifically through the use of code switching in advertisements.

2.4.1 Code Switching in Print Advertisements

Linguists have acknowledged the growing importance of research on the language used in advertisements (Gao, 2005, p. 827; Piller, 2001, p. 170). Advertising is particularly useful for linguistic research as copy writers have to work within space and financial constraints. Leung (2010) argues that “advertising language has to be carefully crafted with the intention to manipulate and persuade consumers on the lexical level” (p. 418). Since copy writers tend to be very proficient in the language they are writing in, when an advertisement uses code switches, it is not only intentional, but “it also serves a very specific purpose – selling” (Leung, 2010, p. 418). Many studies have noted that advertisers have increasingly used multilingual advertising to cater to bilingual consumers (Bhatia, 1992; Gao, 2005; Piller, 2001; Ruellot, 2011).

Bhatia, (2009), observes that there are diverse theoretical and analytical frameworks in the study of the language used in advertisements, including sociolinguistic, ethnographic, semiotic, speech accommodation and communication approaches (p. 618). In addition, the analysis of advertisements has shifted away from sentence level to discourse level (Bhatia, 2009, p. 604).

Code switching as used in advertisements can also be seen as a marketing strategy (Dumanig & David, 2011). Code switching has been proven to improve brand

recall as well as increase the attention grabbing capacity of the advertisement (Ruellot, 2011, p. 7). Gao (2005, p. 827) states that code switching is used to create a positive psychological effect in the consumer. In other words, the motivations for using code switching in advertising go beyond lexical gap or lack of register to using connotations, ideologies and cultural meanings to reach the target audience (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006, p. 9).

In an earlier work, Bhatia (1992, p. 204), treats advertisements as a single discourse unit and emphasizes on the four structural components in an advertisement, namely, the Headline, the Body Copy, the Signature Line, and finally, the Slogan. In researching code switching in Hindi, Chinese, Japanese, French, Italian and Spanish advertisements, he observes that English is used mostly in the headline component of the advertisement as the code switched items grab attention by being different. Bhatia's four structural component framework as described above provides a clear analytical framework for the current study (see Chapter 3).

There are not many studies that focus on language use in print advertising in the Malaysian context from a sociolinguistic point of view. Dumanig and David (2011) investigate the use of code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. Investigating newspaper advertisements focusing on telecommunications, food, and cars that used code switching, the study argues that code switching occurrences in English print advertisements in Malaysia are not only prevalent, but are higher during festival and culturally significant days (p. 219). The study finds that such code switching occurrences serve as an effective marketing strategy. Code switching in advertisements is seen as a form of accommodation.

Azirah Hashim (2010, p. 378), in her study on print advertisements in Malaysia, examines “how advertisers seek to achieve their primary goal of persuading or influencing an audience”. Using a multimodal approach in analyzing the advertisements, she finds that advertisers use code switching in order to create rapport and for emphasis in order to persuade the consumers. The study also reveals language is used in advertisements to encode national identity and cultural values. This is one of the few studies in the Malaysian context that link the occurrence of code switching with identity.

Shanmuganathan & Ramasamy (2009) examine the social and cultural impact factors in Tamil language newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. The study reveals that advertisers use language to attract certain customers, give confidence to the customer, foreground celebrity influence, and assure validity of products and services (pp. 47-50). Social and cultural factors are embedded in these advertisements which, in turn, impact the consumer. Shanmuganathan & Ramasamy (2009) do not emphasize the whole issue of code switching and identity construction in advertising which is an important topic in studying the language of advertising in a multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural Malaysia, and which is raised in the next section.

2.5 Identity Construction

The issue of identity and how it is constructed has become important in this age of rapid globalization and change (Woodward, 1997). Language choice is seen to be intricately linked with identity and can “highlight or downplay certain aspects of identity” (LaBelle, 2011, p. 173). In particular, the use of code switching is linked to identity construction (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006; Leung, 2010, p. 418; Wardhaugh, 2006).

Identity has been defined as “one’s conception of self in the world” (LaBelle, 2011, p. 174). Woodward (1997, p. 11) makes distinctions between an essentialist and a non-essentialist view of identity. In the essentialist perspective, identity is stable, fixed, with “one clear, authentic set of characteristics... which do not alter across time” (Woodward, 1997, p. 11). A non-essentialist view holds that identity is relational as well as contextual and could encompass many different categories of identities depending on the context and the relational position of the speaker (LaBelle, 2011; Piller, 2001; Woodward, 1997).

Differing theories based on similarity, difference and representation have been posited to account for how identities are constructed. Piller (2001) draws on identity theories of similarities and difference for her study. Identity is marked through the sharing of similar characteristics, aspirations, language, ethnicity, and other such markers. For example, German advertisements that use English share similar characteristics of upward mobility, success, and future orientation, construct an identity of German – English bilingualism which is the natural option for successful Germans. This enables them to share in a group identity that has similar characteristics. Thus, similarities in such cultural norms, language choice and ideologies can give rise to a joint or group identity.

Identity and Difference was a theory posited by Woodward (1997) who raises two major concomitant ideas: identity construction through difference as well as identity construction through representation. She posits that identity is built through representation as well as difference. Firstly, the ‘symbolic systems of representation’, that is, cultural norms, language choice, and ideologies, help to construct social identity (p. 14). A person may, for example, be aware of his ethnic identity as an Indian through

the use of certain languages or words, cultural norms, rites, practices such as clothes, food, festivals and other commonalities. All of these help to construct the Indian identity of which this person is a participant.

It is not just representation that helps a person, group or community construct an identity, but also difference. In other words, “identities are formed in relation to other identities” (Blomquist, 2009, p. 10). Words or phrases may be used to mark the difference between ‘them’ and ‘us’. This kind of difference is marked to show or delineate differing, and sometimes opposing, identities.

This marking of an identity through representation and difference can lead to several categories of identities such as ethnicity, religion, culture, group as well as national. Woodward (1997, p. 30) argues, that there is nothing inherently sacred about but rather they become sacred only when they are used as symbols or representations of meaning. She further cites the French social anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss, who sees cooking as a “language in which we ‘speak’ about ourselves and our places in the world” (Woodward, 1997, p. 31). In other words, food is a marker of our cultural identity, in particular, the avoidance of certain foods by Muslims or Jews as markers of identities of those included in the belief system from those who are not. Food can therefore be a “bearer of symbolic meanings and can act as a signifier” (Woodward, 1997, p. 32). Thus, through identification of similarities, differences and representation, various identities can be discerned.

2.5.1 Identity Construction and Code Switching

Various studies have linked code switching to identity (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006; Leung, 2010, p. 418). Thomas and Wareing (2000, p. 216) explain that “one of the

most fundamental ways of establishing our identity is through our use of language.” In other words, language is used by people to construct various identities for themselves (Thomas & Wareing, 2000, p. 136). However, these identities are not fixed, but rather are “constantly being built and negotiated” Leung (2010, p. 418).

The link between code switching and identity has already been made by Gumperz (1982) in his discussion of the ‘we’ and ‘they’ code as being the minority and the majority languages respectively. However, defining the ‘we’ and ‘they’ languages is challenging in bilingual societies (Sebba & Wootton, 1998, p. 263). Sebba and Wotton (1998) observe that in Hong Kong for example, Cantonese, which is actually a majority language, is seen to function as a ‘we’ code for teachers and students in an ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom. They conclude that while the use of ‘we’ and ‘they’ code may indicate an individual, group or social identity, the construction of identity through code switching goes further: a speaker in a multilingual setting may very easily adopt a number of identities, sometimes, even at the same time.

Such identities may shift or change, depending on the situation: “The notions of ‘we’ and ‘they’ can now be seen to be subsumed within more local, and changeable, social identities which are made salient from time to time within a conversation” (Sebba & Wootton, 1998, p. 284). It can be seen that identity construction through the use of code switching can be fluid and changing in the context of the conversation, but this does not mean that identity construction cannot be examined.

Language and code switching, can also be a marker of a person’s identity with regard to age, class, gender, ethnicity or even religion (LaBelle, 2011, p. 176). De Fina (2007) examines code switching in an all male card playing club in Washington, DC.

Her subjects were basically Italians and Italian Americans from various backgrounds, with differing levels of proficiency in Italian. The differing kinds of identities that are constructed in the course of the conversations that take place, as the various participants code switch. She differentiates between social identities, such as ethnicity and gender; situational identities, for example, card player or treasurer; and collective identities, which would involve conceptions of what defines that group.

2.5.2 Identity Construction and the Media

One of the most important domains of identity construction research is the media (Thomas & Wareing, 2000, p. 50). The media is seen to have the power to mediate how people, places and events are represented. In fact, one of the ways that media affects identity construction is through the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes (Motschenbacher, 2009). This is especially seen in advertising. Woodward (1997, p. 15) explains, “advertisements can only ‘work’ in selling us things if they appeal to consumers and provide images with which they can identify”. This raises the important point of identification. For an advertisement to work, it needs to construct an identity that consumers can identify with (Woodward, 1997, p. 15) One of the ways advertising accomplishes this is through code switching.

2.5.3 Identity Construction and Multilingual Print Advertisements

Piller (2001, p. 153) argues that “contemporary social identities are hybrid and complex, and the media plays a crucial role in their construction”. The findings reveal that the use of English is to construct identities which reflect global, successful and economic oriented identities (Piller, 2001, p. 167). This identity constructed is consonant with functions of code switching into English observed in advertisements in local languages (Chen, 2006; Gao, 2005; Leung, 2010; Ruellot, 2011). For example,

Gao (2005) examines the use of English in Chinese advertising, Chen (2006) examines the use of English in Chinese advertising in Taiwan, and Ruellot (2011) examines the use of English in French print advertising. All of these studies come to similar conclusions as to why English is used – because it is linked with, among others, success, modernity, global economy and progress.

It can thus be seen that identity construction is not only linked to the motivations and functions of code switching, but can also be used to explain and understand those motivations. However, while the motivations for using English in local language advertising is clear, the situation is quite different when it comes to using local languages in English advertising.

One study that examines the use of local code switches in English advertisements is Menke (2011). In her study, Menke researched the use of Spanish in English advertisements targeted at Hispanics in the United States of America. She finds that advertisers use various Hispanic words and phrases which are familiar to the Hispanics to create a positive feeling towards the product. She also finds that cultural cues were used to heighten the consumers' sense of their ethnic identity and so be favorably disposed towards a particular product. Her study is one of the few that examines the use of local languages in English language advertising. However it does not discuss in depth the construction of identities in this context and why advertisers would use such a strategy.

The current study examines the use of local code switches in English advertisements and therefore seeks to understand the identities constructed in the Malaysian context as well as trying to understand the motivations for advertisers to

construct such identities. Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006), is one of the few studies which examine identity construction in Malaysia in written discourse. She claims that the existence of local lexis in Malaysian English is seen as an important “identity indicator of the user” (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006, p. 7). She further claims that effective bilingual writers tend to code switch to convey connotations of meaning which are bound up with local culture even when there are English equivalents. In other words, effective bilingual writers code switch as an expression of their identity which is related to local culture.

The notion of identity being related to local culture in the Malaysian context is further explored by Kow (2008). In her study, she investigates bilingualism, culture and identity in Malaysia and observes that language is linked to culture and therefore the choice of language reflects the cultural identity behind it. She further claims that although Malay and English are the two main languages in the country, Malaysians tend to embrace and use all the languages, as well as the culture and ethnic practices that are behind it. She argues that Malaysians have embraced each other’s food and cultural festivals through the concept of open house, and holidays for the major festivals of each ethnic group. She goes on to say that in this very multilingual and multicultural society, there is need for unity, and a Malaysian identity (Kow, 2008, p. 116).

The Government understands the need for a national or Malaysian identity and has initiated the Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice (*The Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice*, 2008), which stresses the need for respect and the building of a Malaysian identity in all forms of advertising. This means that the national identity construct, or at least themes of unity, should be present at some level in advertisements.

Thus, advertisements could be said to not just promote a product or service, or even a brand name, but national unity as well.

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature shows that code switching has become increasingly important in advertising. In particular, the literature shows how code switching is used to construct certain identities which the advertisers hope the consumers will identify with and so be persuaded to buy the advertised product or service. The theories of similarity, difference and representation can be employed to discern various identities constructed through code switching in advertisements such as religious, ethnic, group, national, and cultural identities.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology used in this study. The chapter begins with a description of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks employed in the study, followed by a detailed explanation of the source of data, collection and management, and finally ends with the plan for data analysis.

3.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on three sources: Bhatia's (1992) four structural component framework for analysis of print advertisements, Piller's (2001) identity theories of similarity and difference, and Woodward's (1997) identity theories of difference and representation.

Bhatia (1992, p. 196) describes print advertisement as a "single discourse unit" which can be examined in four structural components, namely, The Headlines (which can contain the attention getters, captions or subheadings in title form); The Body Copy (which is the main text outlining the significant properties of the product); The Signature Line (which carries the name of the product or company as well as the logo); and The Slogan (which is a catchy saying or phrase linked with the product, service or company advertised).

However, not all components mentioned may be present in every advertisement and that they may not be in the sequence described. Bhatia's (1992) framework is chosen for the current study as it has two distinct features which offer it an advantage over other frameworks for analysis. Firstly, the framework treats the whole

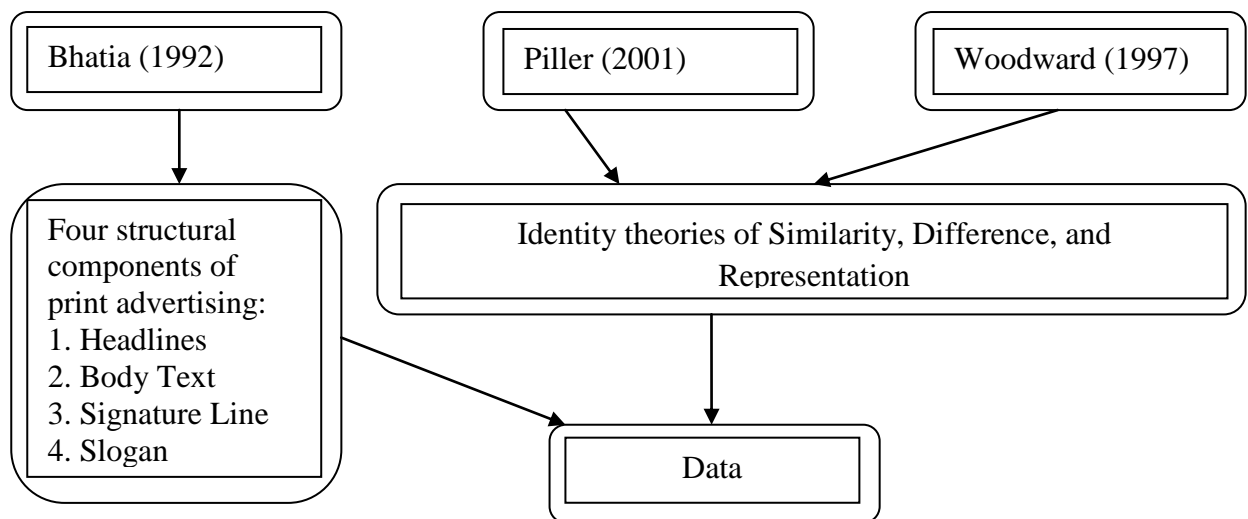
advertisement as a single discourse. In doing this, the advertisement can be analyzed as a whole and the overall intent and purpose can be discerned. Secondly, when the four components are analyzed, credible comparisons can be made across advertisements and relevant patterns can be identified. Thus it provides a systematic approach to analysing advertisements for the current study. Although it could be argued that Bhatia's (1992) four component framework is slightly dated, it has actually been used in many recent studies on multilingual advertising (Gao, 2005).

