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圖像中的萬語千言：美式英語母語者與台灣英語學習者對

於行銷圖像隱喻的解讀

A Picture Says a Thousand Words:

The Interpretations of Advertising Pictorial Metaphors by

Native Speakers of American English and Taiwanese

Learners of English

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中文摘要

在隱喻方面的研究可說是淵遠流長。隱喻不僅僅是在人類溝通中的一種修辭方法，更常常出現在廣告業者銷售商品的宣傳中。儘管在消費者的研究領域裡已有眾多探討隱喻的文獻，然而只有些許學者從事圖像隱喻的研究。再者，研究第二語言學習者對於行銷隱喻的解讀也是非常不足。

因此，本研究目的在於探討母語使用者以及非母語使用者如何解讀行銷圖像隱喻。在本研究中探討了三個研究問題。第一，英語母語者和非英語母語者對於行銷圖像隱喻的解讀表現如何？第二，有什麼可能的因素影響對於行銷圖像隱喻的解讀？以及第三，英語母語者和非母語者對於本研究中廣告的個人觀感以及針對廣告所要傳達的訊息有什麼反應？本研究的設計以及資料分析方法皆是參考Forceville (1996)。本研究以問卷的方式在台灣以及美國兩的收取資料，而問卷中有著四個平面廣告圖像搭配不同的問題。研究者邀請了一位美國籍人士以研究助理的身分參與了本研究中的一些過程，包括了選取合適的廣告、聯繫美國的研究參與者、在美國當地收取資料、以及擔任第二位資料分析者。本研究的四十位參與者皆是就讀英語教學研究所的碩士班研究生。其中二十位美國籍的研究生隸屬於美國的德州大學聖安東尼奧分校，而另外二十位非母語的研究生分別來自於台灣的三所大學。

研究結果顯示，美國的英語母語者對於行銷圖像隱喻的解讀有著較佳的表現。這也意味著美國的英語母語者對於本研究中四個廣告裡的行銷圖像隱喻有較好的洞察力。同時，我們也在設法尋找可能影響解讀圖像隱喻的因子。從情境、社會、以及個人的觀點為根基，我們重新檢視了這四個廣告以及其解讀的過程。而從參與者對於廣告的觀感分析裡，儘管英語母語者以及非母語者來自不同的文化背景，他們對於同一個廣告存有類似的想法。同時我們也發現來自相同文化背景的研究參與者對於相同的廣告的有著迥然不同的觀點。本研究在最後探討了一些在英語教學實務上的應用以及啟發，並對於未來的研究提出實質上的建議。

ABSTRACT

The studies of metaphor endure a great history of research. Metaphors are not only a form of figure of speech in human communication, but also a sales pitch often employed by advertisers. There has already been a plethora of studies on advertising metaphors in consumer research; however, little research has explored advertising metaphors in pictorial form. Meanwhile, there is only a small body of research done to ascertain how second language learners perceive advertising metaphors.

This study, therefore, aims to explore how native and non-native English speakers interpret advertising pictorial metaphors. I intend to answer three research questions: (1) How do the native and non-native speakers of English interpret advertising pictorial metaphors? (2) What factors that determine the success of pictorial metaphor interpretations? and (3) How do the native and non-native speakers of English perceive the advertisements with and without considering advertiser's intention? I follow the research design and adopt the coding scheme of pictorial metaphors from Forceville (1996). A questionnaire containing four advertisements and question items is administered to collect data in American and Taiwan. In this study, a research assistant who is an American is invited to provide assistance in selecting advertisements, contacting American participants, collecting data in the United States, and being a second rater. The non-native data is collected from 20 TESOL graduate students enrolled in three different universities in Taiwan, and the native data is gleaned from another 20 TESOL graduates at the University of Texas in San Antonio, U. S. A.

Based on the results, the English native speakers from the United States have more success in identifying pictorial metaphors than their counterparts. In other words, the American participants seemed to be more attuned to the pictorial metaphors in the present study. Meanwhile, we also manage to account for the participants'

performances in interpreting metaphors by seeking possible factors. By considering

contextual, societal, and individual factors, we re-examine the four advertisements

and the metaphor interpretation process. As for participants' views towards the

advertisements, in some advertisements, the participants hold similar perspectives

despite they belong to disparate cultural backgrounds. Moreover, even for participants

who belong to the same group, their viewpoints can differ tremendously. Some

pedagogical implications towards teaching English in EFL context and suggestions to

improve future research are discussed in the final chapter.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This chapter is divided into five sections. To begin with, I would discuss the common visual rhetoric, metaphor, in advertising. Next, I would introduce the foremost researchers in metaphors, J. Lakoff and M. Johnson, who approached metaphor from human cognition. Their contributions towards establishing the earliest theory of metaphor are still highly praised until today. Followed by Lakoff and Johnson's work, an overview of metaphor research in the fields of semantics and pragmatics would be presented. Some crucial works relevant to the present study would be introduced, as well as their development towards advertising metaphors. Finally, the importance and the purpose of the present study would be presented, followed by the organization of the thesis.

Metaphor in Advertising

Human eyes can hardly dodge myriads of different advertisements in everyday life. Advertisements are seen on flyers, leaflets, brochures, newspaper advertisement sections, magazine cover pages, and so on. Although their appearances are physically diverse, their central purposes are identical: To promote a target product with a specific sales pitch, and to tout potential buyers. In order to outdo other competitors in the same business, advertisers often have to think hard to produce alluring figurative languages to elongate the attention span of viewers. Metaphor is one of the most ubiquitous figurative languages employed by advertisers, and it is often observed in the verbal texts of advertisements, namely slogans. However, with the medium of technology like computer drafting (a type of Computer-Aided Design, CAD, which makes use of computer technology to produce high-definition or three-dimensional pictures), metaphorical implications are understood not only in slogans, but often in

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the concomitant effects with pictures. As a result, compared to the advertisements a decade ago, there is a propensity for advertisements nowadays that the number of visual-aided advertisements has been increasing. This trend has foretold a message to both the general public and the researchers in the field of metaphor. That is, understanding and researching metaphor in advertising need to be re-defined, with a consideration regarding possible effects of visual elements which have become an integral part in nearly every piece of modern advertisement.

Early Research on Metaphor

The early studies on metaphor received a tremendous boost with the rise of cognitive linguistics, as witnessed in Johnson (1992), Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and MacCormac (1985). Among these cognitive linguists, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson are regarded as pioneers in identifying and defining metaphor. Unprecedentedly, the first three types of metaphor were identified, including "structural metaphors," "orientational metaphors," and "ontological metaphors." Theses early works by Lakoff and Johnson had proffered a starting research platform for later scholars interested in metaphor. What is more groundbreaking is the claim in their influential work *Metaphor We Live By* (1980), in which they stated that the human thinking process is "fundamental metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 12). They asserted that metaphor is deeply rooted in human thought and action:

> "Metaphor is for most people device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish--a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in *thought and action*."

(p. 12)

Lakoff and Johnson further indicated that though metaphor is grounded in the human conceptual systems, some of these systems are universal while others are dependent on languages and cultures. Their insightful comments paved a way for the development of advertising metaphor regarding cognitive aspects in both semantics and pragmatics.

Metaphor in Revolution: Semantics and Pragmatics

Scholars in semantics adopt a cognitive-semantic approach towards metaphorical expressions, and deal with the issue of how metaphor is processed in human cognition. There has been a large amount of studies addressing the operational procedure of metaphor, such as Cohen (1993), Giora (1997, 1999), and Levin (1979). Among them, Giora (1997) proposed "the graded salience principle" (p. 193), arguing that there exists at least two conventional or salient meanings, the literal and the metaphorical, in every metaphor. She asserted that these two meanings will be activated at the moment when the metaphor is being processed in contexts, and contextual factors later come into play. Contextual factors are metaphor-specific, and interpreters often have to take socio-cultural factors into account, which links the issue to the field of pragmatics.

Different from semanticists, pragmaticists approach metaphor with careful scrutiny of language and its users' socio-cultural backgrounds. For instance, Bouton (1988) conducted a cross-cultural study to examine native and non-native speakers of English on their abilities of understanding conversational implicatures. He found that different cultural backgrounds of the participants had the different interpretations on implicatures made by NNS and NS. Most importantly, over the last two decades, numerous researchers have contended that metaphors are best analyzed in the domain of pragmatics (Blakemore, 1987; Grice, 1975; Levinson, 1983; Sperber & Wilson, 1986, 1987). This movement originated from Sperber and Wilson's (1986, 1987)

relevance theory, as evidenced in works such as Tanaka (1994) and Forceville (1996). Sperber and Wilson (1986) truncated Grice's famous theory *Maxims of Conversation* into a single principle *Relevance*, holding a relevance-oriented view towards implicatures and how they act in human communication. Since the birth of the relevance theory, it has been widely applied to elucidate communications in various disciplines, largely in verbal discourses (e.g., conversational joking by Norrick, 2003) and verbal-visual (media) discourses. Verbal-visual discourse can be further divided into two specific areas: The discourse of advertising (e.g., punning, by Tanaka, 1992, 1994) and comics (e.g., Yus, 1997, 1998a). The present study attempted to explore the area of advertising discourse, with a focus on non-native speakers' perceptions.

Importance of the Study

Although metaphor comes from a long line of research, there are two areas where little research has been conducted: Learners' perceptions and advertising pictorial metaphor.

First of all, only a small number of metaphor studies accentuate the issue of comparing learners' perceptions with those of native speakers. Perhaps the only study that discussed both native and non-native speakers' perceptions is Bouton (1988) where the author conducted a cross-cultural study on examining English learners' abilities of interpreting conversational implicatures. Bouton stated that culture-related factors might be decisive for non-native speakers to interpret implicatures.

The other area that deserves more exploration is the research of advertising pictorial metaphors. In the domain of advertising research, though metaphor is often the rhetoric which researchers investigate in advertisements, only a small body of studies center on pictorial (or visual) metaphor. Tanaka (1994) investigated a number of British and Japanese advertisements, and she found culture-specific values were embedded in certain advertisements. Orth and Holancova (2004) engaged an equal

number of female and male participants in responding to a set of cell phone service advertisements with female and male models in them, and they found striking gender-related responses from both groups. Lundmark (2005) collected a number of advertisements in British magazines and analyzed how textual features interacted with pictorial components. Obviously, there is still much space left for pictorial metaphor research.

The only study pertinent to the present research is Forceville's (1995) where he probed the perceptions of 18 participants from two non-English speaking countries, Holland and Belgium (Dutch, German, and French are all official languages in Belgium, while Dutch is the only official language in Holland), on three correlated IBM advertisements. Forceville discussed some responses relevant to . For example, in those three billboards, one of them is a tuning fork with the imprinted IBM logo. While most of the participants from Amsterdam gave some aesthetic appraisal, those in Belgium expressed no special feelings. Following are the responses from two Amsterdam participants:
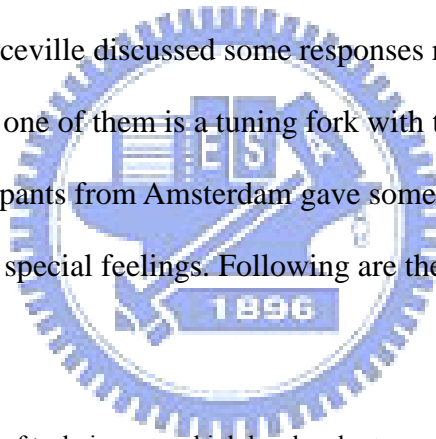
> A12: "The combination of technique on a high level and art on a high level; for great human achievements technique is required: tuning is necessary to accomplish coherence."
> A1: "Musicality; elegance."

(Forceville, 1995, p. 186)

Another example is cited from a Belgium participant:

> G11: "This picture does not really have much impact for me……." (p. 186)

Forceville (1995) indicated that it might be the fact that participants from Amsterdam were actually a group of Art majors in university, which was reflected in their art-related comments. As for the participants from Belgium, they were audience with various academic backgrounds in a conference session. Therefore, their

comments towards the IBM tuning fork advertisement diverge. However, the backgrounds of participants were not strictly controlled in Forceville (1995). Therefore, this factor was included in the present study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to continue advertising research and explore learners' and native speakers' interpretations of advertising pictorial metaphors. This study aimed to answer the following research questions: (1) How do the native and non-native speakers of English interpret advertising pictorial metaphors? (2) What factors that determine the success of pictorial metaphor interpretations? (3) How do the native and non-native speakers of English perceive the advertisements with and without considering advertiser's intention?

It is hoped that this study will make two contributions. First of all, this study would continue advertising research by exploring pictorial metaphors. Since the model of pictorial metaphors proposed by Forceville (1996) is relatively new, this study attempted to apply his model to interpret data and motivate futures studies to make the theory of pictorial metaphor more complete. As for the other contribution, it is expected that the results of the present study could provide insights regarding the factors that might affect the comprehension of metaphors.

Organization of the Thesis

In chapter 2, literature of advertising pictorial metaphors, from the domain of linguistics to advertising research, would be reviewed firstly. Relevant studies of advertising pictorial metaphors would be also discussed. In chapter 3, I would introduce the methodology of the present research, such as the participants, the instrument utilized to glean and interpret data, and the process of data collection. In chapter 4, the results and discussions of the study would be presented and discussed. The final chapter, conclusion, includes a research summary that highlights the

findings, limitations of the present study, suggestions for future research, and some

pedagogical implications regarding teaching English in an EFL context.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

In this chapter, we would be first led by an early yet pivotal work, *Metaphors we live by* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), to enter the realm of metaphor. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have long been recognized as pioneers who explained metaphor by human cognition. Their contributions will give us a general picture about the human conceptual system and formations of metaphor. What follows is Giora's (1997) *the graded salience hypothesis* which approached the issue of processing literal and non-literal language in human mind. It proffers us a microscopic view of how information recipients tackle metaphoric messages psychologically. In the next two parts, I would introduce *the relevance theory* by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1987), and *the interaction theory* by Black (1962, 1972, 1979a, 1979b). These two theories serve as foundations of the theory of advertising pictorial metaphor. I would demonstrate how and why the relevance theory relates to the discourse of advertising, and how and why the interaction theory can help identify pictorial metaphor. Finally, two studies on advertising pictorial metaphors (Mick & Politi, 1989 & Forceville, 1995) would be discussed.

Lakoff and Johnson: Metaphor We Live By (1980)

Lakoff & Johnson's publication *Metaphors we live by* has long been recognized as the very first book explaining the concepts of metaphor in human conceptual system from the cognitive and cultural perspectives. Looking back at the references in metaphor research in the past two decades, their work often has its place. Not only because the book introduces metaphors in a systematic way, but also because the theories proposed pave ways for successive researchers who have been constantly shaping and reshaping the concepts and expanding the domains of metaphor research.

