

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

The independent study *Discourse Analysis on Beauty Products Advertisements in Marie Claire Magazine* aims to analyze how the mechanism of verbal and non-verbal languages is used in beauty product advertisements.

#### Data Collection

The study is a qualitative research with a total of 50 pieces of beauty product advertisements collected from *Marie Claire* magazine, from 2009-2010 (24 issues). The data is categorized in two groups: verbal and non-verbal languages.

#### Data Analysis

The method of the study will be based on the two principles, advertisement language features proposed by Kongpeth and Smith and principle of visual analysis synthesized by Wongbiasaj and Freeouf. The details are illustrated as follows.

The concept of advertisement language features summarized by Kongpeth and Smith will be used to analyze verbal discourse. The visual code is almost always accompanied by the verbal code. From Kongpetch and Smith (2008, 158-178) in *The Language of the Printed Advertisement*, the language of advertisement has the following features.

1. Sentence types are used for different purposes.

1.1 Declarative is used for giving factual information.

Lengthy exposure to the sun can cause skin cancer.

1.2 Imperative is used to command or order the reader to do some action.

Always do it right.

1.3 Interrogative aims to draw the reader's interest and expects the answer.

Are you ready for it?

1.4 Exclamatory contains the expression of strong feelings accompanied by an exclamation mark.

Gorgeous!

2. Prosodic Representations or catchy sounds are commonly exploited in the advertisement to make it interesting and memorable.

2.1 Alliteration is the repetition of consonance.

*Lie leisurely in the sun and leave the rest to us*

2.2 Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds.

*Volumize Mosturize Mesmerize*

2.3 Rhyme is the use of words with the same or similar sound.

*Perfect day Perfect stay*

3. Colloquial diction includes contractions to maintain a tone of familiarity or informality.

*I'm lovin' it.*

Raise your hand if *you're* sure

4. Clichés are the use of wordplay to change the original meaning of sentence.

When in Thailand, do as the Thais do... Select DTAC

The original phrase is “When in Rome, do as Romans do”.

5. Approbatory diction is an attempt to convince customers how good or excellent the product is and to avoid using “good” but other words closest in meaning.

*Ideal* fragrance for a woman in love, Joy by Jean Patou

6. Jargon is generally used to make a good impression on the reader with scientific or pseudo-scientific technical terms.

Rhythm of the night, Clinique’s translucent night emulsion

7. Neologisms are invented words used to make the ad more interesting and memorable.

Explore the New World of *Edutainment* @ “Uniquely Singapore” with  
Nation Group and Christopher Wright

8. Presupposition refers to questions structured to make a particular point or to cause specific effect rather than demand an answer.

Is it about time to be on your own?

9. Figures of speech include the followings.

9.1 Metaphor is an implied comparison between two dissimilar things that have something important in common.

The *apple* of your eyes

9.2 Simile is the comparison of two things with the use of *like*, *as* and *as if* to show similarity.

Bright *like* a star



9.3 Antithesis is the two contrasting words or ideas intentionally juxtaposed to emphasize the contrastive meaning.

It takes a *tough* man to make a *tender* chicken.

9.4 Parallelism is a balance of two or more similar words, phrases or clauses in terms of graphology, phonology, grammar and semantics.

Your *lustrous lips* His *dreamy eyes*

9.5 Homonym is the use of words with the same spelling or pronunciation but with different meaning.

Pack 2 Fly

The *Citi* never sleeps

9.6 Personification is putting human or animate qualities into inanimate objects or an abstract entity.

When the *moon* beams *smile* at the two of you

## 10. Cohesive devices

10.1 References are the use of pronouns and particularly the first and second personal pronouns.

Your dreams *Our* Vision

With the right partnerships *you* can achieve anything.

M&M melts in *your* mouth, not in *your* hand.