Secondly, this study also draws on Piller's (2001), identity theories of similarity and difference in examining the use of English in German advertisements. The theory posits that group and individual identity can be marked by similar characteristics, likes, dislikes, and choices, as well as other markers. However, both group and individual identities can also be marked through difference, i.e. through distinguishing the 'self' from the 'other'. In other words, identity can also be constructed by establishing how an individual or a group is unlike someone else. The identity theories of similarity and difference have been extensively used by other studies in categorizing various identity constructs in advertisements through the use of code switching (Gao, 2005).

Thirdly, the current study also derives its framework from Woodward (1997), who describes the construction of identity through difference. Another dimension is added to identity construction and that is the theory of identity and representation. This theory posits that identity is also constructed through symbolic systems which carry meaning. For example, words and language systems can carry particular meaning for an individual or group. Through the use of these representative, or symbolic words, phrases and sentences, identity is constructed. This theory has also been applied to the construction of identity through the use of code switching. One study in contemporary

times is by Blomquist (2009, p. 11), who argues that identity is built through meanings produced through language use and choice, including code switching. In other words, code switching is used to construct identities through representation as well as difference. This notion is important to the current study as it delves into various identities in a multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual context. Based on the three theories, the following conceptual framework is formulated:

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework



This study employs the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 3.1. The framework is derived from Bhatia’s (1992) four structural component as well as identity theories of similarity and difference adapted from Piller (2001) and identity theories of difference and representation adapted from Woodward (1997). The headlines, body text, signature line and slogan of advertisements collected are analyzed to determine where the code switches occur in advertisements. Then, identity theories of similarity, difference and representation are used to determine the identities constructed within these advertisements. A detailed plan for data analysis is discussed in Section 3.4.

3.3 Data Management

3.3.1 Corpus

The data for this study comprises of a corpus of advertisements published in local English newspapers namely, *The Star*, *The Sun*, and *The New Straits Times*. All three are prominent English newspapers in Peninsular Malaysia, carrying global and local news, as well as business and entertainment articles. This study uses both the daily and the Sunday editions of *The Star* and *The New Straits Times*. However, only the weekday editions of *The Sun* are used because it is not published on the weekends.

The Star, *The New Straits Times* and *The Sun* are the logical choices for data collection as they have the highest readership and circulation for English newspapers in the country. *The Star* and *The Sunday Star* have the highest readership among the three newspapers (see Table 3.1). The higher circulation and readership means more advertisements are used in these newspapers. This in turn means that the likelihood of coming across advertisements with code switching occurrences is higher. The details of readership and circulation for the three English newspapers are as follows:

Table 3.1 Readership and Circulation Details of Local English Newspapers

Readership			
Star		Other newspapers	
The Star (daily)	1,006,000	New Straits Times	236,000
Sunday Star	1,054,000	New Sunday Times	235,000
* Source: Nielsen Media Index (January - December, 2010)		The Sun (daily)	131,000
Circulation			
Star		Other newspapers	
The Star (daily)	286,409	New Straits Times	109,341
Sunday Star	295,552	New Sunday Times	129,554
* Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations, Malaysia - 1 July 2009 - 30 June 2010		The Sun	300,550
		The Edge	22,729

The corpus consists of 121 food, finance, motoring and energy & telecommunications related advertisements selected from the three main local English newspapers mentioned earlier. The newspapers were scanned daily for a period of six months from 1st August, 2011 to 31st January, 2012. Since advertisements with code switching occurrences are relatively fewer than advertisements without code switching occurrences, more time was needed in order to collect enough data for the analysis. In addition, some advertisements were repeated, and so a period of six months was considered sufficient in order to collect sufficient data. The 121 advertisements collected were deemed sufficient as the data was considered large enough to be analyzed for patterns, contexts and similarities and differences in the code switching occurrences. The data was also considered representative as it was gathered from four different categories of advertisements.

Only those advertisements with code switching occurrences from these categories were selected. Food and finance related advertisements were chosen because previous studies have found that the highest occurrences of code switching are related to these areas (Tan, 2009, p. 14). Motoring and energy & telecommunications related advertisements were also included as an initial cursory observation found that these categories had high levels of code switching occurrences.

“Food” advertisements are those that advertise specific food and beverage products, restaurants, catering services and other related services, for example, McDonald’s, Pizza Hut, Guinness, and Tiger. “Finance” advertisements refer to those advertisements offering financial products and services, including banks, financial institutions and insurance. Some examples would be Malayan Banking, RHB Bank, Allianz Insurance, and Citibank. “Motoring” advertisements refer to all kinds of vehicles such as cars, trucks, vans, motorbikes, as well as their dealers and distributors. Some examples would be Perodua, Proton, and Toyota. Finally, “Energy and Telecommunications” advertisements are those that refer to telecommunications and internet products, services and companies, such as DIGI, P1, Celcom, and Maxis, as well as energy producers such as Tenaga Nasional.

Only the text of the advertisements was used for analysis. The study does not employ a multimodal approach in analyzing the advertisements. As such, advertisements that were exclusively visual or had brand names as their only texts were not included in the corpus.

3.3.2 Selection Criteria

Repetitions of advertisements were also not included in the corpus, although advertisements promoting the same product, service or brand, but having different copy (text of the advertisement) were included. Lastly, only advertisements with code switching into Malay, Tamil, and the Chinese languages (Mandarin, Hokkien and Cantonese) were selected as these are the major languages in Malaysia (see Chapter 2).

3.3.3 Data Collection

Figure 3.2: Data Collection Procedure



Figure 3.2 summarizes the data collection. Firstly, *The Star*, *The New Straits Times* and *The Sun* were scanned daily from 1st August 2011 to 31st January 2011 by manual search. This period of time was chosen as it covers most of the significant festivals and cultural events in the country such as Hari Raya (a religious and cultural festival celebrated by the Malays) in August, Merdeka Day (Independence Day) in August, Malaysia Day in September, Deepavali (a religious and cultural festival celebrated by the Hindus, who are mostly Indians) in October, Christmas in December and Chinese New Year (a cultural festival celebrated by the Chinese) in January 2012, since previous studies have found that advertisements tend to use more code switching during festivals and celebrations (Dumanig & David, 2011). Each time an advertisement with code switching occurrences is spotted, the original is extracted. (See Appendix D).

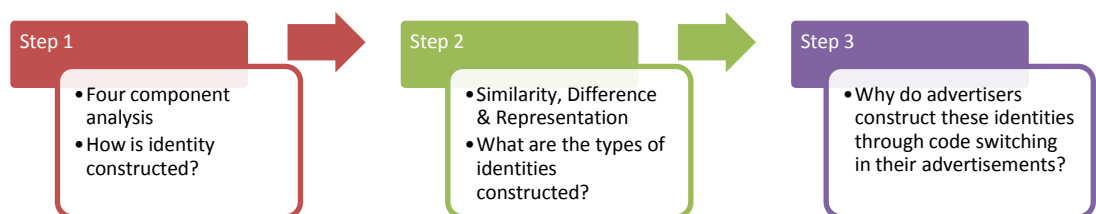
Advertisements were categorized as food, finance, motoring, telecommunications and energy advertisements. In each category, advertisements were indexed and checked for duplications and repetitions. Duplications and repetitions of advertisements were discarded

Finally, the advertisements were listed, coded, labeled and filed according to category, so that they could be retrieved as needed. A master list of all the advertisements according to their categories was drawn up to keep track of the advertisements (see Appendix E).

3.4 Data Analysis

The plan for analysis is summarized in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Plan for Analysis



The first step involved the analysis of the advertisements in relation to the temporal and spatial contexts of the code switching occurrences. The temporal context refers to *when* advertisements with code switching occurrences were published in relation to festivals and cultural celebrations. The spatial context refers to *where* in the advertisement the code switches occur, i.e. the headline, the body text, the signature line or the slogan. Discerning the temporal (when) and spatial (where) contexts of the code switching occurrences in this manner facilitates better understanding of the

methods by which advertisers use code switching to construct identities in their advertisements.

The second step involved the analysis of the data using the identity theories of similarity, difference and representation detailed above by examining key words, phrases and sentences that are culturally, religiously, or nationally meaningful. Since the research adopted a qualitative approach, content analysis was used to code significant and meaningful words, phrases and sentences. For example, *Selamat Hari Merdeka* was seen as nationally meaningful, as it was a phrase used in conjunction with the National Day, whereas words like *sukuk* and *syariah* were seen as religiously meaningful words, as they were used to lend religious credibility for a product. These words, phrases and sentences were analysed to determine the identity construct present in the advertisement. In this way, the different categories of identities constructed through code switching were identified and related to previous works. However, although the study is qualitative in nature, certain basic statistics will be presented, such as the number of advertisements using code switching, the choice of language and the category advertisements with the most code switching occurrences.

The third step was to examine the reasons why advertisers chose to construct identities through code switching in advertisements. This was done by comparing the findings to the motivations for identity construction in advertisements determined in previous works, both in terms of similarities as well as differences.

3.5 Conclusion

The data presented in this research is from the corpus of advertisements described earlier. The text of samples presented is only edited for brevity, and is otherwise not altered in any way. Care was taken to ensure accuracy in presenting the text.

In the next chapter (Chapter 4), the first part presents the data in the form of tables and charts to show the frequency of the lexical items. Some basic information about the language of the code switching occurrences (number of advertisements with code switching occurrences in a particular language, and comparisons between each) is included.

The second part presents a descriptive analysis of the data, grouping the analysis thematically around the categories identified in the framework described earlier. Examples from the data are used to illustrate the analysis and are labeled as Extract 1, Extract 2, and so on. The extracts from the advertisements are clearly labeled in terms of advertiser's name, advertising category, source and date. Direct in line quotations are presented with quotation marks. Words and phrases in languages other than English are italicized and the gloss offered in brackets. Where necessary, a literal (lit.) translation is also provided. The presentation of the data in such a manner enables accurate analysis of trends and patterns.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and analysis of the data collected from 121 food, finance, motoring and energy & telecommunications advertisements in local English newspapers from 1 August 2011 to 31 January 2012. The findings are grouped thematically based on the three research questions (see Chapter 1, Section 1.5). Section 4.2 presents the preliminary analysis of the data according to the following categories: newspaper, language choice, and advertising category. This is to provide a general overview on the occurrences of code switching in newspaper advertisements. Sections 4.3 – 4.5 present the findings and analysis of code switching which focuses on spatial and temporal contexts, types of identities constructed and the reasons for constructing identities through code switching in advertisements. Each section includes discussion on the findings.

4.2 Code Switching Occurrences in Newspaper Advertisements

The findings show that *The Star* had the highest number of advertisements containing code switching occurrences. Out of 121 advertisements, *The Star* led with a total of 84 (69.4%) advertisements, while *The New Straits Times* had 29 (24%) advertisements, and *The Sun* had 8 (6.6%) advertisements with code switching occurrences. The findings are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Code Switching Occurrences in Newspaper Advertisements

Newspaper	Number of Advertisements with Code Switching Occurrences				
	Food	Motoring	Finance	Energy & Telecommunications	Total
The Star	31 (37%)	17 (20.2%)	18 (21.4%)	18 (21.4%)	84 (69.4%)
The New Straits Times	8 (27.6%)	5 (17.2%)	12 (41.4%)	4 (13.8%)	29 (24%)
The Sun	5 (62.5%)	0 (0%)	3 (37.5%)	0 (0%)	8 (6.6%)
Total	44 (36.4%)	22 (18.2%)	33 (27.2%)	22 (18.2%)	121 (100%)

One possible reason for the high number of advertisements with code switching occurrences in *The Star* could be because it has the highest circulation among English newspapers in Peninsular Malaysia (see Chapter 2). Consequently, a higher number of advertisements can be expected as compared to the other newspapers.

Table 4.1 shows that the category with the highest number of advertisements with code switching occurrences in *The Star* is the “Food” category, with 31 (37%) advertisements. “Finance” and “Energy & Telecommunications” come next with 18 (21.4%) advertisements in each category, while “Motoring” has 17 (20.2%) advertisements. The trend is similar in *The Sun*. Food is the leading category although *The Sun* has fewer advertisements with code switching occurrences. However, in the News Straits Times, the “Finance” category leads with 12 (41.4%) advertisements while “Food” is second with 8 (27.6%) advertisements. “Motoring” and “Energy & Telecommunications” are similar with 5 (17.2%) advertisements and 4 (13.8%) advertisements respectively. The higher number of code switched financial advertisements in *The New Straits Times* can be attributed to the target readership of

the newspaper – professionals, managers, executives and businessmen ("The New Straits Times," 2012).

4.2.1 Code Switching Occurrences and Advertisement Categories

The advertisements with code switching occurrences are also analyzed by advertising category. Figure 4.1 presents the findings:

Figure 4.1: Code Switching Occurrences and Advertisement Categories

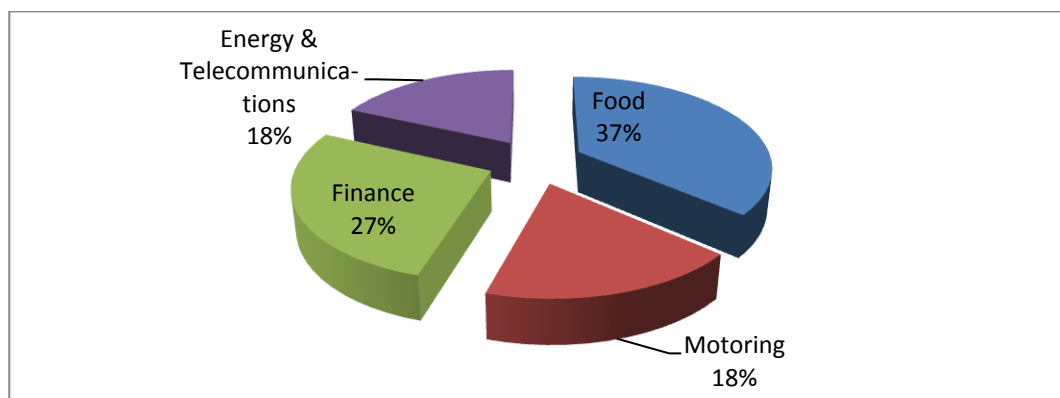


Figure 4.1 shows that the advertising category with the highest number of code switching occurrences is “Food” (37%), with “Finance” (27%) a close second. “Motoring” and “Energy & Telecommunications” come in third with the same number of advertisements with code switching occurrences (18%). This finding is consistent with Tan (2009, p. 466) who found that the highest number of code switching occurrences and lexical borrowings was in the semantic category of culture, particularly food. Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006, p. 15) concurs that cultural items, including food, supplied the highest borrowings and code switching occurrences into English.