Regarding the contents of the book, Lakoff and Johnson explain and tackle concepts of metaphor by human cognition, with a special attention to cultural coherence. Some concepts which directly link with the present study are discussed in the following sections, including human conceptual system, metaphorical categorization, cultural coherence, and the notions of metonymy and personification.

Human Conceptual System

When people encounter the term "metaphor," poetry and rhetoric are the domains that often come to their minds. Indeed, metaphor is a form of figurative language; however, it is not only seen in rhetorical speeches or writings but in everyday life. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) indicated that, "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 3). It is the "thought and action" (p. 4) that enables us to identify the metaphorical linguistic behaviors of the human beings. In the case of the present study which focuses on the perception of pictorial metaphors in advertisements, Lakoff and Johnson's standpoints still hold water. As known to the general public, the main purpose of advertising is to persuade viewers to make purchases. In order to arouse buyers' motivation, metaphors often serve as a riddle-like role making viewers ponder the fascinations hidden inside advertisements.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) then present the formula of the "conceptual metaphor" by using the now classic example "ARGUMENT IS WAR" (the formula is "NOUN IS NOUN", which is the first step to identify a metaphor). Here are two examples of this conceptual metaphor:

I've never *won* an argument with him.
He *shot down* all of my arguments.

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4)

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The verbs associated with the action of arguing, as in the above sentences, are commonly used by speakers of English. Nevertheless, speakers may not be aware of the mechanism behind metaphors. In this case, it is the concept of war that transfers the rhetorical power to the verb "argue", because, it is in war that we fire up missiles to shoot down our nemeses, use weapons to defend our fortress, and finally win the battle. Therefore, the fundamentals of metaphor, as commented by Lakoff and Johnson is, "…. understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5).

Metaphorical Categorization and Cultural Coherence

By using the classical instance ARGUMENT IS WAR, Lakoff and Johnson show us the concept of structural metaphors, where a concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another. Followed by conceptual metaphor, they introduced "orientational metaphor" in which two ideas of the opposite are placed, like the relation of up-down, in-out, front-back, etc. They illustrated this by using the English adjective "happy." In English, if a person says "I'm feeling *up* today," it means he is in high spirits or happy. On the contrary, when a person utters a sentence like "I'm feeling down" or "I'm down," he is probably having a bad day. The point that Lakoff and Johnson tried to make is: Words or phrases that are spatially related to each other can implicate a certain condition of the subject.

However, a concern surges: How do we know concept like HAPPY is UP instead of DOWN? Lakoff and Johnson (1980) added that it is determined by individual's "physical and cultural experience":

> Such metaphorical orientations are not arbitrary. They have a basis in our physical and cultural experience. Though the polar oppositions up-down, in-out, etc., are physical in nature, the orientational metaphors based on them can vary from culture to culture.

(p. 7)

Indeed, the bodily-physical experiences we have are obtained from cultures. In other words, different values and philosophies are molded by disparate cultures. For instance, gender ideology, or more specifically, gender stereotype, plays an important role in sculpturing the way of thinking in every culture. One of the pictorial metaphors discussed in Velasco-Sacristán and Fuertes-Olivera (2006) (see Figure 1), is a typical example of orientational metaphor in Lakoff and Johnson's term (see note 1).
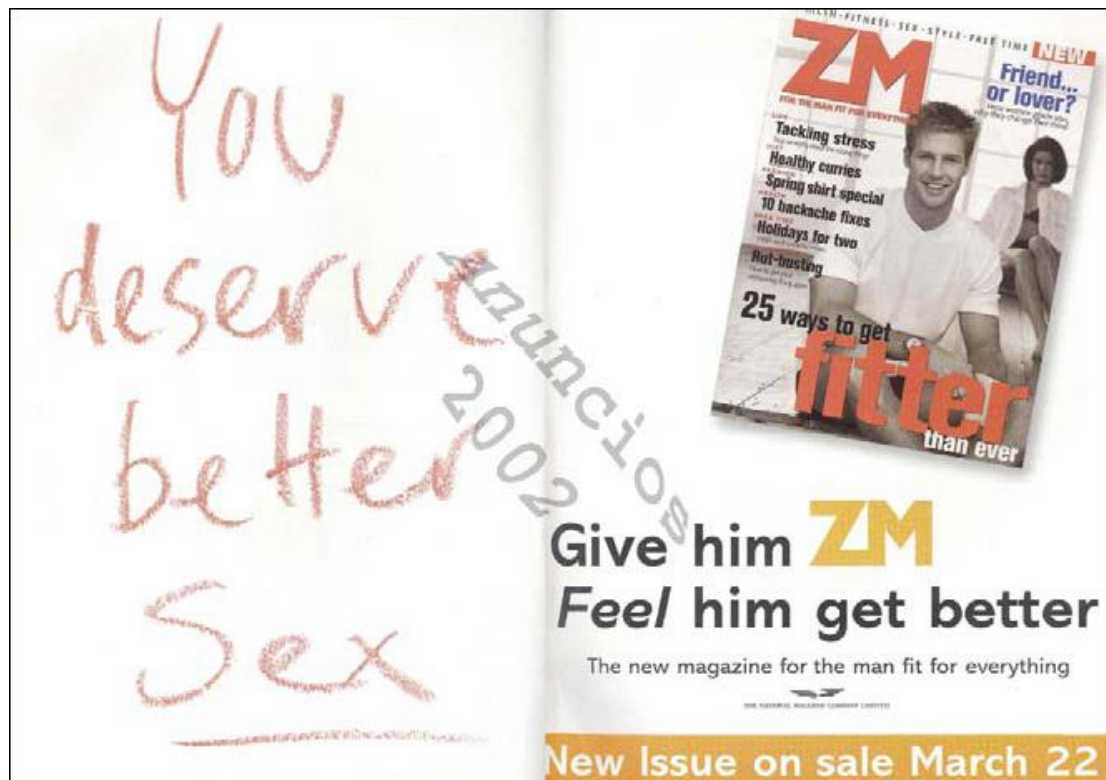
Figure 1. ZM magazine cover
Copyright image courtesy of Marisol Velasco-Sacristán (marisol@emp.uva.es)

In the advertisement, there is a man standing in the front with a smile while a woman sitting in the far back with a glum face. The spatial relation, namely front-behind, implies that male is dominant in terms of certain issue, in this case sexual activity. However, in a society where female power is more active than that of

men, the man-front-woman-back might be reversed. This is what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) called "cultural coherence":

"The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture."

(p. 22)

Personification and Metonymy

These concepts of personification and metonymy are not new to metaphor researchers, because they are often a part of metaphor. Consider the sentence, "The wind whispers." In this case, the wind is personified because only human beings are able to perform the act of whispering. In addition, *depersonification* happens in life, too. For example, the metaphor "That gal is a beast" implies that the girl is as ugly as a beast.

Now consider a sentence of metonymy, "We need more strong bodies to finish this task." Clearly, "strong bodies" stands for "strong people", as the concept of metonymy is understood as THE PART FOR THE WHOLE.

Metonymy and (de)personification often take place in advertising. When advertisers intend to put an emphasis on a certain part of the promoted product, metonymy comes into play (e.g., "comfortable upholstery" for "car"). When the advertised product, like a women's bra, should outshine other features of a woman, de-personification starts to work. Lakoff and Johnson's phenomenal and insightful probe into human conceptual system and metaphorical concepts indeed provide a staunch foundation for future research on metaphor.

Rachel Giora: The Graded Salience Hypothesis (1997)

The studies of literal language and figurative language come from a long line of research. The debates concerning the disparities between these two forms of speech

have been unabated, and they became more intense with the rise of pragmatics. Pragmatics brought in the concept of "contextual effects" which plays either a decisive role or not in the previous research, as in *The standard pragmatic model* (see Fodor, 1983; Grice, 1975; Searle, 1979) and *The direct access view* (see Gibbs, 1994; Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Interestingly, Giora (1997), as a cognitive-semanticist, proposed *the graded salience hypothesis*, explaining the conflicts from former models and stressed the saliency of meanings (to view a comprehensive introduction and comments, see Giora, 2002). Also, Giora (1997) applied the hypothesis on how to approach different figurative languages, with metaphor being one of them.

Instead of re-joining the forums held in the previous two models, Giora (1997) presented the concept "salient meanings." To be salient, "meanings of words, phrases, or sentences (e.g., the conventional interpretations of idioms or proverbs) have to be coded in the mental lexicon and, in addition, enjoy prominence due to their conventionality, frequency, familiarity, or prototypicality" (Giora, 2002, p. 491). In other words, a word or phrase is very likely to be interpreted in a different way by language users. Giora used the polysemous word "bank" as an example to illustrate salient and less-salient meaning. For the people live in metropolitan areas, the word *bank* meaning "an institution which provides banking service" is more salient, while the meaning "riverside" is less-salient.

Giora (2002) then predicted that contextual information would inhibit less-salient meaning after salient meaning is processed. For the case of metaphor, she found that both salient and less-salient meanings will be evoked initially in both metaphoric and literal biasing contexts based on the measurement of participants' reading times and lexical decisions. Though Giora approached metaphor from a pure cognitive stance, her graded salience hypothesis can still lend support to the present study in terms of her emphasis on contextual clues. In advertising, when viewers attempt to decipher a

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possible pictorial metaphor in the first phase, like Plate 2, contextual information will

be conducive to the decision of the real advertised product. In this advertisement,

what comes to the eyes are a straw and a woman's miniature image perfectly matched

with the curve of the straw. But what is the advertised target? Is the conceptual

metaphor "WOMAN IS STRAW" or "STRAW IS WOMAN"? Both choices are

possible until the contextual information comes into play – the texts on the straw

which read "Y +YOGA CENTER."

Figure 2. Y Plus Yoga Center
Image from http://inventorspot.com/inventive_marketing_yoga_center_straw

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Note 1. The authors called this type of gender metaphor "universal gender metaphor"
which is based on Lakoff and Johnson's "orientational metaphor."

Relevance-Perspectives for Advertising Communication

In this section, we turn to look at the most influential theory about human communication in the past two decades, *the relevance theory* by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1987). The relevance theory, along with Black's *interaction theory* (Black, 1962), serve as the two major theoretical foundations of advertising pictorial metaphors. In the domain of advertising language, the relevance theory is conducive to the explanations of how the advertiser (the speaker) interact with the viewer (the hearer), and vice versa. I will first introduce a brief history of the relevance theory, and then relate some tenets of the relevance theory to the present study.

The Origin of Relevance

Paul Grice (1975) proposed four maxims of conversation, that is, maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. His claims received a tremendous challenge by Wilson and Sperber (1981). Wilson and Sperber (1981) suggested revisions regarding the definition of implicature and the maxim-centered explanation of figurative language. They dubbed their theory "Relevance Theory" (henceforth RT) which has become one of the most influential theoretical construct in contemporary pragmatic research. The fundamental difference between RT and Grice's maxims lies in the recognition of communicative norms: In Grice's sense, interlocutors have to know the maxims (communicative norms) beforehand in order to communicate, and these maxims are not violable. However, RT says that communicators do not know these norms but search for them during the course of interaction instead. They can also violate the norms if they want to. From another angle, RT is able to explain figurative language like metaphor because in order to grasp the non-literal meaning, interlocutors often have to "go beyond the words or sentences", thus disobeying the Gricean maxims.

The Nature of Human Communication

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), the general objective of RT is "to identify underlying mechanisms, rooted in human psychology, which explain how humans communicate with one another" (p. 32). RT stands from a cognitive point to tackle views from previous models (e.g., Grice's Cooperative Principle, and the traditional "code model" which regards the human brain as a decoding device), injecting the concept of relevance in the dynamic cognitive environment where speakers and listeners interact.

First of all, let us take in two important concepts, *informative intention* and *communicative intention*. These two concepts are pivotal for understanding the speaker's incentives in communication:

(a) *Informative intention*: The intention to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a certain set of assumptions.
(b) *Communicative intention*: The intention to make mutually manifest to audience and communicator the communicator's informative intention.

<div align="right">(Sperber & Wilson, 1987, p. 700)</div>

Informative intention happens when the communicator attempts to deliver a message, while communicative intention is achieved while the addressee understands the intended message (in Sperber and Wilson's term, *mutual manifestness*). Forceville (1996) further points out that, these two intentions are difficult to distinguish in verbal communication (p. 105). If these two intentions are both in force, this type of communication is called "ostensive-inferential communication" (p. 85). Specifically, ostensive communication and the notion of inference will be dissected for further elaborations.

Based on the definition in Sperber and Wilson (1986), "ostensive communication" has to meet three requirements (pp. 153-154): (a) attract the

addressee's attention; (b) direct this attention towards the addressee's intentions; and

(c) reveal the addresser's intentions. Notice that not every communication is ostensive.

There are times where exists only informative intention without communicative

intention (explicit non-ostensive communication), and where none of these two take

place. On the other hand, communication not only engages participants in delivering

or receiving messages, but also the process of "inferring." Sperber and Wilson (1986)

define inference as "the process by which an assumption is accepted as true or

probably true on the strength of the truth or probable truth of other assumptions" (p.

68). Put simply, inferring means proving the authenticity of a piece of evidence by

searching in the prior experience.

Indeed, when ads readers are exerting mental power processing potential

metaphorical meanings, simultaneously they are searching schemas in their minds.

Those relevant past experiences will spark permutations in altering the addressee's

cognitive environment.

So far, I have discussed two principles of human communication from a

relevance point of view, intention and inference. To summarize, the addresser

dispatches her message with a desire for communication success (intention). Then, the

addressee processes mentally to break down the true meaning in the message. The

crucial point of reaching the communication success is the establishment of mutual

knowledge which the addresser and the addressee are incessantly exchanging in

bilateral directions.

Contextualization

No other scholars or researchers before Sperber and Wilson (1987) regard the

concept of context as a fluid network, but "as a monolithic entity that is accessible to

interlocutors beforehand during interaction" (Yus, 1998b, p. 86). In Sperber and

Wilson's (1987) perspectives, a context is fluid because it is interactive. It is

interactive since when the speaker selects a certain context in communication, the context sets a certain assumptions to the speaker's utterances.

While the addressee begins to solve the code in the message, she is not only dealing with one context. Instead, a number of contexts from different genres might come to her mind. At the same time, all the possible contexts are dynamic. They are not static entities passively to be chosen, but as fluid and dynamic extensions aiming for "optimal relevance." By optimal relevance, Sperber and Wilson (1987) means the addressee searches the most relevant and plausible interpretation of the message that matches the addresser's original intention. The practical meaning of optimal relevance will be elaborated in the next session.