10.2 Repetitions are used in the product name more often than the third personal pronoun references.

Why is *NESTLE ACTIV Light Yogurt* so good for active people? *NETLE ACTIV Light Yogurt* is packed with essential nutrients to help you power through the day

10.3 Ellipsis or substitution is the deletion of words and clauses to make the sentence shorter. For example, the phrase “*Do you have..*” is omitted

Sensitive, dry or cracked skin?

The concept of principle of visual analysis proposed by Wongbiasaj and Freeouf will be used to analyze visual discourse. Visual persuasion is based on a mix of suggestibility. These are persuasive power, convention, agreement among people in society, perception and involvement of, what and how people see and are a part in reading of advertisement. Visual representation is based on cultural conventions. Culture specifies the conditions in which people interpret images of advertisements. People will also use perception from previous learning or experience for interpretation. The principle about visual analysis is divided in two levels: the psychological level and the sign level.

1. Psychological level can be subdivided as follows.

1.1 The principle of focus and motion

1.1.1 Figure-ground technique is the technique of placing a clear, focused item as a figure against blurry, out-of-focus background. Reader’s eyes tend to select to read the meaning of the figure and leave the background unnoticed. The example below can clearly illustrate the notion.

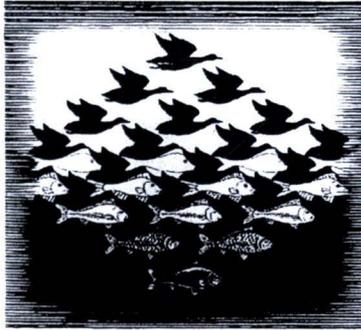


Figure 1: Figure-ground (“Sky and Water I” by M.C. Escher)

In a figure-ground technique, the figure and background are ambiguous. In the upper half part of this picture, black birds are seen vividly against the blurred white background. At the bottom, a school of fish is seen swimming against the dark background.

#### 1.1.2 Eye-leading techniques

A road tapering off in the middle in an ad about a holiday trip directs the eyes of the viewer to the end of road, suggesting a pleasurable trip reward is waiting ahead.

#### 1.1.3 Oblique line technique makes use of slanting or diagonal lines.

When used in an image, it creates dynamic and visual tension and leads to motion or movement in the image. Examples are the road line, the shore line, the fence line.

### 1.2 The principle of grouping

1.2.1 Proximity appears when the two or more visual elements are put close together and seen as a group or patterned picture. From the picture below,



when the squares are given close proximity, unity occurs. In fact, they are nine different squares but now perceived as one group.

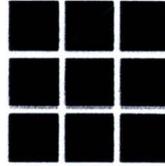


Figure 2: Proximity

([http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt\\_principles](http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt_principles))

1.2.2 Similarity occurs when objects look similar to one another.



Figure 3: Similarity

([http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt\\_principles](http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt_principles))

The example above (containing 10 distinct objects) appears as a single unit because all of the shapes have something in common, pointed tip triangles even in the picture of the bird's head in the middle.

1.2.3 Continuity occurs when the eye is compelled to move through one object and continue to another object.



Figure 4: Continuity

([http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt\\_principles](http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt_principles))

The tapering flowing crossbar of the “H” leads the eye directly to the maple leaf.

1.2.4 Closure states that an incomplete object or a not completely enclosed space can be viewed or perceived as complete or whole if enough of the shape is indicated. This is because people perceive the whole by filling in the missing information.



Figure 5: Closure

([http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt\\_principles](http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Gestalt_principles))

Although the picture of a panda above is not complete, enough of the panda is presented for the eye to complete the shape. When the viewer's perception completes a shape, closure occurs.

2. The sign level is something which stands for something else in the eyes of somebody. A sign becomes a sign only when it is interpreted by someone. A single sign

can be seen as different depending on an individual's social and cultural background. For instance, an apple, to people in general, is a round fruit with firm, juicy flesh with either red or green skin. Another meaning is a fruit of desire or sinful desire related back to the Judeo- Christian story of creation of mankind and the Garden of Eden. Adam committed the original sin by eating the forbidden fruit of knowledge.