One possible reason why the food category has the highest number of code switching occurrences could be because many food and cultural items may not have English equivalents, or even if they do, they may not convey exactly what is meant

(Tan, 2009). The literal translation of the Malay noun *Nasi Lemak* (fatty rice), for example, does not convey anything of what the dish is about nor the affective connotations that come with it for Malaysians.

The occurrence of code switching in advertisements is evident in Extract 1.

Extract 1

- a. Wedding reception or any form of *kenduri* requiring food service... (Restoran Kampung Pandan, *The Star*, 13 August, 2011)
- b. Main Dishes: Fish head curry, tiger prawns, crabs, squids, *beriyani*, *nan*, *tandoori*, *ayam madu*, and many more. (Restoran Kampung Pandan, *The Star*, 13 August, 2011).
- c. Choose from a premium selection of tapas styles dishes including *dim sum*... (Prince Hotel, *The Star*, 27 October, 2011).

In Extract 1a, the Malay noun *kenduri* refers to a special kind of celebratory meal which is part of the Malay culture. The meal is normally held as part of a thanksgiving event or celebration such as a wedding, birthday or anniversary. The word is unique as it carries a special connotation and does not have an equivalent in English. Using the word *kenduri* brings to mind the whole village coming together for a celebration, and evokes sentimental feelings of warmth, laughter and joyful chaos. Although the Malay word *jamuan* (*feast*) could be used, it does not carry the same connotation.

Malaysians, being multilingual speakers “have at their disposal shades of sense and ‘texture’ (Kachru & Nelson, 2011) which are conveyed through code switching. The use of the word *kenduri* taps into the connotational meaning that the word carries in order to convey a message with special meaning that the target audience can readily identify with. Since the rest of the advertisement is in English, it can be inferred that this switch was done to convey the cultural connotations and so identify with the Malay readership in particular.

Similarly, in Extract 1b, *beriyani*, *nan*, *tandoori*, and *ayam madu* refer to foods that do not have direct English equivalents, as they are specialties of local cultures. *Beriyani* is a type of rice cooked in spices which comes from Indian culture, as is *nan* (a type of flat bread) and *tandoori* (chicken cooked in a special high heat clay oven called a *tandoor*). In this instance, code switching occurs as there are no English equivalents for these dishes, and the original nouns are used to fill in the lexical gap. Although *ayam madu* (honeyed chicken) can be translated easily, retaining its meaning in English, the code switched Malay term is used to tap into the public conception of the dish and so be readily identifiable by local customers. In this case, the use of the Malay form conveys all that the dish means, as opposed to ‘honeyed chicken’ which could be confused with a western style dish.

Extract 1c refers to *dim sum* (steamed mini dumplings with a variety of different fillings) as part of the menu. The Cantonese term *Dim sum* is a food of Chinese origin and has no ready translation into English. Hence, the advertiser chooses to code switch into Cantonese in order to accurately convey the meaning rather than to use circumlocution to describe the food in a convoluted manner. Thus, the use of *dim sum* in this advertisement can be said to be a form of communication efficiency. In short, the use of code switching in these instances is for the purposes of filling in a lexical gap, convey connotational meaning, as well as for communication efficiency. The reasons for the use of code switching in advertisements are explored further in Section 4.6.

4.2.2 Code Switching and Language Choice

The number of advertisements with code switching occurrences in terms of language choice is summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Language Choice and Advertising Category

Language	Language Choice and Advertising Category				
	Food	Motoring	Finance	Energy & Telecomm.	Total
Malay	9 (21.4%)	8 (19%)	17 (40.5%)	8 (19%)	42 (34.7%)
Tamil	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	5 (25%)	20 (16.5%)
Mandarin	1 (5.3%)	5 (26.3%)	8 (42.1%)	5 (26.3%)	19 (15.7%)
Cantonese	27 (81.8%)	3 (9.1%)	2 (6.1%)	1 (3%)	33 (27.3%)
Hokkien	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mixed	2 (28.6%)	2 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (42.8%)	7 (5.8%)
Total	44 (36.4%)	22 (18.2%)	33 (27.3%)	22 (18.2%)	121 (100%)

Table 4.2 shows that Malay is the most popular choice of language for code switching, followed by Cantonese. The choice of Malay could be due to the majority of the population being able to understand it to some extent (Dumanig & David, 2011, p. 216). This makes Malay the logical choice for advertisers who wish to communicate with consumers who come from different ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 4.2: Language Choice in Advertisements

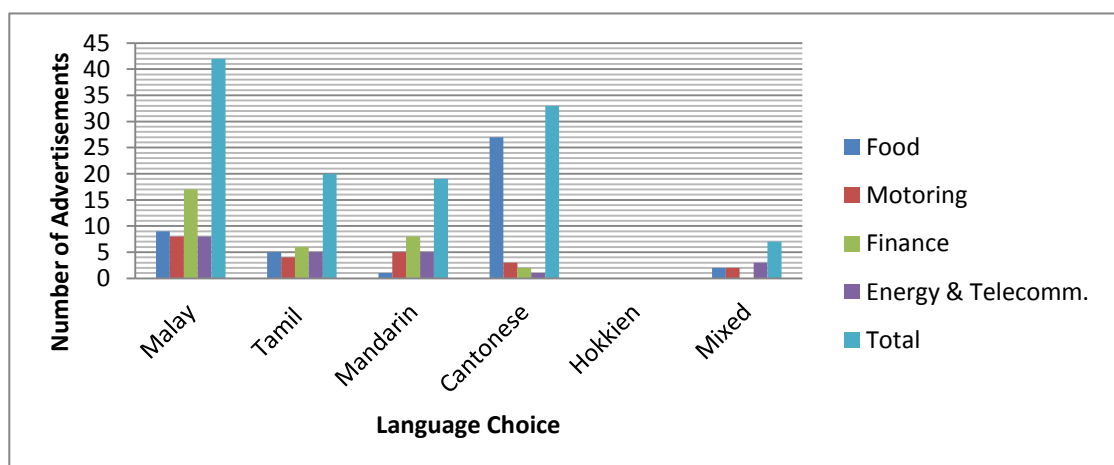


Figure 4.2 reveals that Malay is the most popular choice for finance advertisements while Cantonese is the most popular choice for food advertisements.

This shows that the advertisers' language choice in code switching is influenced by the advertising category as illustrated in Extract 2.

Extract 2

- a. Now you can enjoy faster, higher returns in the shortest time. Introducing commodity Murabahah Deposit-I, a *Shariah* – compliant deposit account especially recommended for smart investors. (RHB Bank, *The Sun*, 7 November, 2011).
- b. You are invited to 'Lou Sang'. Come savor our fresh salmon, jelly fish or abalone *Yee Sang*. (Shogun, *The Star*, 12 January 2012)
- c. 'Fatt Choy' Poon Choi, 22 January; Prosperous 'Lou Sang', 2 January – 6 February; 'Sau Koong' Year – end feast, 2 – 21 January. Call us now to enquire about your free *Yee Sang*, a prosperous fish shaped 'Lin Gou' and / or a bottle of wine. (Corus Hotel, *The Star*, 12 January 2012)

One possible reason for the prevalence of Malay code switched terms in finance advertisements could be the use of religious technical terms which are borrowed from Arabic. For instance, the word *Shariah* in Extract 2a is used to indicate Islamic law generally, and in this context, Islamic banking principles in particular. Azirah Hashim (2010) explicates that technical religious terms are used to establish credentials and gain the attention of a particular religious group: the Muslims. Such terms convey a religious identity that is immediately accessible for Muslims which may not be possible with English translations or equivalents. Although in her study the use of such terms is found in connection with food, in the current study, Islamic terms such as *Shariah* are found in financial advertisements.

Cantonese is also used extensively, especially in food advertisements and particularly during the Chinese New Year period (January 2012). It is the second most popular language choice, which is not surprising as *The Star* records that 50% of its readers are Chinese ("The Star," 2012). Tan (2009) notes that lexical borrowing and code switching into English from Chinese is the highest for food and cultural items. Thus, Cantonese is used extensively in food related advertisements, particularly in

special foods that are culturally significant and prominent during festivals, as can be seen in Extract 2b & c.

In Extract 2b, the reader is invited to *Lou Sang* (Cantonese for ‘Toss’). Those who are familiar with Chinese culture will know immediately that *Lou Sang* refers to the act of ‘tossing’ and is applied specifically to the tossing of *Yee Sang* (Cantonese term for a raw fish salad dish) in relation to Chinese New Year. The practice of tossing *Yee Sang* is a practice that is associated specifically with the seventh day of Chinese New Year. The word for fish in Cantonese (Chen) is a homophone for the Chinese word for surplus. The tossing of *Yee Sang* is seen to bring in luck and prosperity, so that household may always be in surplus or abundance. This dish is normally not available at other times of the year.

Extract 2c uses more code switched Cantonese terms, such as ‘*Fatt Choy*’ *Poon Choi* (a vegetable dish which contains a black hair-like algae called *Fatt Choy*, which sounds like the Cantonese word for prosperity), *Sau Koong* (or *Sau Gong*, the last meal of the old year), and *Lin Gou* (a kind of dumpling). These terms occur only during the Chinese New Year period and therefore can be assumed to have significant meaning in relation to the Chinese New Year celebrations. From these examples, it can be seen that one factor that influences the choice of language is the proximity to religious and cultural festivals. This finding is explored in further detail in Section 4.3.

4.3 Code Switching in Temporal and Spatial Contexts

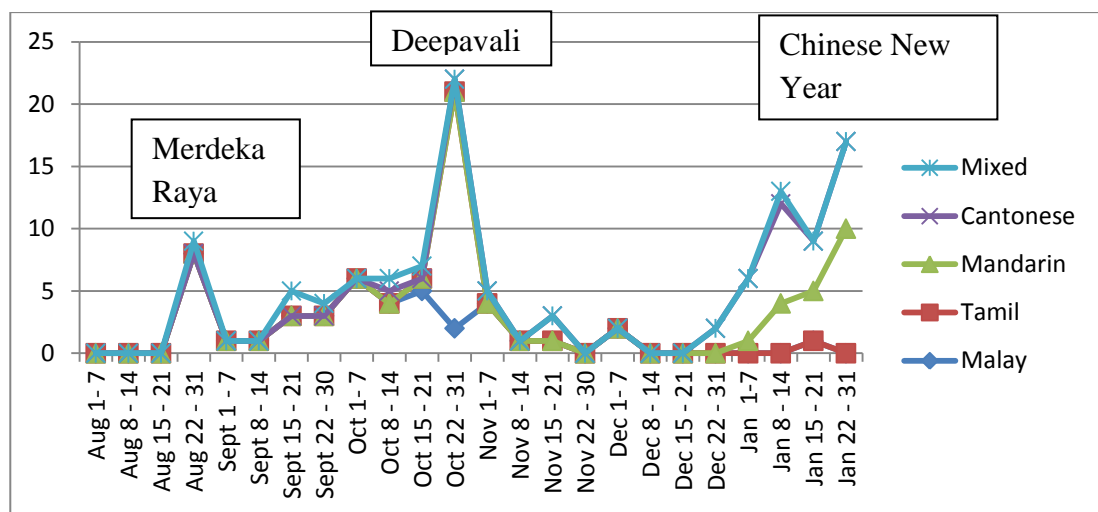
To answer the first research question regarding temporal and spatial contexts (see Chapter 1, Section 1.5) advertisements with code switching occurrences were analyzed firstly to note *when* they occur (temporal context) in relation to major festivals and

celebrations. Then, the advertisements were analyzed using Bhatia's (1992) four structural component framework to note *where* in the advertisements (spatial context) these code switches occur. The study found that code switching occurrences were higher during major festivals and celebrations. The study also reveals that most of the code switching occurrences are in the headline and the body copy of the advertisements. These are discussed in detail in Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 respectively.

4.3.1 Proximity to Celebrations and Festivals

The data reveals that most code switching occurs during festivals and special occasions as shown below in Figure 4.3:

Figure 4.3: Temporal Context of Code Switching Occurrences



During the period of the research, the festivals that were celebrated were *Hari Raya* (August 30 & 31, 2011), *Merdeka* (National) Day (August 31, 2011), Malaysia Day (September 16, 2011) and *Deepavali* (October 25, 2011) and Chinese New Year (23 & 24 January, 2012). In relation to proximity to festivals and celebrations, two findings are reported. As can be seen in Figure 4.3, the study found that code switching occurrences are higher during times of celebration and festivals. Specifically, code

switching occurrences are higher during the period of August 22 – 31, 2011 (*Hari Raya & Merdeka*), October 15 – 31, 2011 (*Deepavali*), and from January 8 – 31, 2012 (Chinese New Year). However, it is interesting to note that there is almost no code switching occurrences during December 22 – 31, 2011 (Christmas).

Secondly, it is evident that code switching into a particular language is higher when in close proximity to the festival related to that particular ethnic group. For example, code switching into Malay is higher during the Hari Raya period from August 22 - 31, while code switching into Tamil is higher on Deepavali day (October 25). Code switching into Cantonese and Mandarin is higher during the Chinese New Year period (January 8 – 31, 2012). This is because most of the advertisements during festival periods consist of greetings and well wishes from the advertisers, with no overt selling of specific products. The higher occurrence of code switching during festival periods is consistent with the findings of earlier studies such as Dumanig & David (2011) who also reported higher occurrences of code switching in English newspaper advertisements during festive periods. They also found that Malay code switches were higher during the Hari Raya period, while Tamil code switches and Chinese code switches were higher during Deepavali and Chinese New Year respectively. The lack of code switching occurrences during Christmas could be explained by the festival itself being most closely identified with English.

Extract 3 illustrates how the choice of language is influenced by the proximity of the various celebrations in Malaysia.