Sperber and Wilson (1987) noted that context is of dynamism. Contexts are not only an array of possible situations, but also as *extended* contextual variations actively constructed by communicators in order to obtain more *contextual implications*. In the next part, relevance theory and human communication will be fully combined to move us closer towards the discourse of advertising.

Relevance Theory and Human Communication

In previous introductions of the underpinnings of RT, some breakthroughs in the study of human communication were presented. In this phase, RT will make an official rendezvous with human communication. As mentioned, the momentum of proposing RT is to re-define the nature of communication along with the essential opponents inside. There are four basic assumptions described by Wilson (1994) that serve as the rudiments for RT:

(a) Every utterance has a variety of possible interpretations, all compatible with the information that is linguistically encoded.

(b) Not all these interpretations occur to the hearer simultaneously; some of them take more effort to think up.

(c) Hearers are equipped with a single, general criterion for evaluating interpretations.

(d) This criterion is powerful enough to exclude all but at most a single interpretation, so that having found an interpretation that fits the criterion, the hearer looks no further.

(p. 44)

It is conspicuous that these four assumptions are sequentially related to each other. These four assumptions make it clear that human communication involves not merely a sender-stimulus-hearer affair, but an intricate and cognitive-demanding network in which the addresser deliver stimuli with degrees of more or less logical interpretations to the addressee who is poised to choose the correct interpretation in a certain context. In other words, addressee is seeking what Berg's (1991) phrase, the *most relevant relevance*, which is the one produced by the addresser's stimulus that best guides addressees to the intended interpretation or, the "usefulness with regard to the conversational goals or objectives of the conversants" (p. 412).

However, it seems that it costs a great amount of cognitive efforts before the addressee gets the right message. In fact, the addresser also needs to work in her cognitive frame to produce the most effective processing message. By most effective processing, it means the one that costs no excessive effort. It is true that addresses are not willing to spend too much time inferring the message, and so does the addresser, who is afraid that the elongated time might lead to conversation breakdown. Therefore, the course of interaction is not a one-sided cognitive work, but an intersubjective web: the lesser efforts are involved, the more relevant the discourse.

Nevertheless, what makes the discourse relevant to the addressee? Namely, how to trigger the formation of mutual knowledge between the addresser and addressee? The linchpin is contextual effects which have a direct relationship to the degree of relevance. According to Wilson (1994), contextual effects can be related to context in three main ways: (a) reinforcing a previous assumption; (b) contradicting a previous

assumption; and (c) combining to a previous assumption to yield further contextual effects. In (c), relevance is manifested because *contextual implications* are generated. The following examples illustrate the three disparate contextual effects:

(a) It will rain in Paris tomorrow:
Previous context: The hearer is going to Paris tomorrow and he is almost sure that it will rain.
Contextual effect: The utterance strengthens a previous assumption.
(b) It will rain in Paris tomorrow.
Previous context: The hearer is going to Paris tomorrow, but he had not expected that it might rain.
Contextual effect: The utterance contradicts (and suppresses) a previous assumption.
(c) It will rain in Paris tomorrow.
Previous context: The hearer is going to Paris tomorrow and has thought about packing an overcoat just in case.
Contextual effect: The utterance is combined with previous assumptions to yield the contextual implication that it is necessary to pack that overcoat.
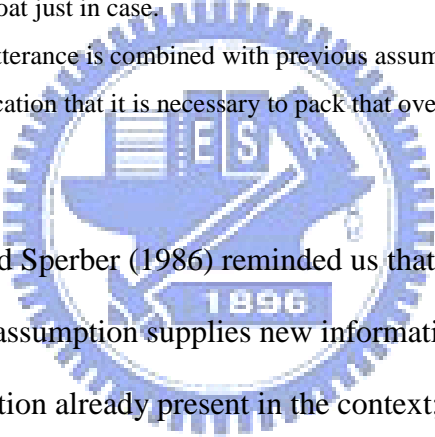
(Wilson, 1994, p. 45)

However, Wilson and Sperber (1986) reminded us that assumptions do not work every time when: (a) the assumption supplies new information but this information is not related to the information already present in the context; (b) the assumption is already present in the context and its strength is not altered in any way by the new information; and (c) the assumption is too weak to alter the context and is therefore eliminated (pp. 120-121). Therefore, "an assumption is relevant in a context if and only if it has some contextual effect in that context" (p. 122).

Although context is important for relevance, it is not always given beforehand. In other words, the addressee has to construct contexts and search for relevance during the process. More importantly, when there is an optimal selection for context, a maximal amount of contextual effects, and little processing effort, relevance is *optimal* (see Sperber & Wilson, 1986; Groefsema, 1989).

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RT had been edited and re-edited after its debut. Although there are a number of

critics like Levinson (1989) who attacked RT for its negligent perspective on

semantics, the contribution of RT towards a more complete theory on human

communication cannot be denied. Before relating RT to the discourse of advertising,

let us deal with the last issue about the force of communication.

Strong Communication versus Weak Communication

Another monumental contribution made by Sperber and Wilson (1986) is that

they distinguished strong and weak communication. Strong communication is the

form of communication where assumptions are explicitly communicated between the

addresser and addressee. The assumptions are processed by the addressee who

searches for relevance in the utterance. On the other hand, when assumptions are not

explicitly manifest to the addressee, a number of possible implications will be

triggered and the so-called "weak communication" will take place. While most

researchers maintained that there was a tendency in considering all communication

are strong communication, Sperber and Wilson (1986) asserted that much

communication carries vague, suggestive assumptions. To best exemplify the

distinction of these two types of communication, consider the following conversation:

Peter: Would you drive a Mercedes?
Mary: I wouldn't drive ANY expensive car.

(Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 194)

Here, two explicit and instant implications are harnessed from Peter's judgment

based on Mary's response. First, Mary regards Mercedes as an expensive car, which is

an *implicated premise*; moreover, Mary would never drive a Mercedes, which is an

implicated conclusion (noted in Forceville, 1996). Though these two implications are

strongly communicated by the addresser Mary, a number of other possible

implications might also derive from her reply. For example, Peter might supply the premise that Cadillacs and Alfa Romeos are also luxurious automobiles which Mary would not drive either. This implication is weaker than the two strong implications mentioned above since it is only a speculation from Mary's reply.

Sperber and Wilson (1986) concluded that "the more strongly an assumption is communicated, the more the communicator takes responsibility for having it derived by the addressee; the weaker an assumption is communicated, the more the addressee takes responsibility for deriving it. Certain utterances aim at triggering weak rather than strong implicatures" (p. 194).

Relevance Theory and Advertising Language

RT is indeed an unprecedented professional view in light of human communication. As mentioned, it has been applied to diverse fields of study. The study of advertising and its language is one of the areas where RT has been effectively executed to account for the advertiser/receiver communication. However, there is a fine line that demarcates the human communication and advertising language, since the latter belongs to the form of mass communication. As reported in Forceville (1996), there are at least four important aspects that differentiate the communication of advertising from human communication. These four aspects are temporal difference, number of participants, multi-media character, and textual ambiguity.

The very first difference lies in the temporal difference, or simply *time*. The participants in Sperber and Wilson's (1986) communication are engaged in a face-to-face and co-present communication network, but those in the milieu of advertising are not simultaneously present. That also means that there is no immediate feedback to be delivered. Ricoeur (1981) observed that:

"In oral discourse, the problem is ultimately resolved by the ostensive function of discourse; in other words, reference is determined by the ability to point to a reality common to the interlocutors. If we cannot point to the thing about which we speak, at least we can situate it in relation to the unique spatio-temporal network which is shared by the interlocutors. It is the "here" and "now", determined by the situation of discourse, which provides the ultimate reference of all discourse. With writing, things already begin to change. For there is no longer a situation common to the writer and the reader, and the concrete conditions of the act of pointing no longer exist."

(p. 141)

Ricoeur's (1981) observation lucidly informs us that communication breakdown can be solved in face-to-face ostensive communication, but not in the case of advertising. What implies the communication process of advertising is that, as remarked by Forceville (1996), "this means that the advertiser must think twice before sending her message: an unfortunate stimulus cannot be easily revoked and adapted (p. 100).

The next difference deals with the *number* of participants in the communication. In the course of face-to-face interaction, there are only two interlocutors; however, in advertising which is a form of mass communication, it is often the case of an advertiser (or a group of advertisers) versus a large number of ads readers. At this stage, a problem has emerged: How does an advertiser do to guarantee she has sent a proper message? Namely, how can she direct the ads readers towards the desired implications during the search for relevance? It is necessary for the advertiser to make an assessment of the cognitive environment of the target groups. In other words, the advertiser has to give a second thought on "the general public's taste" before transmitting the advertisement. Knowing the ups and downs in a certain advertising field is crucial to every advertiser who looks forwards to success.

The third component is the multi-media character of advertisements. Advertisements, often, appear in front of readers with the combination of verbal and

visual features. Here, verbal and visual features refer to the texts and the pictures, which together produce concomitant effects which alter the readers' cognitive environment. Barthes (1986) argued that in advertising verbal information "anchors" visual information: The former not only helps identify elements in the latter, but also restricts the number of interpretations it might give rise to. Recalling Figure 2, if the text "Y+ Yoga Center" did not appear on the flex straw or anywhere in the advertisement, the readers would have no clues of which interpretations to choose. Furthermore, Forceville (1996) reminded us that, "Even though Barthes's view has to be qualified in that particularly in modern advertising pictures may "anchor" text as well as the other way round, text is still a vital element in making sense of an advertisement. The less verbal anchoring is present, we may deduce, the greater the range of interpretations that is possible" (p. 102).

The last issue is *textual ambiguity*. It is necessary to combine the previous three differences to understand the nature of text. As we know, ambiguities occur in the course of conversation frequently. As a result, the interlocutor often gets involved in the activity of disambiguation. In the case of advertising, the task of disambiguation falls totally on ads readers, for there is neither instant communicators on the spot nor feedback exchanged. This fact echoes what I have mentioned earlier, the weak communication, which can be argued to be the fundamental mode of communication for advertising. To be more accurate, the verbal (textual) features in advertising, compared to those in face-to-face interaction, are "powerful but indeterminate" (Cook, 1992, p. 45), aiming for the readers to do what Pateman (1983) dubbed "strategic exploitation" (p. 200).

From the elucidations above, it is evident that the communication in face-to-face interaction and that in advertising are truly distinctive by nature. These disparities will also lead the researcher to focus on the missing aspects found in Sperber and Wilson's

theory of communication.

Covert Communication in Advertising

Keiko Tanaka, like Charles Forceville, holds a relevance-oriented view towards the language of advertising. In her book "Advertising language: A pragmatic approach to advertisements in Britain and Japan," Tanaka (1992) reviewed the previous former schools of thoughts on human communication, analyzed two common rhetorical figures in advertisements (puns and metaphor), and above all, she proposed "covert communication" is an advantageous form of selling products often employed by advertisers. Bencherif and Tanaka (1987) summarized the difference between ostensive and covert communication by using the notion of covert information transmission as a basis, as follows:

> *Ostensive communication*: an overt form of communication where there is, on the part of the speaker, an intention to alter the mutual cognitive environment of the speaker and the hearer.
> *Covert communication*: a case of communication where the intention of the speaker is to alter the cognitive environment of the hearer, i.e. to make a set of assumptions more manifest to her, without making this intention mutually manifest.

(p. 67)

The purposes of utilizing covert communication in the setting of advertising, according to Tanaka (1992), are of two concerns. The foremost concern derives from the advertiser's intention to focus readers' attention on the content of product, making her oblivious of the fact that someone is trying to sell her something. Myers (1983) reported his interview with a real estate agent. According to the agent, by making their house advertisements akin to a magazine cover can become more appealing, especially to the younger audience.

The second purpose is "to avoid taking responsibility for the social consequences of certain implications arising from advertisements" (Tanaka, 1994, p .44). For

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instance, since quite a lot of advertisements contain sexual implications, advertisers have to be meticulous when promoting the product. By resorting to covert communication, advertisers are able to promulgate the product without making the intentions overt. Thus, in covert communication, communicators shoulder no responsibilities for causing any social consequences, not only because they are not having face-to-face communication with ads readers, but also because the interpretation task depends totally on the readers.

Taking one step further, is Tanaka's covert communication consistent with Sperber and Wilson's weak communication? Forceville (1996) vetoed the equality, stating that "Covert communication necessarily makes ample use of the possibilities of weak communication, but not all weak communication is covert communication" (p. 107)." His stance is that adverts who engage readers in covert communication do not take responsibilities of harboring certain implications, because those implications are not made mutually manifest.
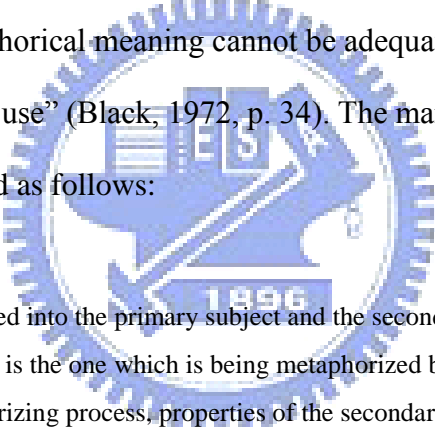
Unlike Forceville, Guy Cook, a giant neo-researcher in advertising communication holds a relatively radical perspective for Tanaka's covert communication. Crook (2004) commented that Forceville's (1996) distinction remained vague; moreover, he questioned the qualification of covert communication towards the valid communication in Sperber and Wilson's sense. He then proposed that irrelevance is a pre-requisite for covert communication, and suggested that advertising communication should be approached by a combination of relevance theory and covert communication.

Although Tanaka's covert communication has received constant criticism from her fellow researchers, its contribution is highly laudable, as Crook (2004) commented, "In short, the notion of covert communication describes a theoretical subpart of communicative behavior and is helpful in elucidating the role of intentions

in utterance interpretation across a range of domains" (p. 737).