Extract 3

- a. *Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri & Happy Merdeka Day* to all Malaysians. (Honda, *The Star*, 29 August 2011)
- b. Warm wishes from the hearts of all 42,000 Maybankers, here and abroad. *Deepavali Vazhthukal*. (Maybank, NST, 25 Oct. 2011)
- c. Usher in a prosperous year by tossing *Yee Sang* with family, friends and business associates! It may be the Chinese year of the dragon, but our Thai style plum sauce exudes a truly Au-thai-tic flavor. *Gong Xi Fa Cai!* (Sri Ayutthaya, *New Straits Times*, 21 January 2012)

Extract 3a uses the Malay greeting *Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri*. *Selamat Hari Raya* literally means “Happy Celebration Day”, and is used by the Malays to refer to two major Muslim festivals in the country, *Hari Raya Haji* and *Hari Raya Aidilfitri*. *Aidilfitri* is borrowed word from Arabic, “ال فطر ء يد” (*Īdu l-Fitr*), often abbreviated to *Eid*, marking the end of the fasting month. The use of the Malay greeting can be explained by the fact that Malay is the language of the Malay ethnic group which is the predominant race that celebrates *Hari Raya*. Although there are other Muslim groups, such as Indian Muslims and Chinese Muslims, who may have their own languages or dialects, Azirah Hashim (2010) reports that the Malays form the largest ethnic community in the country and are most closely linked with Islam. Hence, the celebration of *Hari Raya* is the primary celebration of the Malay race, and consequently is most closely identified with Malay culture and language. This is evident in the analysis of advertisements that appear during this period.

Similarly, Extract 3b has code switches from English to Tamil. The Tamil greeting *Deepaval Vazhtukal* (Deepavali Greetings) is in Romanized form. This style of code switching would appeal to the Tamil readers, particularly many urban and younger generation Tamils who may not be able to read the Tamil script. The greeting is one that is commonly used during *Deepavali* among Tamil speakers rather than the

English equivalent, “Happy *Deepavali*.” Although Indians celebrate *Deepavali*, which is a Hindu religious festival, and there are many languages among the Indians (see the summary of languages in Appendix A) in Malaysia, the Tamils are the majority Indian ethnic group in Malaysia. Therefore, the main language linked with the celebration of *Deepavali* is Tamil. Thus, this is a phrase that the Tamils could identify with readily.

Extract 3c uses the word Cantonese word *Yee Sang*, but also mixes in the Mandarin Chinese New Year greeting, *Gong Xi Fa Cai*, which loosely translates as “Congratulations and be prosperous”. As explained in Section 4.2.3, the tossing of *Yee Sang* is closely identified with the Chinese New Year celebrations, and so has special meaning for the Chinese community. The switching of these phrases, *Yee Sang* and *Gong Xi Fa Cai*, would therefore appeal to the Chinese community, especially during the Chinese New Year period.

It can be clearly seen from the examples how the context, in terms of *when* the code switching occurs, plays a part in determining the choice of language the advertisers use. It is evident that the advertisers code switch into Malay to express solidarity with the Malays during *Hari Raya*, Tamil to express solidarity with the Tamils during *Deepavali*, and into Malay, Chinese and Tamil to connect with all the three major ethnic groups during Malaysia Day. Differing identities are constructed to express solidarity with different groups. In doing this, the advertisers establish rapport with the target group, for example, with the Malays during *Hari Raya*, and make them “feel they are the target audience so they feel a sense of ownership” by conveying the message that “they are the right group of people” for whom the advertisement is intended (Dumanig & David, 2011, p. 221).

4.3.2 Code Switching and Structural Components of Advertisements

In order to construct a comprehensive context of the code switching occurrences, the data was also analyzed against the four structural components of print advertisements identified by Bhatia (1992), namely, headline, body copy, signature line, and slogan. This was done to determine the spatial context of the code switching occurrences, i.e. *where* in the advertisements they occur and how this is used to construct identity. The results of the analysis are summarized in Figure 4.4 below:

Figure 4.4 Spatial Context of Code Switching Occurrences

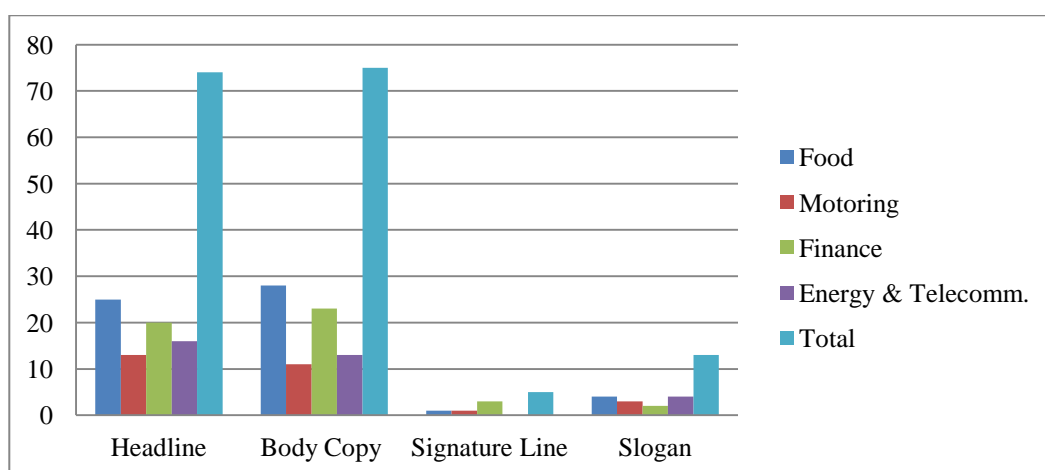


Figure 4.4 shows that most of the code switches occur in the headline (44.3%) and body copy (44.9%) of the advertisements. This is consistent with Bhatia (1992, p. 204) who, in his study of the use of English in Hindi, Chinese, Japanese, French, Italian and Spanish advertisements, found that most of the code switches (90%) occurred in the headlines as an attention grabbing device. Bhatia also found that in certain ‘open’ languages like Hindi, code switching can also occur in the body copy. Examples are presented in Extract 7.

Extract 7

- a. (Headline): *Jom generasiku!* (Body Copy): A chance to win these prizes when you save with SSP. (BSN, New Sunday Times, 16 Oct. 2011)
- b. (Headline): *Loh Sang* & celebrate the dragon year at the Oriental group of restaurants. (Oriental, *The Star*, 17 January 2012)
- c. (Headline): (Chinese Characters) *Wishing good health and may everything go well with you this New Year.* (Body Copy): Refreshing and delicious, made with real fruit juice. Feel the fruity goodness from F& N Fruit Tree. (Fruit Tree, *The Star*, 21 January, 2012)

Extract 7a is an example of code switching used in the headline as an attention grabber. The Malay sentence, *Jom generasiku!* (Come, my generation!) is more than an invitation, it is a stirring call to action. The colloquial Malay expression *Jom* could be translated as ‘Come!’ or ‘Let’s Go!’ The use of this informal term reduces the gap with the consumer and grabs their attention, persuading them to go on reading the rest of the advertisement. Myers-Scotton (2006), in her Markedness model, speaks of how the use of code switching can be considered ‘marked’ and thereby alerts the conversation partner that something different is to follow. Therefore, the use of code switching in the headline alerts the reader that something different is happening and so attracts the attention of the reader (Ruellot, 2011).

The use of a Malay phrase in the headline does not only raise attention, but also appeals to Malay-speaking people from other ethnic groups. The use of this particular phrase, particularly, the call to ‘my generation’, constructs a younger generation Malay identity. This is evident in the background of BSN (*Bank Simpanan Nasional* or National Savings Bank) which is a Government bank created specifically to encourage people to save.

In Extract 7b, the code switched term *Loh Sang* is used to attract the attention of the Chinese community who celebrate Chinese New Year. *Loh Sang* is a term that

refers very specifically to the act of tossing *Yee Sang* in the Chinese New Year period. Thus, the use of *Loh Sang* specifically acts as an attention grabber. Once the reader's attention is caught, then the rest of the details are explained in the body text.

In Extract 7c the whole headline is code switched into Cantonese. This means that the advertisement is meant for a specific audience, those who can read Chinese writing. The headline is used to grab attention, while the body copy is in English, explaining and describing the product. This is illustrated in Extract 8.

Extract 8

- a. The Whiskas *ronda-ronda si comel* roving truck is coming to town. (Whiskas, *The Star*, 7 October 2011)
- b. From unassuming little dishes like Sarawak '*kolo mee*' and the well liked '*roti canai*' to staple favorites like '*nasi lemak*' and the world famous '*assam laksa*', Malaysia cooks up an extraordinary gastronomic experience that blends time-honoured tastes with ethnic flavours that truly reflect the unique diversity of Malaysian culture. (MOT, *New Straits Times*, 15 October 2011)

Extract 8 is an example of how code switching is used in the body copy of an advertisement to construct a specific group identity. Extract 8a uses familiar Malay words to establish rapport with the reader. The term *comel* in Malay means 'cute', while the term *si comel* means 'cutie' – a term of endearment also used on cats. Since this is a cat food advertisement, the code switched phrase is used to construct the identity of a cat lover who uses such terms of endearment on their cat and so would be willing to go and meet the truck when it comes. In this way, rapport and solidarity is established with the reader. The concept of using code switching to build specific group identities that share something in common is explored further in Section 4.6.

Extract 8b shows clearly the use of code switched food terms in the body copy. All the food items described in the body text are code switched as they cannot be effectively and accurately rendered in English. *Assam laksa* (a sour and spicy soup

noodle dish popular in Northern Malaysia), *nasi lemak* (rice cooked with coconut milk and served with spicy sauce), and *roti canai* (an Indian flat bread) are all code switched into Malay. By using these terms, the meaning of the dish is accurately rendered and the readers are able to identify with them immediately.

Unlike Bhatia (1992), Piller (2001) found that most of the occurrences of code switching are in the signature component or the slogan component of the advertisement. She observed that code switching occurrences in the headline or body copy are rare because the advertisers felt that the readers may not be very competent in the English language. The findings of the current study concur more with Bhatia (1992) than Piller (2001).

Code switching occurrences are very few in the signature line and slogan component. This implies two things, firstly, that the identity of the reader in the current study is that of a competent bilingual who reads and understands information in code switched words and phrases in the body copy. This indicates that the reader in the Malaysian context is competent, familiar and also comfortable with Malay, English and their own ethnic dialects and languages, although proficiency in these different languages may vary (Tan, 2009). Unlike the German reader, Malaysians have shown themselves to be very comfortable in switching back and forth between different languages for reasons other than proficiency or lexical gap (Dumanig & David, 2011). Thus the advertisers are able to code switch in the headline and body copy and be certain that the Malaysian readers would not only understand, but that they would also identify with the words and phrases used.

Secondly, since the readers of English newspapers could be assumed to be reasonably competent in the English language, there is no real need to translate either slogan or signature lines into another language other than English. The preference of the advertisers is to render their business names and labels in English for an English speaking readership. This is evident as the number of advertisements with code switching occurrences in the signature line is only five, whereas the number of advertisements with code switching occurrences in the headline and body copy is 74 and 75 respectively. Code switching is used intentionally in the signature line or slogan to stand out or increase memory recall, which is the point of using slogans (Ruellot, 2011).

Generally, code switching is used in the headline mostly to grab attention by standing out or being different from the other advertisements and so appeal to the reader's identity. In the body copy, code switching is used to express certain meanings or connotations which may not be readily expressed in English. This is especially true when it comes to certain dishes or cultural terms, which is consistent with Tan (2009). Code switching is used in the signature line or slogan to improve memory recall by using a catchphrase that is appealing and easy to remember.

The context of the code switches, both in terms of proximity to festivals and celebrations, as well as placement in the advertisement, influences choice of language and affects the meaning carried in the copy. It is also evident that the use of code switches are purposeful with the intention of creating specific identities that build solidarity with the consumers and enable them to have affective feelings toward the product or brand. Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006, p. 12) states that "The choice to use a particular form, motivated by the semantic, and more importantly ideological effects of

the use, undeniably impacts upon the message that the use intends to convey.” In other words, the use of the code switching impacts the message of the advertisement and consequently, leaves an impression on the reader. This finding is consistent with the literature (Dumanig & David, 2011; Gao, 2005).

4.4 Identities Constructed through Code Switching

The findings show that the Malaysian English newspaper reader is a hybrid of multiple identities that advertisers construct in their advertisements. The identities constructed include religious, cultural, national and specific group identities which may overlap or change from time to time. This finding is supported by Woodward (1997) and Piller (2001) who argue that identity is constructed in discourse, and thus, fluid, flexible, changing as well as conflicting at times. Identity construction is relational and contextual. In addition, as LaBelle (2011) explains, multiple identities can be held at the same time. This means different identities can be constructed such as religious (Islamic), ethnic, national (Malaysian) and interest group identities.

4.4.1 Code Switching and Islamic Identity

One of the most prevalent identities constructed in the advertisements is the Islamic identity, which is constructed through the use of religious Malay terms. This finding is supported by Azirah Hashim (2010) who observes that one of the most obvious examples of code switching in print advertisements in Malaysia is in the use of religious terms, particularly the use of Islamic terms. She explains, “In a country where the Malays make up the biggest ethnic group and Islam the dominant religion, issues of *halal* food (food that can be eaten) and *haram* food (food that is prohibited) are of crucial importance” (Azirah Hashim, 2010, p. 382). As such, certain terms such as

halal and *haram* are used to establish credentials and assure Muslims that certain foods are acceptable to them.

The current study did not find any such food-related religious terms. However, religious terms were evident in Islamic banking and financial related advertisements. These terms convey specific ideological meaning which is related to Islam. This can be seen in Finance related advertisements as exemplified by Extract 9.

Extract 9

- a. *Amanah Hartanah Bumiputra* (AHB) is an initiative to encourage *bumiputra* participation in property investment that is *Syariah* –compliant. (Maybank AHB, *The Star*, 15 Oct. 2011)
- b. Grow your investments with *Shariah*-compliant Stocks and *Sukuk*. (Public Mutual, NST, 12 Oct. 2011)
- c. You can now pay your *zakat*, utility bills and many more payments. (Agro Bank, 26 Sept. 2011)

Extract 9a uses an Islamic term, *syariah* (Islamic Law), to establish credentials and gain the attention of a particular religious group: the Muslims. The term *syariah* is used to indicate compliance with Islamic law, and in this context, Islamic banking principles. This is a religious term which only Muslims would identify with readily. Although other religious groups might know of it, they are not the target of this advertisement. The use of the Malay word *bumiputra* (*lit.* sons of the soil), though not a religious term, further precludes all other races from the information in this advertisement, as it refers particularly the Malays and the indigenous groups in Malaysia. Thus in this advertisement, the information is limited to Muslim *bumiputra*.

Woodward (1997) explains that identity is often constructed by marking difference, i.e. by showing or recognizing how one's identity is different from others. This can be seen in the context of this advertisement, where the use of certain technical

religious terms precludes others from being the intended target of the advertisement. The identity that is constructed here is that of a Muslim *bumiputra* as set over and against other religious and ethnic identities. Instead of using the English terms ‘sons of the soil’ or ‘Islamic law’, the advertisers construct a very specific identity in order to target a very specific consumer group. Thus, any other religion or identity cannot be a part of this advertisement. The message is not intended for them.

Extract 9b and 9c are two examples which further illustrate this type of religious identity construction. In these advertisements the code switched words are technical Islamic terms that are used in banking advertisements. These words, *shariah*, *sukuk*, *zakat*, refer to Islamic terms which have a special connotation for Muslims. They are all words borrowed from Arabic into Malay. The term *Shariah* (شريعة *šarī'ah*) refers to Islamic law. While this term does not have a ready equivalent in English, the word *sukuk* does. *Sukuk* (صكوك), literally means certificates, but refers to Islamic bonds in the financial world. While ‘bonds’ is a common English term in banking and financial circles, the use of the word *sukuk* very specifically indicate Islamic bonds.

The word *zakat*, (زكاة [zæ'kæ:], *lit.* alms) too, has an English equivalent, ‘tithe’. However, ‘tithe’ is more generic and could be applied to other religions as well. However the term *zakat* carries a connotation that Muslims could easily identify with. In this case, the advertisers used words that express the religious connotations necessary for Islamic banking.

Woodward (1997) also speaks about constructing identity through representation. Language, and in particular, certain words and phrases, can be seen as symbols which carry a lot of ideological meaning and so may be used to construct

identity. The words mentioned in this example, i.e. *sukuk*, *syariah*, and *zakat*, are all words with symbolic value in Islam. They are loaded with religious meaning and so can be said to represent an Islamic identity. By using these words, the advertisers, through both difference and representation, construct a religious identity that reaches a very specific group of people – the Muslims. Other terms and words relating to other religions such as Hinduism or the Chinese religions were not found. Although it could be argued that *Deepavali* is a religious festival of the Hindus, the study did not find any specific religious Hindu terms in connection with the celebration. The words and phrases associated with *Deepavali* and Chinese New Year could be said to construct ethnic, rather than religious identities.

4.4.2 Code Switching and Ethnic Identities

Hajar Abdul Rahim (2006) argues that bilinguals use code switching to express connotative meanings which are bound up with local culture. This means that bilinguals, including Malaysians, use code switching as an expression of their identity, both in terms of who they are, as well as in terms of the identity they wish to convey. Lee (2003) states that culture is inextricably linked to language, and that language is an expression of culture, which in turn is defined as “a set of beliefs, values, norms, customs, traditions, rituals and a way of life.” In Malaysia, culture is closely bound up with ethnic identity as each ethnic group has its own “set of values, beliefs and practices” (Azirah Hashim, 2010). Thus, language choice can be seen as an expression of one’s culture as well as his or her ethnicity. This can be clearly seen in the construction of Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic identities in the data.

4.4.2.1 Code Switching and Indian Identity

Since most of the code switching occurrences are in the context of cultural festivals and celebrations, and most of the advertisements in this period of time contain greetings and well wishes, it is no surprise that most of the phrases used evoke very specific ethnic related identities. Figure 4.3 shows that code switching into Tamil is very rare outside of *Deepavali* day itself. Most of these code switches took place in advertisements almost exclusively on *Deepavali* day (25th October, 2011). Extract 10 is typical of such advertisements.

Extract 10

- a. **Headline:** (In Tamil script) *Inba Deepavali Vazhthukkal*. Happy Deepavali.
Body Copy: May the divine light of Diwali spread into your life peace, prosperity, happiness, and good health. Happy Diwali. (Repeated In Tamil script): *Makizhziyaana Deepavali naalil theyvika oli paravatam vallamum, makizhchiyum, noyatra vaazhvum perukatam*.
(Sports Toto, *The Sun*, 25 October, 2011)
- b. **Headline:** Let's wish each other Happy *Deepavali* with these nationwide offers.
Body Copy: ...Purchase the 'Oli Peruvom' Caller Tunes and RM 1 will go to the EWRFF, a welfare foundation dedicated to improving education standards amongst the needy... Happy *Deepavali* from Digi. (DIGI, *The Star*, 24 October 2011)

Extract 10a is the only instance of actual Tamil script being used in the data. Most urban Indians may not be able to read actual Tamil script, although they may understand spoken Tamil. Thus the use of actual Tamil script rather than Romanized Tamil, is surprising and also speaks volumes about who the advertisement is for. The phrase used in the headline, *Inba Deepavali Vazhthukkal* (lit. Joyous Deepavali Greetings) is followed by the English equivalent, Happy *Deepavali*. While 'Happy Deepavali' is used by all Malaysians to greet their Indian friends, *Inba Deepavali Vazhthukkal* (*Joyous Deepavali Greetings*) is used only by Tamils in wishing each other. The body copy contains a lengthier *Deepavali* greeting and gives the English equivalent first and then follows it up with the greeting in Tamil script.

The use of Tamil script in the headline grabs the attention of those who know Tamil, and at the same time, excludes those who do not. This advertisement is specifically targeted toward Tamils, and everyone else is precluded. This notion of ‘we’ and ‘they’ has been highlighted by Gumperz (1982). By excluding everyone else, the identity constructed by this advertisement is marked against the ‘they’ who are not able to read and understand Tamil. Unlike other Deepavali advertisements which tend to use the occasion as an opportunity to include all Malaysians in the greeting, this one does not.

A similar situation arises in Extract 10b, which uses the Romanized Tamil label *Oli Peruvom* (may the light grow / shine) for a collection of songs that DIGI customers could download. Piller (2001) explains that identity is also marked through similarity through the sharing of markers such as language. The characteristic of the identity constructed in this advertisement is extended beyond those who are able to read and understand Tamil as well to those who can understand Tamil in general. Thus, the identity constructed in these advertisements is of ethnic Tamils who may, or may not, be able to read and write Tamil, but who would definitely understand Romanized Tamil at least. Since Tamil is the main language of the Indians in Malaysia (see Section 4.3), the use of Tamil could be said to construct an Indian, rather than a specifically Tamil, identity.

4.4.2.2. Code Switching and Chinese Identity

As mentioned earlier, occurrences of code switching into Cantonese and Mandarin were higher during the Chinese New Year period, peaking during the last two weeks of January (see Figure 4.3). Most of these advertisements are food-related and

the code switches occur in the context of foods that are specially linked to the Chinese New Year celebration, thereby invoking a Chinese identity.

Extract 11

- a. **(Headline):** Bonus ‘*Ong Lai*’ pizza. Hawaiian Papa with extra pineapple toppings. **(Body Copy):** Enjoy the all time favourite Hawaiian Papa with chicken roll and extra ‘*Ong Lai*’ this New Year. ‘*Ong Lai*’, a sweet symbol for ushering in wealth and prosperity. (Papa John’s, *The Sun*, 25 January, 2012)
- b. *(In Chinese characters) Once Carlsberg is open, there is an endless flow of prosperity.* (In English) Welcome the New Year with the vigour of the Dragon for an endless flow of prosperity. *Gong Xi Fa Cai*. (Carlsberg, *The Star*, 17 January 2012).
- c. *Gong Xi Fa Cai* from all of us at DIGI. (Digi, *The Star*, 23 January, 2012).

In Extract 11a, there is a play on the word *Ong Lai*. This Cantonese word actually refers to the pineapple, but the literal connotation is ‘Prosperity, come!’ Because of this connection, the pineapple has become a representation of prosperity and so is important in Chinese culture. It is featured prominently in Chinese New Year decorations and on the table as one of the fruits of choice during the festive period. The word brings together those who know Cantonese and so are participants in this culture, and leaves out those who are not. Thus, through similarity, difference, as well as representation, the Chinese identity is marked. The advertiser takes advantage of this connection with prosperity to promote their Hawaiian Pizza, which has pineapple as a main ingredient.

Surprisingly, in most of the advertisements, the Chinese New Year greeting in Mandarin, *Gong Xi Fa Cai*, is used in the headline or in the beginning or end of the body copy, while Cantonese is used for most of the other code switched occurrences, especially in the body copy. Food words such as *Loh Sang*, *Yee Sang*, and other such terms are in Cantonese. Good wishes for Chinese New Year are also rendered in Cantonese. An example of this is in Extract 11b & 11c. In Extract 11b, Cantonese is

used to describe and connect the product (Carlsberg) to prosperity. The code switching here is used to persuade the consumer by appealing to his or her language (Cantonese), ideology (prosperity) and custom (the consumption of beer during such festivals). The choice of Cantonese probably precludes the other dialects and language groups among the Chinese. However, the use of Cantonese can be explained by the fact that *The Star* has five editions for Peninsular Malaysia, including the Northern Edition, the Klang Valley Edition, and the Southern Edition ("The Star," 2012) . The Klang Valley edition focuses on the Klang Valley (Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya, Shah Alam, and Klang). This region is inhabited by mainly Cantonese speaking Chinese. Thus, other dialects (other than Mandarin and Cantonese) are not used much in the advertisements. This could be one of the possible reasons why Hokkien is not found in the data.

The use of the Mandarin greeting (*Gong Xi Fa Cai*) both in Extract 11b and 11c, can be explained by the fact that Mandarin is the medium of instruction in Chinese schools. Thus, those who learn Chinese languages formally or who go to Chinese schools are fluent in Mandarin. This is also evident through greetings from other dialects during Chinese New Year (*Kung Si Fa Chai; Kong Hee Fatt Choy*) which have fallen into disuse particularly in English newspaper advertisements.

The use of code switching in these advertisements construct the identity of a Chinese-English bilingual who is familiar and somewhat proficient in Cantonese and Mandarin, at least enough to read Chinese characters and understand basic words and phrases related to the festival. The fact that Cantonese and Mandarin terms are used most in the domain of culture, particularly food and celebrations, is supported by the findings of Tan (2009) who also found that lexical borrowings from Chinese to English were highest in the domain of culture, food and festivals.

4.4.2.3 Code Switching and Malay Identity

The Malay identity is also marked similarly through the use of certain Malay words and phrases, particularly during the Hari Raya festive period, as in the case of Extract 12 below.

Extract 12

- a. Still the best deal in town. McValue lunch & *Buka Puasa*. (McDonald's, *The Star*, 27 August 2011)
- b. *Maaf*. This blessed *Aidilfitri*, take some time to remember the moments when you may have hurt a loved one, offended a friend, or misjudged a stranger... DIGI wishes you a *Selamat Hari Raya. Maaf Zahir dan Batin*. (DIGI, *The Star*, 29 August 2011)
- c. At RM 1,168 a month, there's more to celebrate this *Hari Raya*. (Volvo, *The Star*, 17 September 2011)

There are a number of phrases used in Extract 12 that reflect the Malay culture. Extract 12a uses the phrase *Buka Puasa* (breaking fast), which relates to Islam and at the same time has cultural connotations. During the holy month of *Ramadhan*, Muslims fast the whole day and break their fast in the evening. Since the majority race in Malaysia is the Malay race who are also Muslims (Azirah Hashim, 2010, p. 382), many restaurants cater to them by including special meals for breaking the fast. While it could be said that this phrase is a religious term, since the Malays are mostly the ones who observe *Ramadhan* and celebrate *Hari Raya*, it could also be said to be a cultural term that reflects Malay culture.

This is evident in Extract 12b, which focuses on the word *Maaf* (forgive), which is linked to *Aidilfitri*. The word *maaf* refers to the celebration of *Hari Raya Aidilfitri*, when the Malays customarily go around to their elders and ask for their forgiveness uttering the phrase *Maaf Zahir dan Batin*, which can be translated as "Forgive my physical and emotional wrongdoings." This is an expression that the Muslims use to

seek forgiveness on *Hari Raya* morning. Although it is made up of individual words, it is a clause that cannot be separated as the individual words do not carry the intended meaning which is to seek forgiveness from the elders. This connotation is evident through the use of *dan* rather than ‘and’ in the phrase. This extensive switch does not only foreground the celebration, but it also creates rapport with the Muslim / Malay consumers by appealing to a common identity, that of the homecoming. By tapping into this identity, DIGI is portrayed as caring and sensitive, one who celebrates with the Malay-Muslims and shares in their joy.

Similarly, in Extract 12c, using the term *Hari Raya*, the advertisement evokes the celebratory mood of the *Hari Raya* festival, and ties it in with the promotional price of their product. The use of this one phrase *Hari Raya*, invokes fond memories and sentiments such as the Malay practice of going back to the family home, referred to as *Balik Kampung* (*lit.* returning to the village) and of joyous reunion with the family. For many families, this might be one of the few times when the whole family gets together. The use of these familiar and culturally loaded phrases during the *Hari Raya* festive period invokes the Malay culture and thus, the Malay identity. A specific Malay ethnic identity is thus constructed through the use of culturally specific terms.

In each of the above examples, it can be seen how identity is constructed principally through difference, marking each ethnic identity over and against other ethnic groups. Words and phrases that are used are specific to a particular culture and so stand out against the other ethnic groups and their culture. Blomquist (2009) cites Trudgill (2000, pp. 44-45) who asserts that language is “an essential part of ethnic group membership.” Therefore, language is not only a defining part of ethnic identity; it is also used by ethnic groups to construct their separateness and identity. Blomquist

(2009, p. 10) goes on to say, “From this I draw two ideas, the first one being that language can be used to construct and define one’s identity, and the second one being that language can be used to separate one’s identity from that of others”.

It is this notion of identity being marked by difference that is seen in the construction of ethnic cultural identities. The advertisements in this instance intentionally construct such clearly different ethnic identities in order to tap into the meanings, norms, beliefs and practices of each individual community, and in so doing, express solidarity with that particular group over and against the others. This is especially evident in the use of Tamil script and Chinese characters (which other communities will not be able to read) and Islamic religious terms for the Malays (which other ethno-religious groups may not be able to access). However, as can be seen, this is not the only type of identity construction in the data. There are times when the advertisers favor highlighting the commonalities, rather than the differences, between the cultures.

4.4.3 Code switching and National (Malaysian) Identity

The analysis also reveals that there are other advertisements, particularly during National celebrations such as *Merdeka* Day and Malaysia Day, which go even further and construct a National, specifically the Malaysian identity. This is supported by Azirah Hashim’s (2010) findings which indicate the presence of a specific Malaysian identity. The advertisements in this section illustrate this construction of a Malaysian identity.

The study finds that Malaysian identity is constructed through marking similarity among the different ethnic groups in the country. This is done through

marking commonalities among Malaysians such as food, childhood games, the use of familiar phrases, festive clothing, as well as through Government policies. This latter is accomplished through the 1 Malaysia policies as well as the use of a uniting language.