Max Black (1972): The Interaction Theory of Metaphor

Among all the research and studies on metaphor, Max Black's interaction theory of metaphor (Black, 1962, 1972, 1979a, 1979b) has been regarded as the central foundation to which many writers are explicitly or implicitly committed (Forceville, 1996; Hausman, 1989; Indurkhya, 1991, 1992; Kjargaard, 1986; Kittay, 1987; MacCormac, 1985; Ricoeur, 1977; Verbrugge, 1980). Not only for the lucid elucidations of the intricate cognitive process of metaphor, Black's theory paved the road for the development of pictorial metaphor. In addition, his interaction theory also manifests an awareness of treating metaphor in pragmatics, which can be best realized in his own quote: "Metaphorical meaning cannot be adequately discussed without resorting to metaphorical use" (Black, 1972, p. 34). The marrow of the interaction theory can be summarized as follows:

(a) A metaphor is divided into the primary subject and the secondary subject.
(b) The primary subject is the one which is being metaphorized by the secondary subject.
(c) During the metaphorizing process, properties of the secondary subject are projected (or mapped) onto the primary subject.
(d) Hearers (metaphor recipients) decide which properties should be mapped onto the primary subject based on contextual clues and personal experience.

(Black, 1972, p. 35)

The stance of interactive metaphor indeed opened a door and let the sunlight slant in for those who had strived to unravel and unveil the mystery of metaphor. I will use the example in Black (1979a) to illustrate projection process mentioned earlier. Table 1 shows that for a man to be metaphorized as a wolf, there should be some common attributes. Among the attributes, some of them are mappable (like "living creature" and "being aggressive") while some are not ("having for legs).

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Above all, the mapping process is depended totally on oneself, who selects and decides transferrable features based on personal experience.

Table 1

The Selection of Mappable Features in a Verbal Metaphor (Forceville, 1996, p. 11)

Primary subject		Secondary subject
MAN	IS	WOLF
Living creature		_____Living creature
		_____ …
		_____Being aggressive, cruel, bloodthirsty
		x_____Having 4 legs…

As the name of the theory "interactive" suggested, Black (1972) demonstrated that metaphor is able to engage communicators in an interactive and reciprocal "take it or not" process of cognition. This is to say that in order to understand the metaphor posed by the communicator, the recipient needs to go through the mental labyrinth, make a decision by activating schematic knowledge, and finally. The elevation from word-level to discourse is definitely insightful and pioneering. However, Black's also received criticism. One of the major critical commentators on Black's theory is Kittay (1987). Based on the extension of the primary and secondary subject concept, she argued that both should be seen as part of "semantic fields." For detailed information on Kittay's (1987) criticism towards Black (1972), please refer to Forceville (1996).

Model of Pictorial Metaphor

Although Black's theory explained the internal works of metaphor, no elements of non-verbal metaphors were discussed. Charles Forceville, who inherited Black's

interaction theory, is the first researcher who attempted to establish a theory for pictorial metaphor. In his revolutionary book *Pictorial metaphor in advertising*, Forceville (1996) mentioned that in order to verify any purported pictorial metaphor, three essential questions are to be asked:

(1) What are the two terms of the metaphor, and how do we know?
(2) Which of the two terms is the primary subject and which is its secondary subject, and how do we know?
(3) Which features are projected from the secondary subject upon the domain of the primary subject, and how do we decide on these features?

(p. 108)

According to Forceville (1996), this model (the three above questions) is a combination of the interaction theory and the relevance theory. On one hand, the interaction theory contributes the taxonomy of the primary and secondary subject to pictorial metaphor. On the other hand, the relevance theory proffers a microscopic view into the nature of advertiser-recipient communication. By asking these three questions, we are able to measure how much recipients understand a target pictorial metaphor. I will demonstrate this in the next section with one of the advertisements used in the present study.

Types of Pictorial Metaphor

There are a number of pictorial metaphor types identified in Forceville (1996), but I only explore two of them in my research. The first type of pictorial metaphor was dubbed "Metaphors with one pictorially present term" or MP1. In this sort, usually the secondary subject has to be retrieved to decide which features then can be mapped onto the primary subject (the advertised product). Consider the following advertisement from a coffee brand Folgers with the doctored version:

Figure 3. Folgers Coffee with the doctored version
Image from http://adsoftheworld.com/media/ambient/folgers_coffee_manhole

In this picture which was shot on a street in New York, the manhole cover was

replaced by a coffee cup which contained steaming hot coffee. Let us examine this

particular metaphor with Forceville's model. The first question asked us what the two

terms of metaphor are and how we know. From the doctored version of this

advertisement, it is obvious that the two terms are a coffee cup and a manhole cover.

However, the readers will not be able to see the doctored version but the original

advertisement. This means oftentimes readers are required to observe what

similarities between the two objects, as what was said in Black's theory, "The

similarity between the two terms is not preexistent but – with the aid of this specific

context – created" (Black, 1979a, p. 82). It is in this specific context, where people are

plying back and forth on the street, that we are able to identify what has been

substituted by the coffee cup. Then, here comes the second question: Which one is the primary subject and which is the second subject? If recalling the concept of "verbal anchoring" in the previous section, the question is solved immediately with the help of the text appeared around the coffee cup "Hey, City That Never Sleeps. Wake up. Folgers." At this stage, we are assured that the metaphor is COFFEE CUP is MANHOLE COVER, instead of the reverse. Eventually, we have to decide the mappable features in this case. Before we begin the final stage, Forceville (1996) reminded us:

> First, "relevance is always relevance to an individual" (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 142), and unless that individual happens to be oneself, one can never be completely clear about the relevance of a message to a specific individual. Second, given a shared (sub)cultural background, a group of addressees confronting this advertisement are likely to agree on at least part of the interpretation. This part, which then constitutes the message's "strong implicatures" can be complemented by more idiosyncratic "weak implicatures" in the interpretation of specific individuals."
>
> (pp. 112-113)
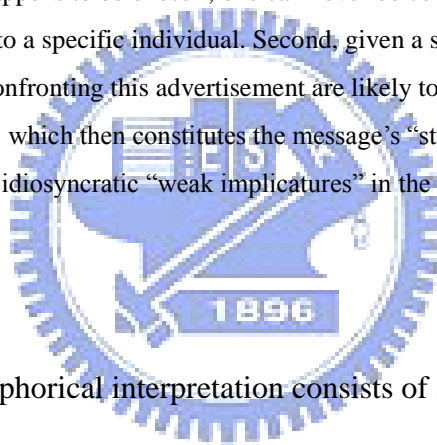
In short, every metaphorical interpretation consists of a set of strong implicatures agreed by most people in a group of a particular cultural background, plus a cohort of weak implicatures from individuals. Namely, the same metaphor may be deciphered differently due to the viewers' cultural backgrounds (like customs) or individual philosophy and ideology. Table 2 exhibits the possible mapping features between the primary subject COFFEE CUP and the secondary subject MANHOLE COVER.

Table 2 shows that while some of the features are mappable (like "round shape"), others fail to be projected onto the primary subject. Therefore, a possible strong implicature of this advertisement may be something like "Folgers provides hot and steamy coffee everyday" or "Folgers coffee gives you vitality, just like the manhole cover which has the "vitality of city" buried underneath it" (it refers to the myriad of

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cords, wires, and lines underground). Interestingly, there might also be some

idiosyncratic explanations to a varying degree. For instance, some people might

derive an implicature like "Folgers offers quality but inexpensive coffee", for a

manhole cover is usually made of cast iron which is not a costly material compared to

other metals, and takes pressure very well. While some viewers give positive

feedback to the coffee advertisement, others might have a not-so-positive impression.

By this I mean the image of manhole covers projected in different cultures. For those

who regard a manhole cover as being dirty and downtrodden, positive attributes of

coffee will be less likely to be associated.

Table 2

Possible Mapping Features in Folgers Coffee Advertisement

Primary subject: COFFEE CUP	IS	Secondary subject: MANHOLE COVER
- round shape		- round shape
- steamy		- steamy
- hot		- hot
- vital		- vital
- refreshing		- heavy (x)
- addictive		- porous (x)

    The factor of cultural variables is also echoed in Cook's (1992) study in which

he listed a number of interactive elements embedded in an advertisement (Figure 4).

He underscored the relationship of each element and stated that the processing of any

advertisement should be treated and scrutinized with possible social

parameters.
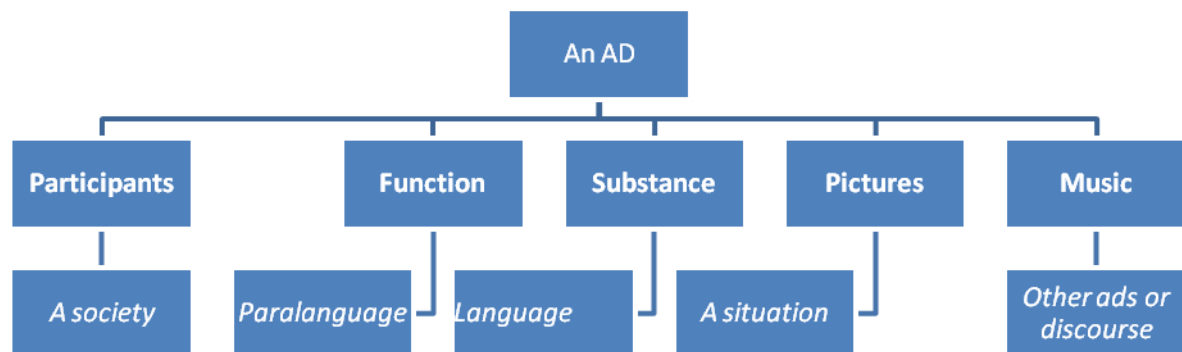
Figure 4. Interactive elements in advertisements (Cook, 1992, p .3)

The other type of pictorial metaphor, which labeled MP2, can be distinguished from the first type by the fact that there are not only one term visible but both. Poring over the following advertisement by IWC featuring its Big Pilot's Watch (Figure 5), part of the bus straps are replaced by watches. With this image in mind, it is very probable that the advertisers are apt to provoke some strong implications relevant to "the tightness of IWC's watches" or "the comfortable touch of IWC's leather straps." Again, more riveting individual interpretations are likely to be galvanized.

By far, two types of pictorial metaphors were introduced. Moreover, the distinction between these two types were made where in the case of MP1 the secondary subject is usually missing, whereas both the primary and secondary subject are pictorially present in MP2 situations. However, the striking disparity is more than this. Forceville (1996) offered further valid support for the distinction:

> To further support the claim that the subdivision into MP1s and MP2s is a valid one, it may finally be added that the distinction has a parallel in verbal metaphors, namely in the opposition between *metaphor in praesentia* and *metaphor in absentia*. Ricoeur (1977, p. 186) gives the examples "Jim is an ass" and "What an ass!". In the first sentence both primary subject and secondary subject are given; in the second sentence the primary subject is not given and must be

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recovered from the context. There is one crucial difference between the verbal metaphor in absentia and the MP1 metaphors examined above, however: where as in the verbal specimens it is the primary subject that must be recovered from the context, in pictorial ones, as we have seen, this is usually the secondary subject."

<div align="right">(Forceville, 1996, p. 136)</div>

In other words, in the contextual cues in MP2s, either textual or pictorial, are not necessary to be utilized to establish the identity of the two terms while in MP1s it is imperative to make them effective. Above all, Forceville (1996) sent us an important message: Every pictorial metaphor is unique to an individual who lives in a certain society. Thus, while some metaphors enjoy universal interpretations, others remain culturally striking.

Figure 5. IWC Big Pilot's Watch
Image from
http://www.eglobe1.com/index.php/2006/10/16/creative-advertisements-around-the-world/

Related Studies on Pictorial Metaphor

Numerous studies of analyzing advertisements from readers' perspectives have been done in the field of consumer research, but most of the rating scheme is

rhetoric-based (McQuarrie & Mick, 1999; van Mulken, van Enschot-van Dijk, & Hoeken, 2005). David Mick is one of the earliest researchers interested in reader's responses to advertisements. Mick and Politi (1989) attempted to see how participants respond to the sexual innuendo in a Gordon's gin advertisement. Totally 17 participants' interpretations were assessed through written questionnaires, and those responses were categorized into different themes. It turned out that some gripping responses in terms of gender differences were found.

Forceville's (1995) study investigated a number of participants from two occasions- one occurred at the Vrije University in Amsterdam, Holland, and the other took place during the annual conference of the Poetics and Linguistics Association in Ghent, Belgium, 1992. In Amsterdam, the 18 participants included staff members and undergraduates from the Faculty of Arts, while in Ghent the participants were the audience (the actual numbers were not mentioned) attending Forceville's presentation. Both groups were asked to respond to a trio of IBM billboards on a ten-page questionnaire, and their responses were classified. The following are the four questions in Forceville's (1996) study:

Question 1: "Describe in your own words billboards A, B, and C."
Question 2: "Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by billboards A, B, and C, and describe point by point the personal feelings and associations each of the billboards' pictures evokes in you. Could you please indicate how important you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."
Question 3: "What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with each of the billboards A, B, and C? If the message in your view has several aspects, could you then please indicate the relative importance of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."
Question 4: "What proof or evidence do you find in each of the billboards A, B, and C to support

your ideas about what the advertiser has wanted to communicate?

(Forceville, 1996, pp.196-197)

Though both Mick and Politi (1989) and Forceville (1996) used written questionnaires to collect data, the way they presented their questions are different. Mick and Politi's (1989) asked all four questions to the participants advertisement by advertisement; that is, participants answered all the four questions concerning the first advertisement and then proceeded to the next one. However, Forceville (1995) put the question items at the core. Participants answered the first question to the first advertisement, and then they went on to answer the same question to the second advertisement. The concern of this approach, according to Forceville (1995), was "…that participants should give their responses to each question without knowing what the next question would be, since otherwise their responses to the second and third billboard might have been affected by what they knew would be the next questions" (p. 170).

Compared to Mick and Politi (1989), Forceville (1995) is more structurally sound in terms of theoretical backup and questionnaire design. I will adopt the research design in Forceville (1995) and make two adjustments for the present study.

The very first adjustment has to do with participants' backgrounds. As mentioned in the section of the importance of study in Chapter 1 on page 4, the backgrounds of participants in Forceville (1995) were not unified. In the present study, I limit the participants in both American and Taiwanese group to history and English majors respectively. The rationale is to bridge the possible link between specific perceptions and their backgrounds.

The second one is the language used while completing the questionnaire, which is a concern for the fear of data misinterpretation. In Forceville (1995) where the author had participants from Holland and Belgium respond to three billboards, the

language used was largely in Dutch instead of English, for most of their first language was Dutch. Forceville (1995) later translated these data into English. For the present study, it is considered that the Taiwanese participants should write their responses in English rather than their first language Mandarin Chinese, for the fact that they are advanced English learners and also for the fear that their ideas might be misunderstood in the progress of translation.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The present study is intended to explore advertising pictorial metaphors in both native and EFL context. I attempt to answer three research questions: (1) How do the native and non-native speakers of English interpret advertising pictorial metaphors? (2) What factors that determine the success of pictorial metaphor interpretations? (3) How do the native and non-native speakers of English perceive the advertisements with and without considering advertiser's intention?

This chapter presents how the present research was designed and conducted. Starting from the participants, their educational backgrounds and how they were recruited would be described. Next, the design of the questionnaire and a pilot study would be illustrated. Subsequently, data collection procedures would be described. Finally, I would explain the three stages of data analyses and draw examples from the results.
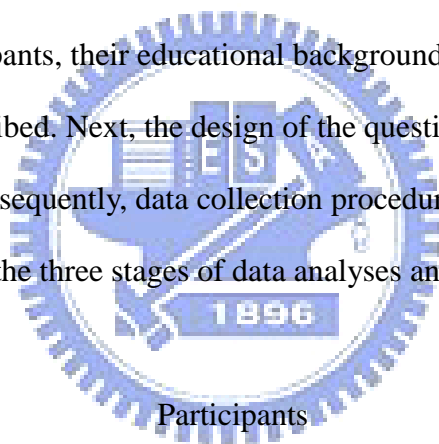
Participants

The participants of this study comprised two groups: the Taiwanese group (non-native speakers of English, NNS) and the American group (native speakers of English, NS). Each group consisted of 20 graduate students, with a total numbers of 40 participants. Table 3 presents the background information of the American and Taiwanese participants.

The 20 participants in the Taiwanese group were graduate students from 3 universities in Taiwan: 5 from National Chiao Tung University (from The Graduate Institute of Teaching English to Other Speakers of Languages or TESOL), 9 from National Chengchi University (from The Graduate Program of TESOL), and another 6 from National Tsing Hua University (from The Graduate Program of TESOL). The

TESOL graduate programs at these three universities were chosen because they only

allowed approximately 3% admission rate per year (about 6-10 students are admitted

each year). More importantly, students who enrolled in the programs had taken

graduate entrance exams in their respective university which often required both

advanced English reading and writing skills (e.g., paraphrasing, summarizing, and

composing). Therefore, it can be assumed that the graduate students in these three

TESOL programs have high-level reading and writing skills to tackle the

questionnaire in the present study.

Table 3

Demographic Information of the Participants

Information / Group	American Group (NS)	Taiwanese Group (NNS)
Nationality	USA	Taiwan
Number	20	20
Department/ Program	Master's Program in TESOL	Master's Program in TESOL
University	University of Texas, San Antonio (UT, SA)	(1) National Chiao Tung University (NCTU) (2) National Chengchi University (NCCU) (3) National Tsing Hua University (NTHU)
School year	1st and 2nd year	1st and 2nd year
Gender (male : female)	8 : 12	3 : 17

Unlike the participants in the Taiwanese group, those in the American group all

belonged to the same university. They were graduate students either at their first or

second year in the graduate program of TESOL at University of Texas, San Antonio,

Texas, U.S.A. With the arrangement by the research assistant of the present study

(introduced later in this chapter), twenty students of the program agreed to participate

in my research project.

<center>Instrument</center>

The present study utilized questionnaire as data-gathering instrument. The questionnaire packet included a consent form, a demographic information survey, and the actual questionnaire. The actual questionnaire contained an instructional page, advertisements, and question items. The documents were all written in English, and participants were required to use only English when they wrote their responses.

Consent Form

Information such as the purpose of my research project, and the process of participation were explained in the consent form.

Demographic Information Survey

In this part, participants had to fill out their personal information including age, gender, nationality, affiliation, level of study, and email address.

Instructional Page

The purpose of the instructional page is to explain how to complete the questionnaire without having the risks of affecting data coding. For example, one of the reminders reads: Do not scroll back to the previous pages to modify your answers. If the participants violate this rule, their written responses would be regarded as "unnatural." It is unnatural because reaction towards advertisements should be intuitively provoked. For participants who violated this naturalness principle, their responses would not be regarded as genuine data and thus would not be used.

Advertisements

The questionnaire encompasses two types of pictorial metaphors: MP1 (Metaphors with one pictorially present term) and MP2 (Metaphors with two pictorially present terms). Under each category, there are two advertisements. For the two advertisements of MP1 (labeled MP1A and MP1B), one is the Folgers Coffee

advertisement already discussed in the previous section (p. 29-32, also see Figure 3), and the other is a razor advertisement from Bic (See Figure 6). In this razor advertisement, a giant razor is doing the chore which the missing secondary subject, a lawn mower, should be doing. Participants were expected to recover the missing lawn mower in order to fully interpret this advertisement.
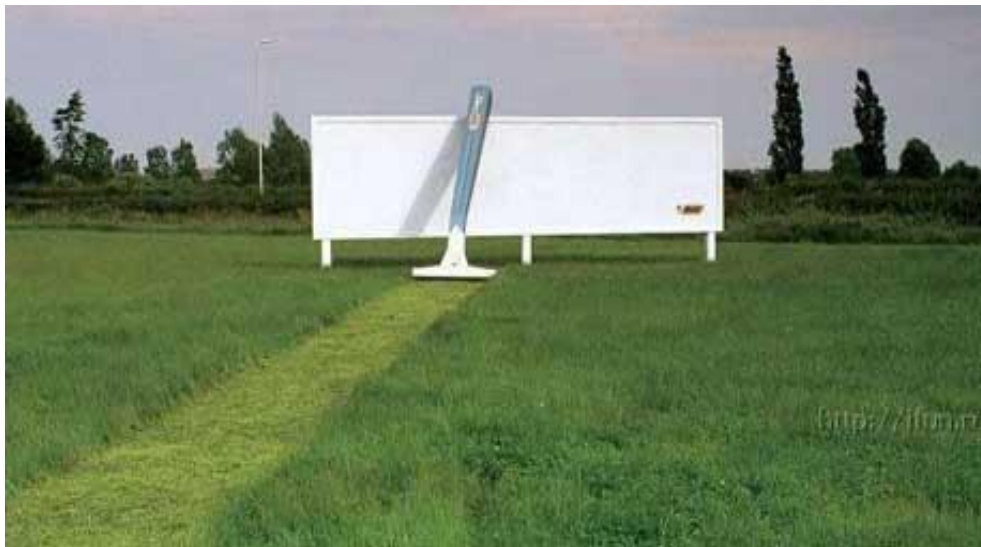
Figure 6. Bic Razor

Image from http://www.emmitsburg.net/humor/daily_additions/2007/may/2.htm

As for the two advertisements in the MP2 category, one is the formerly introduced IWC Big Pilot's Watch (MP2A, see Figure 5 on page 34), and the other one is a brassiere advertisement from a famous brassier maker Wonderbra (MP2B, see Figure 7). In the bra advertisement, the primary and secondary subject in the advertisement are a woman and a bra covering her chest. The most interesting part of this advertisement is the impact from the slogan which reads "I can't cook. Who cares?" combining with the nonchalant posture from the model. This bra advertisement, along with the Folgers Coffee advertisement, were expected to be highly culturally-striking to the participants (the other two advertisement, Bic Razor and IWC Watch, could also have cultural impacts). For the bra advertisement, the

roles and images of women in Western and Eastern cultures are projected quite

distinctively, so does the history of feminism. Therefore, it is possible that the

participants might associate the advertisements with their social values or images

while reflecting upon these two advertisements (to see the reasons why Folgers

Coffee advertisement might be potentially culturally-striking, refer to the section of

Types of Pictorial Metaphor on page 29.)

Figure 7. Wonderbra
Image from http://www.adsneeze.com/clothing-footwear/wonderbra-girl

A research assistant was invited in the present study. The second researcher is a

female American citizen who lives in San Antonio, Texas, U. S. A. She possesses a

Master's Degree in Computer Programming in the University of Texas at San Antonio

and has worked as a computer programmer for a few years. Her duty as the research

assistant encompasses contacting the American participants, assisting the selection of

advertisements, collecting the native data, and being the second rater in the data

coding process.

Because she resides in the United States, the communication between us relied

on the video-conferencing function on Skype (a peer-to-peer online telephoning and

messaging software). Before gleaning and choosing the advertisements for the present research, the research assistant attended a series of online training sessions hosted by me. First of all, I e-mailed her Forceville's (2002) journal article about the issue of indentifying pictorial metaphors. We discussed the content of the article and clarified some ambiguous points until she understood the essentials of pictorial metaphors. Next, she received excerpts in Forceville's (1996) book on discussions of MP1-MP2 distinction and some examples. After the research assistant understood the concept of MP1 and MP2 metaphors as well as her responsibility in the present study, we proceeded to the selection of advertisements. Two MP1s and two MP2s were needed in this study, and I had informed the research assistant that advertisements with cultural values embedded would be selected as priorities. After searching amongst the 28 advertisements that I previously compiled from the Internet, we chose two MP1 advertisements (coffee and razor), but only one advertisement (watch) for MP2 type. As a result, I turned to scholarly articles relevant to metaphor in advertising, and I selected the Wonderbra ad used in Velasco-Sacristán and Fuertes-Olivera's (2006) article for its vivid gender-portrayal and culture-sensitivity. Both the research assistant and I reached a consensus on the selection of the four advertisements.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in May, 2008, with the purposes to investigate whether participants had difficulties in comprehending the question items, and to test Forceville's (1996) model of pictorial metaphor. Only Folgers Coffee advertisement was employed in the pilot study questionnaire. Five Taiwanese (graduate students from the Department of Linguistics, National Chengchi University) and 1 American (a high school student of a student-exchange program in Taiwan) were involved. The American high school student was recruited in the pilot study because of convenient sampling.

Before the pilot study, participants were instructed to indicate any unclear or incomprehensible descriptions concerning the question items. The feedback from the participants indicated that all the question items needed to be more concise. Since the research assistant and I could not find a way to truncate the question items, we came up with an alternative solution, that is, to highlight key words in every question item in order to make the question items easier to comprehend. For example, in question item 2, key words were highlighted by enlarging the font size, changing the font color, and printing in boldface:

> "Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by this ad, and **describe point by point the personal feelings and associations about this picture**. Please indicate **how important** you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

The pilot questionnaire was placed in Appendix C.

After we collected the 6 participants' questionnaires, their written responses were evaluated and analyzed based on the model of pictorial metaphor in Forceville (1996). There were 3 out of 6 total participants who successfully interpreted the Folgers Coffee metaphor. That is, those who succeeded indicated the coffee mug (the primary subject), the manhole cover (the secondary subject), and provided at least one legitimate mutual features. The following is an excerpt from one of the Taiwanese participants:

'The passers-by were drawn to the steam, and I realized that the coffee cup was replaced by the manhole cover.'

The mutual feature provided here is 'steam', and we also found another feature related to 'shape' from the other two successful participants. In addition, there was

one participant whose responses contained both features. Besides the issue of mutual features, we noticed that participants used different English word(s) to refer to the secondary subject. Other than 'manhole cover', we retrieved 'water lid' and 'sewer cover.' From this finding, we learned that language users might possess disparate vocabulary which all refer to the same object.

The pilot study provided some directions for the questionnaire design and data analysis: (1) The descriptions of the question items should be highlighted for better understanding; (2) The same secondary subject might be described in different English words, and (3) It is possible to find two (or more) features in one participant's response.

Question Items

The question items and format in the present study were adapted from Forceville (1996), with a change regarding the wording. Since Forceville used billboards as materials, the word "billboard" was substituted by "ad." See the original question items in Chapter 2, p. 36. The following are the question items in the present study:

(1) Describe in your own words of this ad.
(2) Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by this ad, and describe point by point the personal feelings and associations about this picture. Please indicate how important you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number.
(3) What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with this ad? If the message in your view has several aspects, please indicate the relative importance of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects to be equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number.
(4) What proof or evidence do you find in this ad to support your ideas about what the advertiser wanted to communicate?

The question items were disseminated into four subparts. Then, in each subpart, four advertisements were presented with an identical question. For instance, in subpart number one, participants would see the first advertisement with question number 1: "Describe in your own words of this ad." Then, what appeared on the next page would be the second advertisement with the same question. Please refer to Appendix B for the complete questionnaire.

<center>Data Collection Procedure</center>

The Taiwanese participants at the three universities (NCCU, NCTU, and NTHU) in Taiwan were contacted by a student representative from each school on the phone. The information about number of participants and available date were reported back to me. Additionally, the representatives and I arranged a locale where computers were available in each campus. Audio-visual classrooms were used in NCCU and NTHU. For participants at NCTU, a graduate students' study room was utilized. The data collection procedures at three universities followed an identical routine despite participants were in disparate locations.

On the data collection day, after making sure each participant was seated and their computers was turned on, I started to introduce myself briefly and thank them for partaking in my research. Then I informed them to click open a Microsoft Word file entitled "questionnaire" which was pre-stored on their computer desktops. They were given some minutes to read the consent form on the first page and to fill in the demographic information. Afterwards, they were told to read the reminders on the instruction page carefully which, if not strictly abided by, would affect the data analysis. Subsequently, participants started to respond to the questionnaire by typing their answers. During the process, I was in the room monitoring the participants. As some of them finished early, they were allowed to leave the room after I made sure they had saved the files. After the last participant finished the questionnaires, I

<center>46</center>

collected their files and ended the visit. The Taiwanese data at the three venues were collected in September and October of 2008.

The research assistant was in charge of collecting data in the United States. She received digital files of the questionnaire two weeks from me before the scheduled data collection date. She was also reminded to check these necessary files and contact the coordinator (a staff member of TESOL program) in the University of Texas at San Antonio for confirmation about participants and locale. The data collection in the United States followed the same procedures as that in Taiwan. The data collection in the U.S. was completed in October of 2008.

<div align="center">Data Analyses</div>

There are three stages in data analyses, and each stage respond to the three research questions respectively. The three stages are (1) analysis of participants' metaphor interpretation performance; (2) analysis of factors behind participants' failure on metaphor interpretation, and (3) analysis of participants' perceptions towards the advertisements. The research assistant was involved in all three stages of analyses. For each stage, the research assistant and I coded both the native and non-native data independently. Upon finishing each stage, we compared and discussed the results as well as the coding problems.

Stage One: Analysis of Participants' Metaphor Interpretation Performance

The first stage of analyses aimed to answer the first research question of the present study: How do the native and non-native speakers of English interpret advertising pictorial metaphors? The coding guidelines were adopted from Forceville's (1996) model of pictorial metaphors, which contains three essential questions for a legitimate pictorial metaphor:

(1) What are the two terms of the metaphor, and how do we know?

(2) Which of the two terms is the primary subject and which is its secondary subject, and how do we know?

(3) Which features are projected from the secondary subject upon the domain of the primary subject, and how do we decide on these features?