As noted earlier, food can be the “bearer of symbolic meanings and can act as a signifier” of identity (Woodward, 1997, p. 31). One of the main markers of the Malaysian identity is the love for food, whichever culture it may be from. Advertisers have taken this very Malaysian aspect and applied it to the concept of unity.

Extract 13

- a. The humble *Murukku* is loved by all, bringing us together in a time of celebration. As Malaysians, it really doesn't take much to unite us. Maybe it's because we've been that way all along. Happy *Deepavali*. (Tenaga Nasional Berhad, NST, 25 October 2011)
- b. **(Headline)** A salute to every Malaysian. **(Body Copy)** For the ones who mix their coffee with tea, who look for *nasi lemak* when they're overseas; And the ones who finish their meals with an *ABC...* and the ones who can't wake up without a 'super *kau' kopi-O* first... For the ones who call everyone 'bro', who *lat-tali-lat* to decide who gets to go... (Perodua, *The Star*, 18 September 2011).
- c. **(Headline)** Weaving harmony through *Baju Raya*. (There is an image of four *baju raya*, and under each there is a caption as follows: “Modern *Kurung a la Punjabi*”, “*Baba Nyonya* inspired *Kebaya*”, “Buttons and fabric from *Cheongsam*”, and “*Sari* cloth from *Indian* fashion house.” **(Body Copy):** As we prepare for a blessed *Syawal*, let us remind ourselves. Although from different backgrounds, we're really all cut from the same cloth. Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri and Selamat Hari Merdeka. (TNB, *The Star*, 29 August 2011)

Extract 13a shows a *Deepavali* advertisement. The word *Murukku* is lifted out of its original setting as an Indian snack, particularly during *Deepavali*, and set as something that is 'loved by all.' Although the *Murukku* is Indian in origin, Malays as well as Chinese have their own versions of it. The Indian snack has become loved by all, and has been adapted and assimilated into the different cultures. Hence it has become a food that characteristic of all cultures, although the strongest attachment is

still to Indian culture. The advertisement draws on this shared cultural food item and uses it as a symbol of the unity of Malaysians. Woodward (1997, p. 31) notes that food is an important cultural marker and can carry symbolic meanings. Therefore it can act as a signifier or expression of a national identity. As Indians, Chinese or Malays, there may be many differences but as Malaysians there are many things which are shared in common.

In Extract 13b, although Perodua is a car manufacturer, the advertisement uses food related words to promote the idea of a Malaysian identity. The code switched items stand out as they are traditional foods or beverages which are linked to local culture and so are easily identifiable by every Malaysian. *Nasi Lemak* (rice cooked in coconut cream) is a kind of rice dish that is of Malay origin but is popular across all the races. Most Malaysians have *Nasi Lemak*, on a regular basis, particularly for breakfast. It is rice cooked in coconut cream and garnished with condiments such as nuts and anchovies. Rather than describing it in this long and convoluted manner, the use of *Nasi Lemak* immediately strikes a chord in every Malaysian, regardless of race. *ABC*, an acronym for *Ais Batu Campur* is a dessert of shaved ice, nuts and other little bits which again connects with all the races.

Even the coffee is spelled “*kopi*”, which is in Malay, and refers to the Malaysian version of coffee – dark, and roasted with margarine and sugar. The word *kau* (Hokkien for ‘thick’) refers to thick coffee, not just strong coffee. ‘Super *kau*’ would refer to extra thick coffee associated with breakfast at the old Chinese coffee shops. Taken together, *kopi* super ‘*kau*’, is a mix of three languages, that is, Malay, English and Hokkien. This phrase carries the connotation of the Malaysian variety of coffee.

The advertiser also evokes the shared memory of childhood games through the use of the phrase *lat-tali-lat*, which refers to a game that almost all Malaysians would have played in their childhood, and so becomes another common experience or trait of Malaysians. Perodua uses these markers of the Malaysian identity – things that the general public link to what being Malaysian is all about - to bring good feelings of nostalgia and warmth to the reader. The Malaysian identity cuts across ethnic barriers by appealing to common or shared experiences, norms or practices, such as food, childhood games, or new clothes for festivals. This concurs with what Woodward (1997) observes about advertising and how it uses images and representation that is very much in the public consciousness. It is this very Malaysian identity that is already present in the public consciousness that is constructed by the advertisers in order to appeal to the consumers.

Similarly Extract 13c builds the idea of Malaysian identity, but in a slightly different way, through the use of lexical items referring to clothing in the local languages. One of the main characteristics of any celebration in Malaysia is that families would go out to buy new clothes to wear for the celebration. These are *Baju Raya* (festive clothes) which are usually worn on the first day of the festival. This happens across ethnic lines, as each community shares this common practice.

Tenaga Nasional, in this advertisement, takes the idea of *Baju Raya* and shows how, in this case, the clothes for the Muslim (mainly Malay) celebration of *Hari Raya* has elements of the other races and their cultures woven in. The code switched words in Extract 14b are from Malay, Chinese and Indian languages, with “*kurung*” and “*kebaya*” coming from the Malay, while “*Punjabi*” and “*sari*” comes from the Indian languages. “*Cheongsam*” comes from the Chinese and the “*Baba Nyonya*” are yet

another ethnic Chinese group (see Appendix D for the image of the advertisement). Although the celebration is basically a Malay celebration, the advertisement appeals to the larger Malaysian identity by weaving together elements from every culture. The last line of the advertisement asserts in English, ‘Although from different backgrounds, we’re really all cut from the same cloth.’ In this advertisement, it can be seen how code switching to the different main language groups in Malaysia (Malay, Chinese and Indian languages) is used to construct a Malaysian identity, especially by appealing to a shared cultural norm – that of *baju raya*.

Extract 14

- a. If you end your sentences with *lah*, you’ll love this *Kopi O, lah*. (Nescafe, *The Star*, 5 September 2011).
- b. *Cili padi*. Now in bright yellow. The new Perodua Myvi 1.5 (Perodua, NST, 5 October, 2011)
- c. *Lagi power, lagi best*. (Perodua, *The Star*, 28 September 2011)

Another shared cultural norm is the use of familiar phrases as seen in Extract 14. Extract 14a highlights the very Malaysian trait of using *lah* in their speech. The ubiquitous *lah* is used by most Malaysians regardless of ethnic background or even language. *Lah* itself is a particle from the Malay language which has no meaning on its own, but which is added to sometimes mitigate what is being said or to add emphasis or some other effect. While the advertisement is actually about coffee, the advertiser chooses a familiar form of speech which becomes a marker of Malaysian identity. This identity then is exploited by the advertisers to advertise their own product, i.e. if at all one is a Malaysian, one would enjoy the coffee that is being advertised, which, as explained earlier, is a Malaysian *Kopi*.

In Extract 14b, the code switched Malay term *cili padi* (bird’s eye chili) refers to a small yet very hot variety of chili pepper. Its size belies its heat. This has given rise

to an idiomatic expression in Malay, *Kecil kecil cili padi* (though small as a bird's eye chili...) which refers to something that may be small, but is very potent or packed with power. Perodua uses this idiomatic expression to play on the connotative meanings of the phrase to refer to their car, the MyVi, which is projected as something small, but quite powerful. By using this expression in the headline, the connotative meaning used by the advertisers create a positive feeling among those who use Malay towards the car by implying that though small in size, the Myvi is big on power. Although the phrase used is a Malay saying, in this context, the advertiser reaches out to all those who use Malay and are familiar with the phrase, not just the ethnic Malays themselves, thus reaching out to Malaysians from all ethnic backgrounds. This is further exemplified in 14c.

Extract 14c shows a unique combination of Malay and English words which, when taken together, represent Perodua's marketing thrust. The company has registered this phrase as a trademark and uses it as a slogan. While the code switched word is actually the Malay intensifier *lagi* in both instances, it is used differently each time. In '*lagi power*' the word *lagi* is used to denote 'more', to render it 'more power'. In the second instance, however, it is used with the English superlative, 'best' to create a familiar Malay phrase. The word 'best' has been borrowed into colloquial Malay and is used by people from various ethnicities as part of informal talk. The phrase is a familiar one to them. The phrase '*lagi best*' can be rendered as 'is even better', implying that the vehicle being advertised was the best before, but is even better now that it has more power. The familiarity of the phrase enables the consumer to identify with the brand and have a positive attitude towards it.

In Extract 14, familiar phrases and idiomatic expressions are used to construct a Malaysian identity. As Woodward (1997, p. 15) notes, “advertisements can only ‘work’ in selling us things if they appeal to consumers and provide images with which they can identify”. The use of *lah*, *cili padi* and *lagi* power, *lagi* best, taps into expressions that may originate from the Malay language, but is recognized by Malaysians in general. It has been observed before that Malay is the choice for inter-ethnic communication (Rajadurai, 2007). Thus, it becomes the choice of advertisers in constructing a Malaysian identity that cuts across ethnic lines through the use of well known phrases.

The study also found that Malaysian identity is constructed through the policies of the Government, that is the use of Malay as a national as well as uniting language, and the 1 Malaysia policy. The construction of the Malaysian identity as a planned, intentional ideology of the Government is exemplified by Extract 15.

Extract 15

- a. Through diversity we embrace the values of respect, mutual understanding and tolerance. Together, we will progress as One nation, *1 Malaysia*. *Selamat Hari Malaysia*. (RHB, News Straits Times, 16 September 2011)
- b. Click on the *Jalan-jalan 1 Perodua*, *1 Malaysia* app on facebook.com/MYPerodua. (Perodua, *The Star*, 13 October 2011)
- c. *Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri & Happy Merdeka Day* to all Malaysians. (Honda, *The Star*, 17 September 2011)

Extract 15 reflects the influence of Government ideology in reflecting a united, Malaysian identity in advertisements. This is no accident, as the Malaysian Advertising Code specifically calls for advertisers to incorporate elements that reflect unity (*The Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice*, 2008). In addition to this is the Government’s policy to promote Malay as a uniting language between the various ethnic groups. This

is exemplified in Extract 15a, where the advertiser makes no mention of their label, company, product or service. The advertisement serves as reminder of the values of the nation, specifically unity in diversity. The values of respect, mutual understanding and tolerance are highlighted. In addition the advertiser links progress to being ‘together’. Only by being together, or being united, will the country progress. This progress will be as One nation, 1 Malaysia. The use of the English One indicates that ‘One nation’ is meant to be in English. Contradicting this is the use of the numerical ‘1’ in 1 Malaysia. Since 1 Malaysia is the Malaysian government policy for unity and progress, when RHB uses ‘1 Malaysia’ it should properly be read as ‘*Satu* Malaysia’, rather than ‘One Malaysia’. In doing this, the advertiser highlights 1 Malaysia concept of the Government.

Extract 15b strengthens this notion by using the same ‘1 Malaysia’ in the advertisement. The code switched phrase begins with *jalan-jalan* (lit. walkabout) 1 Perodua. The use of the code switched *jalan-jalan* would lead the reader to read 1 Perodua and 1 Malaysia as *satu* Perodua and *satu* Malaysia. Thus Perodua links its advertisement to the 1 Malaysia brand promoted by the Government, and so accesses the same Malaysian identity that comes with the 1 Malaysia tag.

In addition, RHB ends the advertisement with the greeting *Selamat Hari Malaysia*, whereas ‘Happy Malaysia Day’ would have done just as well. Extract 15c uses the greeting Happy *Merdeka* Day to all Malaysians. The greeting could have been rendered in English as ‘Happy National Day’. The implication is that the code switched greetings in both the advertisements are purposeful and intentional. The use of Malay in these greetings indicates that not only is unity being promoted, but that the vehicle of unity is the Malay language itself. Thus, Malay is not only used to convey the message

of unity, it is used to forge unity as well. This finding is evidenced by Malay as the preferred choice of language in advertisements carrying messages of unity in the *Merdeka Day* and *Malaysia Day* period as indicated in Section 4.2.3.

The findings reveal the Malaysian identity. This finding is consistent with Kow (2008), who notes that Malaysians tend to embrace and use all the languages in the country, as well as the culture and ethnic practices that are behind it, even though Malay is the official language and English is a strong second language. This is especially seen in the practice of Malaysians who have embraced each other's food and cultural festivals through the concept of open house, as well as the many holidays for the major festivals of each ethnic group. It is this shared experiences and cultural elements that the advertisers exploit in order to construct a Malaysian identity.

4.4.4 Code Switching and Interest Group Identities

The last type of Identity found in the data is interest group identity. Interest Group identity can refer to any group that has something in common. Religious, ethnic and even national identities are all different forms of group identities (De Fina, 2007, p. 377). Since religious, ethnic and national identities have been discussed in the previous sections, this section will focus solely on group identities that have other things in common, such as interest groups.

Extract 16

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The Whiskas <i>Ronda-ronda Si Comel</i> roving truck is coming to town. (Whiskas, <i>The Star</i>, 7 October, 2011).b. Hot <i>bola</i> pair deals. (Pizza Hut, <i>The Star</i>, 12 October, 2011) |
|---|

Extract 16a shows one such interest group which has already been discussed earlier in analyzing the '*Ronda-ronda Si Comel*' advertisement from Whiskas (Section

4.4). The group could be identified as cat lovers as they all shared a common interest – cats. The discussion will not be repeated here.

In Extract 16b, the code switched Malay word *bola* has a ready translation in ‘ball’ or, in this context, ‘football’. *Bola* then is used not because of lexical gap or lack of register, but for affective reasons. Through the use of code switching, *bola* is brought to the foreground and stands out from the rest of the sentence as an attention grabber. This word taps into a particular culture, this time not ethnic, but a part of the Malaysian culture that cuts across all ethnic groups: football fever. It is perhaps significant that the advertisement occurred during one of the football league sessions in England. English football has a strong following in Malaysia, and it is common to see crowds of people watching football at restaurants. In this way, the passion for football and food is linked and used by the advertisers in tapping into this football ‘fever’.

While the word ‘football’ refers merely to the game or the ball used in the game, the term ‘*bola*’ has additional affective connotations which brings to mind all the feelings, emotions and atmosphere of watching a football game as a crowd. It is this commonality, a shared emotion and experience concerning the game, which cuts across ethnic lines, and so constructs a group identity that is centered on the game of football.

4.5 Reasons for Constructing Identities through Code Switching

The findings show that advertisers construct religious, ethnic, national (Malaysian) and group identities for various reasons, all which relate ultimately to the main goal of all advertisers, which is persuading the consumer either to buy their product or to be positively disposed towards their brand (Azirah Hashim, 2010, p. 387; Dumanig & David, 2011; Ruellot, 2011). The reasons and motivations identified by the current

study include accommodation, affective reasons, building credibility and building solidarity as a form of marketing strategy which seeks to accomplish this goal of persuading consumers. This is consistent with the findings of Dumanig and David (2011) which report similar motivations for the use of code switching in advertisements (see Chapter 2). However, as has been noted in the literature review, there are no studies that the researcher is aware of which investigate identity construction through code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. As such, the study is forced to rely on relevant work done in other domains in Malaysia in order to verify the reasons why the identities detailed in the previous section were constructed by the advertisers.