<div align="right">(Forceville, 1996, p. 108)</div>

In other words, to successfully identify and interpret a pictorial metaphor, participants' responses should reveal that they have implicitly answered all the above questions. The answers to these three questions can be found in the responses under the 4 question items. The first two questions on the coding guidelines concerning the distinction of the metaphor's primary and secondary subject are related to question item 1 (describe the advertisement), 2 (personal associations), and 3 (advertiser's intention) because participants have to identify and use the two terms to describe the metaphor. As for the last question on the coding scheme, its answer can be retrieved under question item 4 where participants are required to provide evidence for their statement regarding the pictorial metaphor. Forceville (1996) noted that the answers to the three questions in the pictorial metaphor model are very likely to scatter in any of the 4 question items. Following is an example of how we evaluated participants' responses based on the three questions in the coding guidelines. The example is an American participant's response towards MP1A Folgers Coffee:

'This ad is about coffee. I see a cup of coffee with steam coming up from it. I thought of a manhole with steam coming up from it on a busy city street. I would not have made out the words unless they were given to me.'

First of all, this participant immediately identified coffee is the product advertised in this context (primary subject). Next, the participant mentioned the steam (mutual feature) evaporating from the coffee cup and indicated what was actually on

the ground, a manhole (secondary subject). The steam was indeed a mutual feature

shared by a coffee cup (when it contains hot, not cold coffee), and a manhole (where

high-temperature steam coming out from the underground). Therefore, this participant

was verified as a successful metaphor interpreter because he had implicitly answered

the three questions in the coding guidelines: Identifying the primary (coffee cup) and

secondary subject (manhole) plus providing one legitimate mutual feature (steam).

Table 4 and 5 present the metaphorical components in the four advertisements of the

present study. The mutual feature provided here were drawn from real examples.

Table 4

Primary Subject, Secondary Subject, and Mutual Features in MP1 Advertisements

Components	Folgers Coffee	Bic Razor
Primary subject	Coffee mug	Razor
Secondary subject	Manhole cover	Lawn mower
Mutual feature	[+ round shape]	[+cut]

Table 5

Primary Subject, Secondary Subject, and Mutual Features in MP2 Advertisements

Components	IWC Big Pilot Watch	Wonderbra
Primary subject	Watch	Bra
Secondary subject	Bus strap	Woman
Mutual feature	[+tightness]	[+sex]

In addition, Forceville (1996) stated that if a participant's response has already

met the criterion under question item 1 (describe the advertisement), he/she is

regarded as a better metaphor interpreter. Participant A4 is regarded as one of the

better metaphor interpreters in the American group.

Figure 8 presents the sequential process of how we evaluated participants'

responses to answer the first research question: How do the native and non-native

speakers of English interpret advertising pictorial metaphors?

As it can be seen in Figure 8, we would begin the process by examining

participants' responses towards a particular advertisement. The first issue was

concerning the primary and the secondary subject, and the other was regarding mutual

features. After that, we would sort out the number of successful metaphor interpreters

in each group and do a comparison. Lastly, numbers of better metaphor interpreters

would be presented.
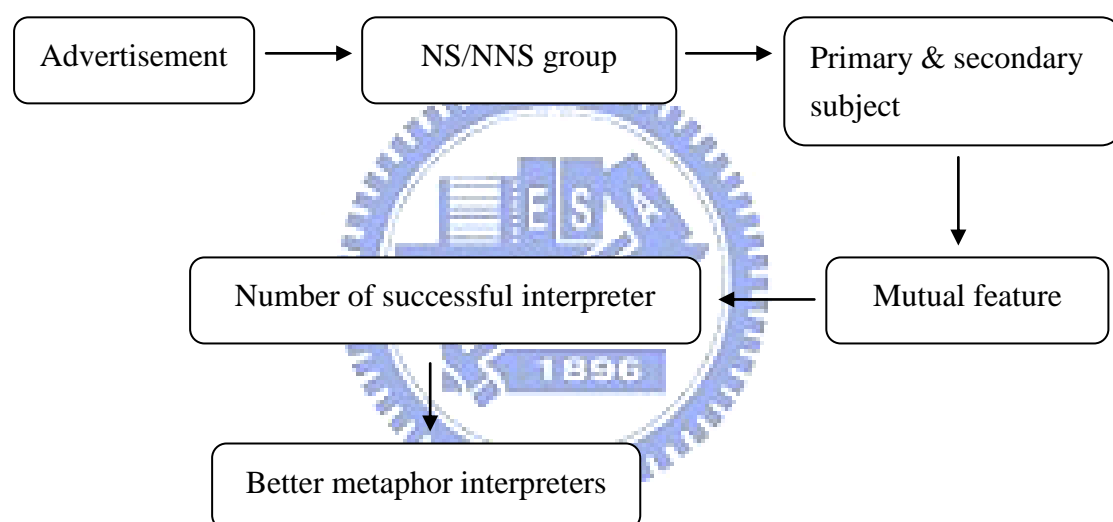
Figure 8. Diagram of analytical procedure for research question one

Stage Two: Factors behind Metaphor Interpretations

Starting from the second stage, we attempted to answer research question 2

(What factors that determine the success of pictorial metaphor interpretations?). The

analytical procedure is similar to that in the previous stage, except there are two

problem analyses added (see Figure 9). The purpose of these two additional analytical

phases is to analyze and discuss what factors might have effects in the metaphor

interpretation process. First of all, after re-examining the primary and secondary

subjects, we would discuss why and how the primary or secondary subjects prevented

the participants from interpreting the pictorial metaphor in problem analysis I.

Following the first problem analysis, we would re-inspect the mutual features in each

advertisement and discuss why some participants failed to indicate at least one mutual

feature.
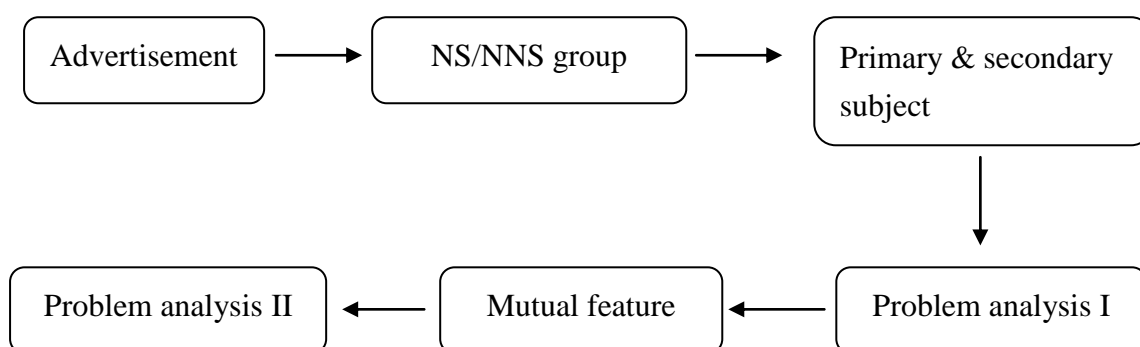
Figure 9. Diagram of analytical procedure for research question two

Stage Three: Analysis of Personal Perspectives towards the Advertisements

In the final stage of the data analyses, we intended to answer the last research

question: How do the native and non-native speakers of English perceive the

advertisements with and without considering advertiser's intention? Since the

participants were asked to comment on their personal associations and advertiser's

intention in question item 2 and 3 of the questionnaire respectively, there are two

analytical phases in this stage.

Personal associations towards the advertisements

Firstly, participants' responses under question item 2 would be categorized into

categories (question item 2 asks participants to ignore the advertiser's intention and

indicate personal associations. However, as noted earlier, response could possibly be

found elsewhere in the questionnaire). An English adjective was used to represent a

particular category. We categorized those responses based on the main idea and key

words. After the responses were sorted out, the categories of a particular

advertisement would be ranked hierarchically based on their quantity. Table 6 presents

an example of how we categorized personal associations.

Table 6

Taiwanese Participants' Personal Associations towards IWC Watch Advertisement

Category (number of occurrence)	Example (participant's code name)
Amusing (16)	'That big razor makes me laugh so hard. Is it possible to have that big razor?' (T2)
Confused (15)	'I can't read this ad. It's not clear.' (T18)
Effective (7)	'This big thing gives me a feeling that it can cut very well.' (T2)
Others (6)	'I like the color of the machine.' (T17) 'The razor is obviously fake.' (T3) 'And the watches are not very stylish…' (T6) 'It seems the hand was tighten by the bus thing.' (T10) 'The ring is used to provide safety for the passengers, so the watch may be trustworthy because it never breaks down.' (T14) 'Maybe the advertiser is thinking that commercial flight travelers are more likely to buy the watch. It may imply that this watch is only for those white-collar people.' (T15)

There are two points regarding Table 6 I need to clarify. First, it is very likely

that one participant had more than one personal association towards the same

advertisement. Thus, as shown in Table 6, one Taiwanese participant (T2) had two

different personal associations. The other point is regarding the categories under the

'Others' department. Following Forceville's (1996) categorization, response with one occurrence is placed under the category of 'Others.' Under this razor advertisement, we found 6 different responses with only one participant and each one expresses different ideas.

Personal perspectives towards advertiser's intention in advertisements

In this phase we analyzed participants' perspectives about what message they thought the advertiser intended to convey in advertisements. The analytical is identical to that. The analytical measure was similar to that in the previous phase (analysis of personal associations), with a minor difference in that those responses would be stratified into themes. The word "theme" refers to "…the features or attributes that participants judged transferable from each metaphor's secondary subject to its primary subject" (Forceville, 1996, p. 177). These themes would be presented with an English noun based on the content of responses. Among the themes within a particular advertisement, there is a dichotomy of implicature: Strong implicature and weak implicature. The force of an implicature is based on its quantitative grounds against other implicature. Table 7 shows the implicatures towards the Bic Razor advertisement from the American group.

Table 7

Strong/Weak Implicatures in Wonderbra Advertisement

Theme (number of occurrence)	Example (participant's code name)
Transformation (13)	'Their bra will change woman to a hottie.' (A11)
Appearance-first (9)	'The advertiser wants to women to pay attention to their outfit and appearance.' (A18)
Others (1)	'Wearing our bra will make you feel carefree (if you are a woman.)' (A19)

In this case, transformation theme is more strongly implicated than appearance-first theme because the former has more participants than that of the latter (13:9). After implicatures were identified, we would compare the results across two groups.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Overview

In this chapter, the results of the present study would be presented and the interpretations of the findings would be discussed. The results would be presented according to the research questions.

The first research question, 'How do the native and non-native speakers of English interpret advertising pictorial metaphors?' number of successful metaphor interpreters in the two groups would be presented and discussed first. And then, among those who successfully interpreted the pictorial metaphors, I would present the number of better metaphor interpreters.

To answer the second research question, 'What factors that determine the success of pictorial metaphor interpretations?' I went beyond the number of successful metaphor interpreters in the two groups and discuss the possible factors that might determine the metaphor interpretation process in terms of the primary subject, the secondary subject, mutual features, and other socio-cultural viewpoints.

As for the last research question, 'How do the native and non-native speakers of English perceive the advertisements with and without considering advertiser's intention?' participants' personal associations and perspectives of advertiser's intention towards the advertisements would be presented and discussed.

RQ1: How Do the Native and Non-Native Speakers of English Interpret Advertising

Pictorial Metaphors?

As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, to be a successful metaphor interpreter one has to identify the primary and secondary subject, as well as indicate at least one mutual feature. For example, there are 6 American and 5 Taiwanese successful interpreters under the IWC Watch advertisement. That meant from those 11

participants' responses, we found descriptions of the primary subject (watch), secondary subject (bus strap), and at least one mutual feature. Table 8 presents the numbers of participants from both groups who successfully identified pictorial metaphors in the four advertisements. The inter-rater reliability was 92.5%. The numbers reveal that the most difficult advertisement (IWC Watch) and the easiest one (Wonderbra) all belong to MP2 type.

Table 8

Numbers of Successful Metaphor Interpreters in American and Taiwanese Group

Participants/ Advertisement	MP1A (coffee)	MP1B (razor)	MP2A (watch)	MP2B (bra)
Number of American successful interpreter	68 % (15)	53% (8)	54% (6)	51% (20)
Number of Taiwanese successful interpreter	32% (7)	47% (7)	46% (5)	49% (19)
Total	100% (22)	100% (15)	100% (11)	100% (39)

Based on the percentages and numbers in Table 8, the American participants performed better in every advertisement than their Taiwanese counterparts did. However, for successful interpreters of MP1B, MP2A, and MP2B, there was only a slim disparity. In other words, the real difference falls on MP1A where the number of American successful interpreters is nearly twice as many as that of the Taiwanese.

Better Metaphor Interpreters

As previously stated in Chapter 3, the participant who indicates the primary subject, secondary subject, and at least one feature immediately under question item 1 is regarded as a better metaphor interpreter. Table 9 provides the numbers of better metaphor interpreters of the four advertisements. We sorted out the number of better metaphor interpreters in each advertisement and compare them with the data in Table

8. Therefore, the number before the slash (/) refers to the better metaphor interpreters, and the number behind the slash is the total number of successful interpreters. For instance, look at the numbers under Bic Razor advertisement. Although there is one more successful metaphor interpreters in the American group, there are an equal number of better metaphor interpreters (5) in each group. That entails in the Bic Razor advertisement, the percentage of better metaphor interpreters in the Taiwanese group is higher than that in the American group (71% vs. 63%). The inter-rater reliability in this analytical phase reached 97.9%. The number of better metaphor interpreters offers a deeper look into the participants' performance. That is, not only did the Americans have a better overall performance, but they were more keenly attuned to the elements in the advertisements.

Table 9

Better Metaphor Interpreters in Four Advertisements

Group/ Advertisement	Folgers Coffee	Bic Razor	IWC Watch	Wonderbra
American	53% (8/15)	63% (5/8)	50% (3/6)	85% (17/20)
Taiwanese	29% (2/7)	71% (5/7)	20% (1/5)	68% (13/19)

The following example is cited from an American participant who responded to Wonderbra:

'So women who want to attract men, and not closet homosexuals want their breasts to look like the ones in the ad, so many of them will put pads in their bras and some of them will buy Wonderbra.' (A16)

In the above response, the participant pointed out the primary subject is the bra (in the last line), and indicated it is 'women' (secondary subject) who would purchase

and wear Wonderbra. As for the mutual feature, 'attractiveness' was the shared

attribute between the woman and the bra (they are both good-looking).

RQ2: What Factors That Determine the Success of Pictorial Metaphor Interpretations?

From the results presented in the previous section, we have answered the first

research question; that is, the native speakers had a better performance in interpreting

pictorial metaphors than their counterparts. Starting from this section, we would go

strive to answer research question two. Namely, we would go beyond the numbers

and illustrate what hurdles had kept the American and Taiwanese participants from

interpreting the pictorial metaphors. The first issue dealt here was the primary and the

secondary subject.

Problem Analysis I: Issue of Primary and Secondary Subject

According to our analyses, the main barricade to interpret the pictorial

metaphors lies in the fact that the participants were either aware of the secondary

subject or they employed problematic English vocabulary to refer to the secondary

subject (e.g., Some Taiwanese participants used 'weeder' to refer to 'lawn mower' in

the Bic Razor advertisement). For the Americans who failed the task, they did not

discern the secondary subject (e.g., Some Americans did not mention the secondary

subject 'bus strap' in the IWC Watch advertisement). For the Taiwanese who failed

the task, some ignored the secondary subject while others used problematic words

while referring to the secondary subject. In other words, the lack of lexical

competence might be the reason that made it more difficult for the non-native

speakers of English to tackle the pictorial metaphors.

In each advertisement, we found participants from both groups used a variety of

English nouns to refer to the secondary subject, as shown in Table 10. The inter-rater

liability reached 100%.

Table 10

Numbers of Nouns Used for Secondary Subject in the Four Advertisements

Group/ Advertisement	Folgers Coffee	Bic Razor	IWC Watch	Wonderbra
American	7	2	4	2
Taiwanese	6	4	5	2

As mentioned earlier, controversies regarding vocabulary rose while the Taiwanese participants used unexpected English nouns to refer to the secondary subject. This controversy was found in Bic Razor and IWC Watch advertisement. In the next section, I would present and discuss those various nouns for the secondary subjects in the four advertisements, with a focus on Bic Razor and IWC Watch advertisements.

MP1 A: Folgers Coffee

In this coffee advertisement where a coffee mug is placed on the ground, the missing secondary subject is actually a manhole cover. As shown in Table 11, there is a similarity among the various secondary subject names used by the two groups, and they are all related to the concept of sewage. Therefore, these alternative names were regarded by the raters as being eligible. The inter-rater reliability reached 100%. The following example contains both manhole and sewage:

'Advertiser wants the passers by to stop and notice that this is not a manhole spewing sewage but a cup of coffee courtesy Folgers.' (A11)

As a matter of fact, most of the successful metaphor interpreters did not adopt our expected word "manhole cover' while they were addressing the secondary subject. As raters, we could not judge whether 'manhole cover' exists in the mental lexicon of those who associated the advertisement with these words. Nevertheless, they

employed vocabulary semantically similar to the idea of manhole cover, such as 'sewage lid' in the following example.

'The coffee cup is actually taking the place of a sewage lid.' (T16)

Table 11

Variety of Secondary Subject Names for the Folgers Coffee Advertisement

Secondary subject / Group	American	Taiwanese
Expected word	manhole cover	manhole cover
Varieties (number of occurrence)	sewer cover (1), sewer (1), sewage line (1), sewage (1), underground venting system (1), underground system (1), manhole (2)	Lid (1), manhole (1), sewage lid (1), sewer (1), lid of underground water (1), lid of underground passage (2)
Controversial word choice	none	none

For those who did not mention the secondary subject, they were either completely unaware of it or on the verge to identify it. In other words, they had detected something unnatural about the coffee mug, but were unable to explain what went wrong. The following is a typical instance of this kind:

'I don't think it is legal to print advertisements on the road, so it may be considered guerrilla marketing. The steal that appears to be rising may come from a subway below, so I think it is an "intelligent" ad to make use of the environment.' (A17)

This participant had the awareness of the uncanny coffee mug, stating that this had something to do with the subway. However, he went no further to describe what the eccentricity was but commented on the advertiser's intelligence instead.

MP1B: Bic Razor

Like the Folgers Coffee advertisement, the secondary subject in this razor advertisement is missing and has to be retrieved. With the grass as a hint, we can tell that a lawn mower is replaced by the razor in the advertisement. The participant in the following example successfully pointed out the razor and the lawn mower.

'The larger-than-life razor actually stands for a lawn mower because the razor in the picture is cutting grass.' (A18)

However, only a few participants (8 Americans and 7 Taiwanese participants) were able to explicitly recover the missing lawn mower. In addition, 4 Taiwanese participants used the word 'weeder' to refer to the secondary subject.

Table 12 presents the various words the participants used for the lawn mower. The instance from participant A18 shown earlier is the only response in the American group where the noun phrase 'lawn mower' was found. The inter-rater ability reached 89.2 %.
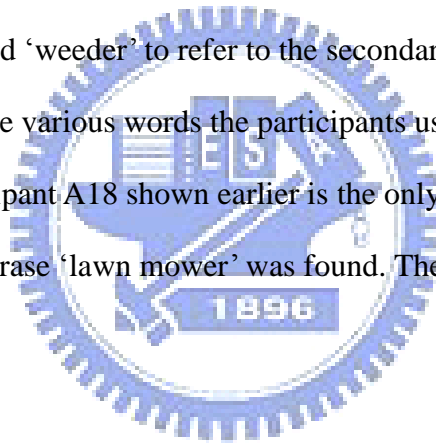
Table 12

Variety of Secondary Subject Names for the Bic Razor Advertisement

Secondary subject/ Group	American	Taiwanese
Expected word	lawn mower	lawn mower
Varieties (number of occurrence)	Mow (7), lawn mower (1)	Weed (2), weeder (2), lawn mower (2), mower (1)
Controversial word choice	None	weed, weeder

In other words, the other 7 Americans did not explicitly use the noun 'lawn mower' to refer to the missing secondary subject. In the following example, the expression 'lawn mower' was not found; however, we determined that the participant

must have had the awareness of the lawn mower, otherwise the verb 'mow' would not

have appeared.

'The BIC razor is so powerful that it can mow the wild grasses growing in a field.   –

imagine what it can do for your body.' (A11)

Therefore, either the verb 'mow' or the expression 'lawn mower' would prove

that the missing secondary subject had been retrieved.

Figure 10. Weeder
Picture from
http://www.shopelectriclawnmowers.com/im/86/uproot_lawn_weeder.jpg

Figure 11. Lawn mower
Picture from
http://www.lakewoodconferences.com/direct/dbimage/50161374/Lawn_Mower__
SE_BC01_.jpg

The same phenomenon also occurred among the 7 Taiwanese participants. However, it was surprising to find that instead of using the verb 'mow' or the noun phrase 'lawn mower,' some Taiwanese participants used 'weed' and 'weeder.' Upon encountering these variants, I consulted the research assistant who is an American and other English native speakers for verification. Actually, there is a gardening tool called weeder which is used to remove weeds in the garden, and the verb 'weed' literally means the act of removing weeds. However, although a weeder (Figure 10) and a lawn mower (Figure 11) have the similar function of removing overgrown grass, a weeder is used in a small territory like a garden. So in this case, a lawn mower is more suitable than a weeder. The following example is a response from one of the Taiwanese participants who used 'weed' and 'weeder'.

'Is that a weeder or a razor? I think they look alike and they have the similar function, that is, to make the surface clean and smooth. Weeding the grass is like shaving men's beard off.' (T9)
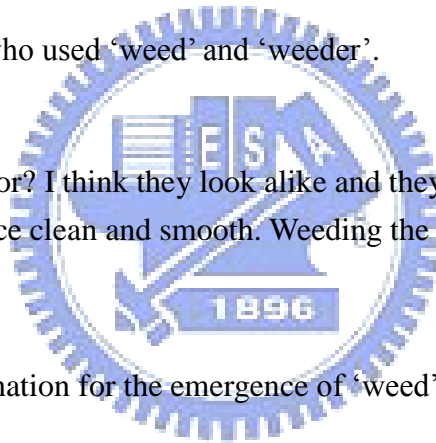
The probable explanation for the emergence of 'weed' and 'weeder,' might be the lack of the words 'lawn mower' in the participants' lexicons. It is possible that those participants derived 'weeder' from its root word 'weed' (as in 'teach' to 'teacher'), without knowing the device's specific uses. It is also questionable that they know what a weeder looks like in real life. Despite the fact that they misused the word 'weeder' in this context, we had reached an agreement that their descriptions were eligible since they recognized that the razor perform the job of cutting grass.

MP2A: IWC Watch

Similarly, the secondary subject in this watch advertisement was not noticed by most of the participants, although it was only partially invisible. This watch advertisement is also the one where a large variety of secondary subject names were

unearthed, as shown in Table 13. The inter-rater reliability reached 92%. As usual, we would inspect the varieties in the American group first.

Among the 6 American successful interpreters, 3 of them used 'strap,' and the other 3 chose 'grip,' 'hand grip,' and 'hand things' which all make perfect sense except the last one 'hand thing' :

'Everyone uses those hand things when standing on a bus so that 'type' will fit everyone.' (A13)

Though this participant did not use an exact word or phrase to indicate the secondary subject, it is certain that he knew what those 'hand things' are for. Thus, 'hand things' is an acceptable synonym for the bus strap.

Table 13

Variety of Secondary Subject Names for the IWC Big Pilot Watch Advertisement

Secondary subject/ Group	American	Taiwanese
Expected word	bus strap	bus strap
Varieties (number of occurrence)	Strap (3), hand grabs (1), hand things (1), grip (1)	Strap (1), belt (1), ring (1), loop (1), hanger (1)
Controversial word choice	none	belt, ring, loop, hanger

On the Taiwanese side, 5 Taiwanese participants used different words or phrases to describe the secondary subject. Following are examples containing 'belt,' 'strap,' 'ring,' 'loop,' and 'hanger' sequentially.

'It's clear that the *belt* is associated with the watch, which the ad conveys.' (T3)
'Looking at the hand holding the strap makes me think of that the *strap* of the watch is tough and can endure for a long time.' (T5)
'Because the watch is in the shape of the *ring* in the public transportation, it seems

that the company aims to offer a brand that almost everyone can afford to buy.' (T14)

'The Watch make me though of the *loop* on the bus……' (T17)

'The preciseness provided by the watch is like a *hanger*…..' (T20)

These varieties instantly caused a conflict between the research assistant and me. I checked the meanings of those four words (ring, loop, hanger, and belt) in a number of reliable paperback dictionaries to see if they can fit in this watch context. The results showed that those four words can be used in assorted contexts, I then consulted with the research assistant and 7 other English native speakers for further discussions. A majority of the native resources I consulted confirmed that using these four words as synonyms for the bus strap is viable, though a majority of them expressed that their first choice would be bus strap. Their first choice (also mine) on bus strap is totally explicable, because in this advertisement, when describing the watch has become part of the bus strap, you are also indicating both subjects have 'straps.' In other words, the rationale for the advertiser of this advertisement to combine these two subjects together is the fact that they both have straps made of either plastic or leather. What's more, the object that connect the watch face and wrap around the wrist by clipping can be only described as either 'watch strap' or 'watch band', according to the native speakers I consulted (oftentimes, a watch strap entails that it is made from either leather or metal, while the material for a watch band is plastic). Thus, if participants used other words to refer to the watch – loop watch, hanger watch, belt watch, and ring watch- the meaning would be completely different.

Figure 12. Loop watch

Image from:
http://lh3.ggpht.com/_a4Z5Kj2H-8A/SLk09QE8DLI/AAAAAAAAAnM/MZ0l7y FCgbY/138+Belt+loop+watch.jpg

Figure 13. Hanger watch

Image from: **http://cdn.overstock.com/images/products/L10791887.jpg**

Both loop watch and hanger watch belong to a watch type called 'belt watch' which people can dangle onto their belt by using the steel clip (see Figure 12 and Figure 13 above). Therefore, the word 'loop' and 'hanger' when put in the context of watch wearing literally means the clasp device.

Figure 14. Ring watch

Image from:

http://www.gizmodude.com/2007/11/16/entry_images/1107/16/digitus%20watch%20ring%20charles%20windlin.jpg

An example of the ring watch is shown in Figure 14. It usually refers to a tiny electric watch which people are able to wear like a ring.

Although those 5 Taiwanese participants employed problematic English nouns as the secondary subject, we believe they realized what the secondary subject was in the advertisement. In other words, they understood the metaphor but failed to use proper English words in this context.

Besides those assorted English nouns of the secondary subject, the primary subject is also an issue in this watch advertisement. Unlike other advertisements in the present study, there are 11 Taiwanese participants did not even indicate the primary subject in this advertisement which meant they were not aware of what product was advertised in this advertisement.

MP2B: Wonderbra

Unlike the other 3 advertisements, there was no controversy or problem in terms of the secondary subject for this advertisement. The participants used either 'woman' or 'model' in their descriptions, as shown in Table 14. The inter-rater reliability reached 100%.

Table 14

Variety of Secondary Subject Names for the Wonderbra Advertisement

Secondary subject/Group	American	Taiwanese
Expected word	women	women
Varieties (number of occurrence)	Model (7), woman (13)	Model (2), woman (17)
Controversial word choice	none	none

Problem Analysis II: Issue of Mutual Features

The mutual feature in a pictorial metaphor refers to the attribute shared by the primary and the secondary subject. The number of mutual features could be as many as possible, and it depends on how well the participants interpreted the metaphor. In the present study, failing to realize the mutual features is another blockage for participants to decode the hidden metaphors, although it is a smaller issue compared to the secondary subject. In each advertisement, we found a number of participants who offered either no or invalid mutual features, as presented in Table 15. The inter-rater reliability reached 99.3%.

Table 15

Numbers of Participants Who Failed to Provide Mutual Features

Group/Ad	Folgers Coffee	Bic Razor	IWC Watch	Wonderbra
American	2	6	8	0
Taiwanese	4	8	8	1

In these four advertisements, those who missed mutual features or proffered invalid features also failed to indicate the secondary subject. The following is an example from the IWC Watch advertisement where no mutual feature was found.