4.5.1 Accommodation

An analysis of the data reveals that advertisers use code switching as a means reducing the distance with the bilingual consumer. One of the convergence strategies found to be used by advertisers to accommodate the bilingual consumer is the use of familiar code switched phrases and images to construct an identity that is familiar and accessible to the consumer.

Extract 17

- a. *Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri* to all Malaysians. (Hard Rock Café, New Straits Times, 29 August, 2011)
- b. Blessing a child by feeding him a sweet treat is an old tradition in some Indian communities... Happy *Deepavali* from Nestle. (Nestle, New Straits Times, 25 October 2011)
- c. Cheers! Prost! Salut! *Yum Seng!* Enjoy your favourite beers together with good food, good friends and fun games. (Oktoberfest, *The Star*, 11 October, 2011)

Extract 17a uses a Malay greeting that is synonymous with the Hari Raya celebrations. By using this very familiar greeting, a Malay – Muslim identity which is

at once very familiar as well as appealing to that community is constructed. Constructing an identity that is familiar with the consumer in such a way reduces the distance with them and makes them amenable towards the particular product or brand, in this case, Hard Rock Cafe. Woodward (1997), as discussed earlier, has summed it up well – if advertisers want to sell, then they need to use images, phrases and words which are familiar to the consumer.

Extract 17b uses the same idea by highlighting a familiar image, that of a mother feeding her child a sweet treat during *Deepavali*. In highlighting this imagery, the advertisement strikes a chord with Indians who celebrate Deepavali. The image is not only familiar, but also arouses deep sentiment in the Indian reader. Thus, the advertisement is able to connect with the Indian readers. Extract 17c accommodates the Chinese reader, among others, by highlighting the phrase, *Yum Seng* (Cheers!), a phrase used when drinking beer or wine in a celebration as a form of toast. The toast never happens when the person drinking is alone. This particular toast is therefore tied to a celebration or happy occasion, a notion strengthened by the English text, ‘good food, good friends, and fun games.’ Thus, by using *Yum Seng*, the advertisement connects with Chinese readers and converges with them.

This finding that accommodation is one reason why advertisers use code switching in advertisements is consistent with previous studies (Dumanig & David, 2011). In advertising, accommodation happens when advertisers try to reduce the distance between them and the consumers by using various convergence strategies. This is seen as a marketing strategy (Dumanig & David, 2011).

4.5.2 Affective Reasons

The study also finds that advertisements use a variety of code switches to evoke a sense of warmth, hospitality and nostalgia, especially in the creation of various ethnic and national identities previously discussed.

For example, the Malay identity, the Tamil identity, and the Chinese identity are all constructed in advertisements that occur during festive periods. The use of culturally related words, phrases and greetings such as *Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri*, *Deepavali Vazhthukkal*, and *Sau Gong & Loh Sang* are illustrative of the way that Identity construction is used to evoke affective feelings in the heart of the reader. It is significant that the terms are not explained, but the advertisers assume that the target audience will readily understand and identify with the terms involved. The use of these words and phrases construct identities that invoke sentimental feelings and leave the reader positively disposed toward the brands or products advertised. The use of familiar phrases is not limited to festival periods, as can be seen in Extract 18.

Extract 18

- | |
|--|
| <p>a. Your child insists on sharing your bed on date nights. <i>POTONG STIM!</i> Using dongle at home... <i>LAGI POTONG STIM!</i> (P1, <i>The Star</i>, 1 October 2011)</p> <p>b. Rain starts just as you finish waxing. <i>POTONG STIM!</i> Using dongle at home... <i>LAGI POTONG STIM!</i> (P1, <i>The Star</i>, 17 September 2011)</p> <p>c. <i>Diamlah</i> ;) P1 broadband still cheap! When everything else is expensive, save more with P1's great deals...The best outdoor and indoor broadband deal with Voice service. Shhh... <i>diam-diam</i> get it now. (P1, <i>The Star</i>, 13 January 2012)</p> |
|--|

In Extract 18a & b, the advertiser uses a familiar phrase, *Potong Stim* (killjoy or frustration) to construct an identity of a sympathetic and understanding person who knows just how frustrating life can be. Using a few different familiar scenarios, the

advertiser sympathizes with people who are caught up in frustration using a dongle for their internet service at home. By linking the code switched term *Potong Stim* and *lagi Potong Stim* (even more frustration), the advertiser likens the ineffectual dongle with all of these frustrating situations in life. In doing this, the advertiser is constructed as someone who not only knows the frustration the consumer is going through, but is also able to offer something better.

This is seen in Extract 18c, where the Malay phrase *Diamlah* (shut up) is followed by an emoticon which softens the tone of *Diamlah*. Now it is rendered not so much as ‘Shut up’ but rather ‘quiet, please’. The advertiser now becomes a co-conspirator, sharing a secret with the consumer. In doing so, the advertiser is able to show their product as being better, not just in effectiveness, but in price as well. And by couching it as a conspiracy, the thrust of the advertisement is not so much overt as it is covert. The ending, ‘*Sssh...diam-diam*’ (quietly, now) further strengthens this image of a conspiracy, and the consumer is delighted to be ‘in’ on the secret.

The use of such familiar phrases builds a friendly, accessible identity that enables the advertiser to reach the consumer at an affective level, becoming a friend, and offering some friendly advice, rather than as a company selling things.

This is consistent with previous studies such as Gao (2005), who argues about a ‘favourable psychological affect’ which is brought about through the use of code switching in advertisements. In addition, Azirah Hashim (2010, p. 387) observes that advertisers use code switching to create rapport with the target audience. These studies find that the use of code switched terms brings with it certain connotations and culturally loaded meaning. As has been pointed out above, the use of code switching by

Malaysians is not merely because of lexical gap, but because of the connotative meanings that they want to express (Hajar Abdul Rahim, 2006). Thus, the use of such culturally loaded terms evokes sentimental feelings in the heart of the reader. This in turn, puts the reader in a psychologically favourable attitude towards the advertised product or brand.

4.5.3 Building Credibility

As was discussed in Section 4.5, Azirah Hashim (2010) notes the use of code switching to establish credentials, such as the use of the word *halal* to indicate which foods could be eaten by Muslims. To establish credentials simply means to give assurance that a particular product or label is safe or acceptable to be used. This gives confidence to the customer and to ensure validity of products and services (Shanmuganathan & Ramasamy, 2009). When it comes to a multilingual nation like Malaysia, what is acceptable or normal to one community may not be acceptable to another. Thus, advertisers use religious terms and phrases to help assure potential customers that their product is safe to use from a religious point of view. However, even this is in line with the overall goal of advertisers in persuading the reader (Azirah Hashim, 2010, p. 378).

The findings of the study affirm these previous studies as it was found that some identities were constructed in advertisements to build credibility among the consumers. This is especially true in the construction of religious identities as illustrated by Extract 19.

Extract 19

- a. Fund Transfer, Bill Payment, Loan / Financing Payment, *Zakat* Payment, *Tabung Haji* Payment. (Public Bank, *The Star*, 1 November 2011)
- b. *Kempen Berbaloi*. (Agro Bank, New Straits Times, 5 November 2011)
- c. Public *Ittikal* Sequel Fund. Grow your investments with *Syariah*-compliant Stocks and *Sukuk*. (Public Mutual, New Straits Times, 12 October 2011)

In the banking sector, Islamic Banking principles have become increasingly important to Muslims who want to know if the particular financial service or product they are considering is actually acceptable to their religion. The use of certain Islamic terms such as *shariah*, *sukuk* and *zakat*, builds an identity of a devout Muslim who is familiar with Islam and its requirements. Therefore, the products described by these advertisements would be acceptable from an Islamic point of view, and so would be safe for Muslims to use. In this instance, the construction of the religious identity serves to establish credibility among the Muslim readership and thus persuades them in considering the product or service favorably. Even when religious terms are not used, such as in Extract 19b, the code switched phrase, *Kempen Berbaloi* (a profitable investment) serves to establish credentials. The Bank is running this campaign to inform its customers that investing with them will definitely be profitable. In this way, the bank's expertise and credentials are displayed in order that the consumer may trust them and so invest with them.

4.5.4 Building Solidarity

The last main motivation identified by this study for the construction of identity in advertisements is to build solidarity. The current study finds that differing identities were constructed to express solidarity with differing groups at differing times. While this is evident in all the examples cited in the previous section, it can especially be seen

in the choice of language used by the advertisers during different celebrations. Extract 20 illustrates this finding.

Extract 20

- a. Some say Luck. Some say Fortune. Some say *Rezeki*. However it's said, it still means prosperity. *Jom Generasiku!* (BSN, New Straits Times, 19 January 2012)
- b. Thank you for the *Ang Pow*. The *Ang Pow* has become more than just a Chinese festive gift or a traditional symbol of good luck. Today, it has been adopted by everyone. It now comes in many colors to symbolize different celebrations. Only a society that can adapt, evolve and share their individual traditions can truly be united. Happy Chinese New Year to everyone from all of us at Tenaga Nasional. (TNB, New Straits Times, 23 January 2012)
- c. (Chinese Character): Fullness. (Bernas, 16 January, 2012)

Even outside the festival period, attempts to build solidarity with different target groups can be seen. Extract 20a is an example of how an advertisement uses key words to build solidarity. In this advertisement by BSN (Bank Simpanan Nasional), the slogan is, “*Jom, Generasiku!*” The use of the word, *Jom*, translates as “come with me”. But the connotative meaning is much more, as was discussed in Section 3.4. It is a stirring call to action. The call is to an entire generation who shares the same identity as the speaker. The use of the pronoun *ku* (short for *aku*, meaning me / my) clinches it – the call is not just to anyone, but to my generation. The speaker is calling to his or her generation, whatever generation that might be. In this way, the advertiser expresses solidarity by calling the reader to be a part of the identity that is being created.

Extract 20b focuses on the *Ang Pow* (red packet or prosperity packet), which is synonymous with Chinese culture, particularly during Chinese New Year. The tradition is for elders to give these *Ang Pow* to the young as well as unmarried adults not merely as a celebration gift, but as a blessing or sign of prosperity. As the advertisement states,

the practice has been taken up by the other cultures as well, and now it is common, for example, to see green packets or *Duit Raya* for *Hari Raya*. In this advertisement, the use of *Ang Pow* creates solidarity with the ethnic Chinese community, by using a cultural item that is at the very heart of the Chinese culture. The use of this phrase can heighten the sense of Chinese identity and so strike solidarity with them (Menke, 2011).

Similarly, in Extract 20c, only one word, a Chinese character, appears in the advertisement, with the meaning ‘fullness’. Again, the Chinese ethnic identity is appealed to through the use of a character which is very familiar to them. This character, translated ‘fullness’ is usually drawn on a red card and stuck onto the rice bin in the kitchen or store. The idea is that a kind of blessing, ‘May your rice bin be forever full and never run out’ is expressed with the character. It is significant, of course, that the advertiser in this case is Bernas, the national rice company. Again, through an appeal to a cultural custom, the Chinese identity is appealed to as the advertiser seeks to strike solidarity with them. Establishing a common identity to build solidarity has been acknowledged as a primary motivation for code switching in the oral domain (Kow, 2003), as well as in advertising (Menke, 2011). The current study is consistent with the findings of these studies.

4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be noted that advertisers use a variety of language forms in their English language advertisements in the newspapers to construct different identities. These identities are constructed through the use of code switching which is influenced by the proximity of celebrations and festivals. In addition, the placement of such code switching occurrences in the advertisement also affects how the meaning is conveyed,

and thus leads to the construction of differing identities. The study found that there were four major types of identities constructed in the data, namely, Religious identity, Ethnic identities, National (Malaysian) identity, and specific Group identities. The reason for constructing such identities is as a marketing strategy aimed at persuading potential customers through the use of accommodation, affective reasons, building credibility and building solidarity.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The objective of this study is to examine, describe and explain the types of identities constructed through code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia. In order to do this, a corpus of 121 food, finance, motoring and energy & telecommunications related advertisements containing code switches into the Malay, Tamil and Chinese languages is examined. The advertisements are extracted from the leading English newspapers in Peninsular Malaysia, namely *The Star*, *The New Straits Times* and *The Sun* over a period of six months, from 1 August 2011 to 31 January 2012. The data is analysed using the framework derived from Bhatia (1992), Woodward (1997) and Piller (2001).

This chapter presents a summary of the results thematically arranged around the research questions. A discussion of the implications of the study follows. Finally, recommendations for future research are discussed.

5.2 Summary of the Results

Three research questions are asked in this study. An analysis of the data revealed the following results.

5.2.1 Research Question 1

How do advertisers use code switching in temporal and spatial contexts to construct identity in English newspaper advertisements?

In order to answer this research question, the contexts of the code switching occurrences are examined. Both temporal and spatial contexts are examined, i.e. when

and where they occur. The findings reveal that code switching is used to construct identity in English newspaper advertisements in two major ways, that is, through the temporal proximity to cultural festivals and celebrations, and through the spatial position of the code switching occurrences in the advertisement.

In terms of temporal context, or when the code switches occur, it is found that while code switching did occur in the advertisements throughout the year, the number of occurrences is much higher when in the proximity of major cultural festivals and celebrations. It is found that code switching occurrences increased sharply during the *Hari Raya*, *Deepavali* and Chinese New Year celebrations.

Another finding in terms of temporal context is that the choice of language for the code switches is influenced by the festival or celebration nearest to it. Code switching into Malay is found to be higher during the *Hari Raya* period, while code switching into Tamil is at its highest during the *Deepavali* period, and code switching into Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese) is higher during the Chinese New Year period. During occasions of national interest, such as *Merdeka* Day and Malaysia Day, code switching into a mix of languages is found to be common.

The use of code switching during festivals is consistent with previous studies in the Malaysian context. Studies on code switching in newspaper advertisements as well as studies on the use of loan words in newspapers both indicate higher usage of code switched words and loan words during festival times in Malaysia. The data shows that the code switched terms are closely linked to culture and therefore may carry cultural connotations which may not come across in English equivalents or translations. This also shows that when it comes to cultural and religious matters, the various

communities value their heritage highly and so tend to preserve the cultural and religious terms and phrases of their community.

In terms of choice of languages, code switching into Malay is more common than code switching into Tamil or the Chinese languages (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3). The reason code switching into Malay is the highest is probably because of the Malay language's position as the national language and the de-facto language of communication between different ethnic groups. As such the general public could be expected to be reasonably proficient in it, and so the use of Malay in some instances signals communication with a larger audience than just the Malay community.

The analysis of the spatial context of the code switched occurrences reveals that the code switches are most prevalent in the headline and the body copy (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2). While this is consistent with certain studies such as Bhatia (1992), it is contradictory to others (Piller, 2001). This could be because of the function of these code switching occurrences in the advertisements. In Piller's (2001) study, she explains that the German copy writers had doubts about the German reader's English proficiency. Hence, they did not use much English in the parts of the advertisement such as the Headline or the Body Copy where knowledge of English would be crucial. However, the findings of the current study, concurs with Bhatia's (1992) study that the use of code switching actually heightens the attention-grabbing factor of the headlines. The use of code switching in the body copy expresses cultural and religious significance that cannot be expressed in English. This lends the advertisement a sense of authority or credibility.

It can be seen then that the advertisers use code switching in both temporal and spatial contexts to build identity through their advertisements. The use of code switching in advertisements has been intentionally timed to coincide with the major festivals. This shows that advertisers have been intentionally trying to connect with their readers. It is significant that they also chose the language of the code switches to coincide with the festivals. This shows that advertisers use both the proximity of the festivals and the language of the code switches to build identities that are accessible to their readers. In short, they use phrases and words which their readers are familiar with. By tapping into this ideological consciousness of the public, they build identities which are relevant to, and identifiable by, their target audience.

5.2.2 Research Question 2

What are the types of identities constructed through code switching in English newspaper advertisements?

In analyzing the data with a framework of identity theories of similarity, difference and representation, the study finds that there are four major types of identities constructed in the data, namely, Islamic identity, Ethnic identities, National (Malaysian) identity, and Interest Group identities.

The data reveals that Islamic identity is marked by both representation and difference through the use of religious terms. Most of the words and phrases used are loanwords from Arabic which have been assimilated into Malay. As such when the advertiser code switches to these terms, they build a specific religious identity which is only accessible to the followers of one religion, and not the others. The data shows that words like *sukuk*, *zakat*, and *shariah* are terms that are representative of Islam which are understood by Muslims to have religious significance. As such, the use of these

terms carries symbolic meaning which only Muslims would recognize and give credence to as they read the advertisement. For followers of other religions, they will not give the same kind of recognition or credence to these terms, as they are not the target audience. The use of these terms then builds an Islamic identity which very clearly differentiates between Muslims and others.

The analysis also shows that various types of ethnic identities are built through the code switching occurrences in these advertisements. Each major ethnic community was found to be represented in the data through the construction of specific identities that relate to them. The construction of these ethnic identities has been primarily through the marking of difference with other communities. This was done by using words and phrases which have special meaning to the community that is celebrating at the time. For example, phrases such as *Maaf, Zahir dan Batin*, is used by the Malay community during *Hari Raya*, and so is especially significant for them. The use of such culturally loaded terms distinguishes the Malay identity as it is built through these advertisements from the other ethnic communities, as the terms would be meaningless for them. In constructing a Tamil identity, the advertisers use terms like *Deepavali vazhtukkal* which is not only significant for only the Tamils, but can only be understood by them. In a similar vein, Chinese characters are used extensively in advertisements in the Chinese New Year period which can only be read and understood by those who are proficient in Chinese. Further the use of culturally significant food terms during this time, such as *Yee Sang*, builds an identity that is distinctly Chinese, as opposed to Tamil or Malay. In this way, only the targeted community responds to the advertisement.

The third type of identity constructed in the data is the Malaysian identity. It is found that advertisers used common traits and shared experiences such as food items, childhood games, familiar phrases, as well as Government policies to construct a uniting Malaysian identity that focused more on what was similar rather than what was different. Food items which are popular across ethnic lines such as *Nasi Lemak*, *ABC*, *Kopi super 'kau'* as well as cultural practices which all communities might practice, such as purchasing *baju raya* for festivals were used to construct this unique Malaysian identity.

Finally, the last type of identity found in the data could be termed as Interest Group identity. This identity cuts across ethnic lines, as a group is formed around a common interest. The data found at least two such interest groups, one formed around a love for cats, and the other formed around a passion for football. In both cases, words and phrases which had special meaning for members of an interest group were used to create an identity which the members of that group could identify with. Words and phrases such as *ronda-ronda si comel* had special meaning for the cat lovers group, and *bola*, for the football group.

5.2.3 Research Question 3

Why do advertisers construct identity through code switching in English newspaper advertisements?

Having examined the means and the types of identity construction through code switching in English newspaper advertisements in Malaysia, the study examines the reasons for such identity construction. The findings reveal that the reason for constructing such identities could be explained primarily as a marketing strategy aimed

at persuading potential customers through the use of accommodation, affective reasons, building credibility and building solidarity.

It has been observed in previous studies that the advertisers' main goal in advertising is to persuade potential consumers to buy their products or favourably consider their brands. As such, the motivations for using code switching in advertisements are firmly linked with this primary goal. The current study concurred with this finding as the data reveals that the motivations for using code switching in advertisements differ somewhat from those of using code switching in the oral domain or in other domains. It was found that in advertising, the code switches are used purposefully and intentionally as a marketing strategy that would persuade readers to have a positive attitude towards the brand or the product advertised. The motivations identified in this study also differ from those identified in studies which focus on code switching to English in local language advertisements. In those cases, the motivations typically involved prestige, success, modernity and sophistication which are closely identified with English.

The current study reveals different motivations. The first motivation for the use of code switching to construct identity was accommodation. It was found that advertisers built differing identities to accommodate different target groups. For example, the differing ethnic identities that were mentioned in Section 5.2.2 above were constructed to accommodate the different ethnic groups through the use of specific terms and phrases which they could identify with readily. For example, the use of terms like *Ramadhan* or phrases such as *Buka Puasa* builds a Muslim-Malay identity that members of that community would readily identify with. This would then reduce

the distance between the advertiser and the consumer. Advertisers use this form of convergence, i.e. getting closer to the consumer, as a form of accommodation.

The second reason for constructing these identities through code switching in advertisements is to create affective feelings. Previous studies indicate that code switching in advertisements is used to build rapport or build goodwill among the readership towards the brand or product. These positive feelings can be very persuasive for the consumer in considering which product or brand to buy. The data finds that advertisers intentionally use certain code switched words and phrases to build affective feelings among the consumers by constructing identities that they can identify with in an emotional way. This can be seen especially in the use of culturally loaded terms and phrases such as *Maaf, Zahir, dan Batin, Loh Sang, Sau Gong, and Murukku*.

The third reason for the construction of these identities is the construction of credibility. It was found that the use of religious terms such as *shariah, sukuk* and *zakat*, constructed a religious identity which lent credibility to the product or services offered. By using these terms, the reader is assured that the products or services indicated are acceptable to their religion. The construction of this religious identity can be seen as a purposeful attempt at persuading the reader from a religious point of view.

Finally, the fourth reason for the construction of these identities is to build solidarity with the readership. This can be seen in the various greetings advertisements during festival days as the advertisers try to build solidarity with the readership. Using terms and references that the readers are familiar with enable the advertisers to indicate their solidarity with them. The data also found that this does not only happen during festival days, but at other times as well. The use of such phrases as *Jom generasiku*

illuminates the attempts to build solidarity with the readers by reaching out to them as ‘my generation’. In this way, the advertisers construct an identity that is one of the people, someone who wants to help and only seeks the best interest of the reader.

5.3 Implications

The analysis of the data reveals that code switching is used to construct various identities in the advertisements found in the local English dailies. This implies that such code switching is common and familiar enough to be identified by the readers. It also follows that the advertisers use such code switches intentionally to construct identities that are easily accessible by the readers. The data also reveals that differing types of identities are constructed in order to reach different groups. Rather than one all reaching identity, the advertisers favor reaching different target groups in different ways. The study further reveals that the advertisers use both temporal and spatial contexts to construct identity in their advertisements. The study finds the advertisers take advantage of the different cultural festivals to get their message across.

While different types of identities are seen to be constructed in these advertisements, such as Islamic identity, Ethnic identities, National (Malaysian) identity and Interest Group identities, they are all constructed for one basic reason – as a marketing strategy aimed at persuading consumers. Identity construction through the use of code switching is carried out in advertisements in order to accommodate the readers, persuade them through affective feelings, build credibility and finally, build solidarity with them.

5.4 Recommendations

There are a number of limitations in the current study on terms of domain, data selection as well as scope. Future studies that are more comprehensive are recommended in order to fill in some of the grounds that the current study does not cover.

Some recommendations for future studies include:

- i) Examining other categories of advertisements where code switching occurs, as this study limits itself to food, finance, motoring and energy & telecommunications related advertisements.
- ii) Extending the scope of the study to other forms of print advertisements such as magazines and other forms of advertisements such as television and radio advertisements.
- iii) Extending the scope of the study to identity construction through loanwords found in advertisements, or even articles found in newspapers and magazines.
- iv) Examining the use of stereotypes in constructing identity in newspaper advertisements.

References

- Ahmad, B. H., & Jusoff, K. (2009). Teachers' code switching in classroom instructions for low English proficiency learners. *English Language Teaching*, 2(2), 49 - 55.
- Asmah Haji Omar. (2003). *Language and language situation in Southeast Asia: With a focus on Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Akademi Pengajian Melayu, Universiti Malaya.
- Azirah Hashim. (2010). Print advertisements in Malaysia. *World Englishes*, 29(3), 378 - 393.
- Bhatia, T. K. (1992). Discourse functions and pragmatics of mixing: advertising across cultures. *World Englishes* 11(2/3), 195 - 215.
- Bhatia, T. K. (2009). World Englishes in global advertising. In B. B. Kachru, Y. Kachru & C. L. Nelson (Eds.), *The handbook of World Englishes*. (pp. 601-619). Oxford: Wiley - Blackwell Publishing Ltd. .
- Blomquist, L. (2009). *Language and identity: Attitudes towards code-switching in the immigrant language classroom*. Bachelor Degree, Universitet UMEA.
- Bullock, B. E., & Toribio, A. S. (2009). Themes in the study of code-switching. *The Cambridge handbook of linguistic code-switching*. (pp. 1 - 18). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chen, C. W.-Y. (2006). The mixing of English in magazine advertisements in Taiwan. *World Englishes* 25(3/4), 467 - 478.
- Chuchu, D. F. A. (2007). *Code-switching in a multilingual environment*. Tanjong Malim: Penerbit Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.
- De Fina, A. (2007). Code-switching and the construction of ethnic identity in a community of practice. *Language in Society*, 36, 371 - 392.
- Dumanig, F. P., & David, M. K. (2011). Language use and bilingual consumers: An analysis of print advertisements in multilingual Malaysia. *Bridging the gap of cross-cultural communication*. (pp. 216-224). Kuala Lumpur: University Malaya.
- Gao, L. (2005). *Bilinguals' creativity in the use of English in China's advertising*. Paper presented at the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism, Somerville.

- Gumperz, J. (1982). Conversational code-switching. In J. Gumperz (Ed.), *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hajar Abdul Rahim. (2006). *The evolution of Malaysian English : Influences from within*. Paper presented at the The Biennial Conference of the ASAA., Univeristy of Wollongong.
- Irwin, Anthea (2011). In A. Mooney et. al. (2011) *Language, society & power: An introduction* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Kachru, Y., & Nelson, C. L. (2011). *World Englishes in Asian contexts*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Kow, Y. C. (2003). Codeswitching for a purpose: Focus on preschool Malaysian children. . *Multilingua*, 22, 59 - 77.
- Kow, Y. C. (2008). Bilingualism, culture and identity. *BOCA - The South Florida Journal of Linguistics*, 1(2), 106-123.
- LaBelle, S. (2011). Language and identity. In A. Mooney et. al. (2011) *Language, society & power: An introduction* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Lee, S. K. (2003). Exploring the relationship between language, culture and identity. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 3(2).
- Leung, C. (2010). Code-mixing in print advertisement and its cultural implications in Hong Kong. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(3), 417-429.
- Menke, L. (2011). *Why do bilingual hispanics like effective code switched advertisements?* Unpublished Report. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Motschenbacher, H. (2009). Speaking the gendered body: The performative construction of commercial femininities and masculinities via body-part vocabulary. *Language in Society*, 38, 1-22.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2006). *Multiple voices: An introduction to bilingualism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Nair-Venugopal, S. (2003). Malaysian English, normativity and workplace interaction. *World Englishes*, 22(1), 15-29.
- Piller, I. (2001). Identity constructions in multilingual advertising. *Language in Society*, 30, 153-186.

- Poplack, S. (1980). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a typology of code-switching. *Linguistics*, 18, 581-618.
- Poplack, S. (2004). Code-switching. In U. Ammon, N. Dittmar, K. J. Mattheier & P. Trudgill (Eds.), *Soziolinguistik. An international handbook of the science of language*. (2nd ed.). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Rahim, H. A. (2006). *The evolution of Malaysian English: Influences from within*. Paper presented at the The 16th biennial conference of the ASAA.
- Rajadurai, J. (2007). Sociolinguistic perspectives on variation in non-native varieties of english: The case of Malaysian English. *Multilingua*, 26, 409-426.
- Romaine, S. (2010). Identity and multilingualism. In K. Potowski & J. Rothman (Eds.), *Bilingual youth: Spanish in English-speaking societies*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Ruellot, V. (2011). English in French print advertising from 1999 to 2007. *World Englishes*, 30(1), 5-20.
- Sebba, M. (2011). Multilingualism in written discourse: an approach to the analysis of multilingual texts. Paper presented at the Third Conference on Language Contact in Times of Globalization, Greifswald, Germany.
- Sebba, M., & Wootton, T. (1998). We, they and identity. In P. Auer (Ed.), *Code switching in conversation: language, interaction and identity* (pp. 262-289). London: Routledge.
- Shanmuganathan, T., & Ramasamy, K. (2009). The social and cultural impact factors in Tamil advertisements. *Polyglossia*, 17.
- The Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice*. (2008). (3rd ed.). Petaling Jaya: Advertising Standards Authority Malaysia.
- The Star. (2012) Retrieved 29 April, 2012, from <http://www.thestar.com.my/>
- The New Straits Times. (2012) Retrieved 30 April, 2012, from <http://www.nstp.com.my/>
- Tan, S. I. (2009). Lexical borrowing from Chinese languages in Malaysian English. *World Englishes*, 28(4), 451-484.
- Thomas, L., & Wareing, S. (2000). *Language, society and power: An introduction*. London: Routledge.

- Valdes-Fallis, G. (1978). *Code switching and the classroom teacher*. Arlington: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (5th ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Wei, L. (1998). The 'why' and 'how' questions in the analysis of conversational code-switching. In P. Auer (Ed.), *Code-switching in conversation: Language, interaction and identity*. (pp. 156 - 176). London: Routledge.
- Woodward, K. (1997). Identity and difference. In K. Woodward (Ed.), *Identity and difference*. (pp. 8 - 58). London: SAGE Publications.