'I see a man holding onto a band to help his balance as he stands and gets a good look at "The Big Pilot Watch".' (T4)

Participant T4 clearly pointed out the two subjects but no feature was found throughout her questionnaire. Another example is where an illegitimate feature occurred:

'Both the coffee and the sewage lid drew people's attention.' (A10)

Drawing attention from the crowd was obviously not a shared feature between the coffee mug and the manhole cover. Another participant offered a valid feature which is the steam under Folgers Coffee:

'The manhole has hot steam, just like the hot coffee.' (A19)

In totality, the results show that 65 out of 78 Taiwanese and American participants (83%) who were unable to indicate at least one mutual feature within a metaphor.
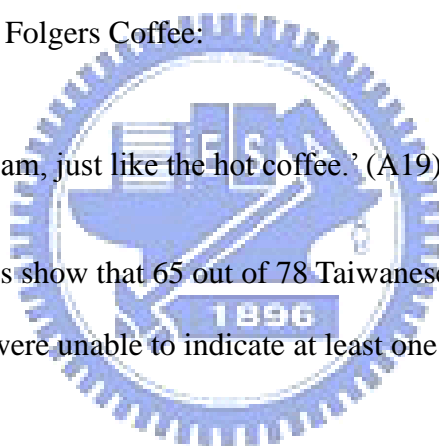
Possible Factors behind Interpreting Pictorial Metaphors

So far, on one hand, we have learned that the American participants had a better performance in interpreting pictorial metaphors than the Taiwanese participants. On the other hand, from the two problem analyses, we realized that some Taiwanese participants had difficulty finding proper English words to refer to the secondary subjects in the Bic Razor and IWC Watch advertisement. Overall, the key for the American and Taiwanese participants to successfully interpret the pictorial metaphors is the secondary subject. However, we were curious to find out what factors might prevent the American and Taiwanese participants from understanding and describing the pictorial metaphors in the present study. In the following paragraphs, we would

look at these four pictorial metaphors of the present study in terms of awareness of context and differential concerns and interest.

Awareness of context

We as human beings are attuned to the world most of the time; however, we are not always conscious of what we are doing. We are dwelling in the world, and we are not always aware that the world is shaping our thoughts and actions. I would discuss how the physical environment and social context might impact on metaphors in the following paragraphs.

First of all, there are differences in the physical environment in which people live, and because people are mostly unconsciously attuned to these differences, the metaphors that people use in their languages also vary. Each language grows in its surrounding geography, landscape, dwellings, and so forth, which entails the metaphors of a particular language are developed by the speakers who speak the language. In the present study, the first language of the participants is different. While the participants in the United States speak American English as the first language, Mandarin Chinese is the mother tongue for the Taiwanese participants. Kövecses (2007) mentioned that the linguistic difference (i.e. the inner structure of language) is one reason that makes a metaphor hard to be comprehended at the cross-cultural level. Therefore, due to the language disparity, the construct of Chinese and English metaphors could be very different, which could account for the fact that the Taiwanese participants did not interpret the pictorial metaphors as well as their American counterparts did.

Not only the physical but also the social environment can exert and influence on the kinds of metaphors we have in a language. Social issues may have some impact on metaphors, such as social pressure (Emanatian, 1995). The Wonderbra is a good example where its feminist issues can be regarded as a certain 'social pressure' for

people, not just for females. The feminist issues were discussed in both American and Taiwanese participants' responses, and there is only one participant (Taiwanese) who failed to understand this advertisement. In other words, if an advertisement contains a metaphor that could stir a familiar or popular social issue, the probability of successfully interpreting the hidden metaphor could be higher. The research assistant and I are not sure about if there is also a social issue in other three advertisements, so we only discussed Wonderbra in terms of the social context here.

Different concerns and interests

The differential concerns and interests that societies, groups, or individuals may have also have an impact on the kinds of metaphors people use and how other people interpret the metaphors. I would discuss the concerns and interests at the societal and individual level.

An entire society may be characterized by certain concerns and interests. In the American society, for example, if one has a front yard as part of the property, he or she is expected to tend the grass on a regular basis. Once the front yard is strewn with overgrown weed, the property owner could be fined by the government. Thus, this is the social concern regarding front yard in the United States. However, in Taiwan or in other places around the world, the same social concern is not often heard. Moreover, in order to tend grass, a lawn mower is often used. In the Bic Razor advertisement, a number of Taiwanese participants use 'weeder' instead of 'lawn mower' to refer to the secondary subject. Previously, the research assistant and I arrived at a tentative conclusion, which is that those who used 'weeder' might not have 'lawn mower' in their mental lexicons. By considering the social concern of tending grass in the American society, the reason for those Taiwanese participants who used 'weeder' might be that they are not familiar with the grass-tending act in the American society.

Personal concerns and interests also often influence the understanding of

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metaphors. Perhaps the situations in Folgers Coffee and IWC Watch advertisement could be best explained in terms of personal concerns and interests.

Coffee-drinking is an important cultural aspect in the western world. In contrast, a number of Asian countries such as Taiwan have tea as their traditional beverage, although the number of coffee drinkers has been prospering these days. Since the coffee culture spreads fast, worldly-chained coffee shops like Starbucks can be seen in Taiwan. However, there are some local or national coffee brands in the American that we Taiwanese never heard of. Folgers is one of them. Folgers is a common coffee brand known for its wide availability and low price in America. People are able to afford Folgers and it can be purchased at grocery stores and supermarkets. For Taiwanese participants, I would boldly assume that most of them have never heard of Folgers, not to mention it is a coffee brand. Nevertheless, the factor is not only about the unfamiliar coffee brand, but the secondary subject manhole cover. In this coffee advertisement, Folgers Coffee is projected as a manhole cover. We thought the combination of coffee-manhole immediately baffled most the Taiwanese but not the American. Although this combination seemed unusual and archaic, most American participants were able to point out the manhole cover as the secondary subject and relate the manhole cover to Folgers. As for the Taiwanese, they might also be aware of the manhole cover. However, only 7 of them successfully interpreted this advertisement.

The watch advertisement could also be explained in terms of personal interests or concerns. That is, wearing a watch and taking a bus totally depends on one's experience. One might know the brand IWC which is a world-famous watch maker, but he or she doest not wear a watch. Taking a bus is also a personal experience because not everyone in this world needs to take a bus as the traffic tool. Therefore, when participants who did not have any experiences in wearing watches or taking

buses were facing the watch and bus strap combination, the unfamiliarity in personal experiences might prevent them from interpreting this metaphor.

In sum, the factors that might have impact on interpreting metaphors could involve physical environment (structural difference of metaphors), social context (social issues and social pressure), societal concerns and interests (social norm), and individual concerns and interests (personal experiences).

RQ3: How Do the Native and Non-Native Speakers of English Perceive the

Advertisements With and Without Considering Advertiser's Intention?

In order to answer research question three, we examined participants' perspectives towards in terms of their personal associations and viewpoints towards the advertiser's intention. The results show that the American and Taiwanese participants shared some common perspectives in all four advertisements, although they came from different cultural backgrounds. I would present the results of participants' personal associations according to the four advertisements first before proceeding to show the results of the perspectives towards advertiser's intention.
Personal Associations towards the Advertisements

MP1 A: Folgers Coffee

Table 16 presents the participants' feelings towards the coffee advertisement. The inter-rater reliability reached 97.8%. First of all, in the American group, 16 participants detested the coffee for its seemingly stinky odor.

'…it is not appealing nor does it make you want to drink the coffee. And it smells really bad…' (A10)

Fourteen Americans and 6 Taiwanese thought the coffee was not clean:

'Dirty – that coffee looks like shitty water to me.' (A16)

Seven American and 11 Taiwanese participants found this coffee advertisement creative. However, none of the Americans further stated why they thought it was being creative. On the other hand, a few Taiwanese provided explanations for the advertisement's creativity:
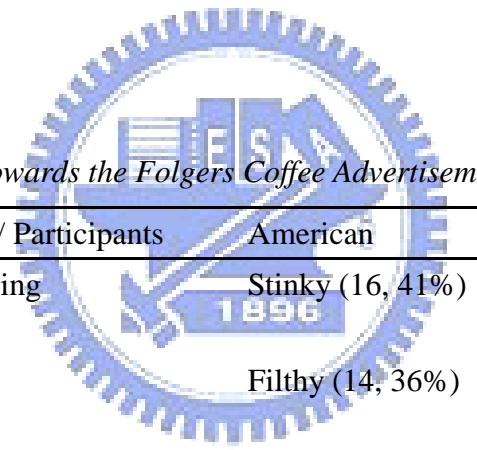
'This ad is creative. No one would consider the sidewalk or the ground surface a good place for posting ads.' (T15)

14 Taiwanese were attracted by the coffee mug:

'The stream which comes out of the coffee attracts me, I would consider why there is a smoke there.' (T2)

Table 16

Personal Associations towards the Folgers Coffee Advertisement

Rankings of perceptions/ Participants	American	Taiwanese
The most prominent feeling	Stinky (16, 41%)	Attractive (14, 39%)
The second most	Filthy (14, 36%)	Creative (11, 31%)
The third most	Creative (7, 18%)	Filthy (6, 16%)
Others	Others (2, 5%)	Others (5, 14%)
Total	39 (1005)	36 (100%)

The reasons for a majority of Americans to regard Folgers Coffee as being foul-smelling and unsanitary is obvious; that is, the coffee mug occupies the place where a manhole cover should be, and what is under the manhole cover is usually something people would avoid deliberately. Their negative feelings towards this advertisement corroborate the fact that most of them successfully uncovered the secondary subject.

While most of the Americans associate Folgers Coffee advertisement with the notion of filth, only few Taiwanese share the same view. Our interpretation is that most of the Taiwanese participants were not aware of the manhole cover. Consequently, their comments were centered on the topics such as attraction and creativity.

Besides, we also found some responses have only one occurrence amongst the American and Taiwanese group, and we located them in the category of 'Others' such as the following two instances where participants felt 'warm' and 'redolent.'

'The sizzling steam sort of warms me up.' (A12)
'The smell would make me want a cup of coffee.' (A13)

MP1B: Bic Razor

Table 17 contains information about the personal associations towards the razor advertisement. The inter-rater reliability reached 93.6%.

As shown in Table 17, a total number of 20 American and Taiwanese participants regarded the razor advertisement as effective. Some of them elaborated on its effectiveness while others did not provide any specific reasons.

'The razor is very sharp and cuts cleanly through the toughest stubble' (A15)
'I thought this was a very clever way to show how effective the razor is.' (A9)

De facto, responses related to efficiency were regarded as being invalid under question 2 in the first place. The purpose of statement in question 2 is asking participants to describe their personal feelings without considering the advertiser's intention. Thus, the participants were supposed to compose how they felt about the Bic Razor advertisement. However, instead of doing so, they commented on the

advertiser's intention.

Table 17

Personal Associations towards the Bic Razor Advertisement

Rankings of perceptions/ Participants	American	Taiwanese
The most prominent feeling	Effective (13, 40%)	Amusing (16, 36%)
The second most	Comfortable (10, 31%)	Confused (15, 34%)
The third most	Amusing (8, 25%)	Effective (7, 16%)
Others	Others (1, 4%)	Others (6, 14%)
Total	32 (100%)	44 (100%)

Another two positive feelings were uncovered among the responses. Ten

Americans indicated that Bic Razor along with the background (which is a

mountainous scene) made them feel comfortable.

'The sky and grass scene is relaxing and makes me feel calm.' (A3)

8 Americans and 16 Taiwanese were amused, mainly because of the

larger-than-life razor and the mowed lawn:

'This ad is hilarious! I've never seen a razor ad like this….so BIG! I can imagine how

large its blade is!' (A19)

Nevertheless, a large number of Taiwanese were befuddled by the advertisement.

The following excerpt explains about the confusion:

'Actually, I can't figure out what the white board is and the relation between the white

board and the razor.' (T14)

Their perplexity directly connects the fact that only a small number of Taiwanese (7) successfully interpreted this razor metaphor. Similarly, there are just 8 participants in the American group. Unexpectedly, we only found 5 cases of confusion in the American group. It turns out that most of the Americans, though did not have a clue in identifying this razor metaphor, somehow managed to describe their personal feelings without being puzzled.

As for the responses in 'Others' category, there is one riveting instance from the American pool.

'Insulted – is my facial hair as dirty, unkempt and green as that field?' (A16)

From the descriptions, this participant did not appreciate the grass-hair insinuation. The Taiwanese responses in 'Others' are mainly comments on the advertisement itself.

MP2 A: IWC Watch

A large number of the Americans and Taiwanese participants were baffled by the name 'Big Pilot,' thus the confusion had blocked further thoughts on the advertisement (see Table 18). The inter-rater reliability reached 97.1%. The following responses are from a Taiwanese and an American participant:

'This may relate well to a pilot but it doesn't relate well to a non-pilot. It is not clear what the pilot's plans are or how he would use the watch.' (A10)
'I don't know why the name of the watch is Big Pilot? I really have no idea what's happening in the picture…' (T7)

Among those with confusion, many of them also blame the advertisement as being foolish:

'Felt silly... even though you could "try on" the watch, it doesn't really sell the product to me.' (A8)

Table 18

Personal Associations towards the IWC Watch Advertisement

Rankings of perceptions/ Participants	American	Taiwanese
The most prominent feeling	Confused (15, 42%)	Confused (17, 39%)
The second most	Foolish (12, 34%)	Foolish (13, 30%)
The third most	Creative (4, 12%)	Creative (7, 16%)
Others	Others (4, 12%)	Others (6, 15%)
Total	35 (100%)	43 (100%)

Once again we found that participants made comments on the advertiser's intention while describing their feelings. Also, we found that when participants did not follow what question 2 required them to answer, the probability of failing the advertisement is higher. In other words, for those participants with confusion and foolishness towards this watch advertisement, nearly 90 percent of them (50 out of 57) failed to interpret the metaphor.

In general, participants did not appreciate the watch advertisement because it baffled them and they regarded the advertisement as being foolish. Only a small number of participants from both groups (4 Americans and 7 Taiwanese participants) regard this advertisement as being creative.

'It's a creative idea to combine watch and bus strap. I never thought of that before.' (A17)

Nevertheless, very few of them offered clear descriptions about why they

thought it was creative.

The responses in 'Others' category show a great variety. In the American group, some of them described that the advertisement made them feel crowded because it is a bus scene.

'I hate taking bus, because it always made me feel so crowded.' (A16)

Some wrote about a sense of protection and durability.

'Because the way the hand hanging onto the straps, I felt protected. Also the straps seem to be able to hold a lot of weight.' (A9)

Others wrote that the watch was not easy to be noticed:

'It's hard for people to notice the watch on the bus.' (A12)

On the other side, some Taiwanese commented on the watch and said its style was outmoded thus unworthy of purchase:

'And the watches are not very stylish…' (T6)

Some felt uncomfortable because the watch seemed to tighten the hand;

'It seems the hand was tighten by the bus thing.' (T10)

Some mentioned a feeling of safety because the hand was holding onto the bus strap:

'The ring is used to provide safety for the passengers, so the watch may be trustworthy because it never breaks down.' (T14)

One of them expressed appreciation towards the watch for it is a perfect gizmo for white-collar people:

'Maybe the advertiser is thinking that commercial flight travelers are more likely to buy the watch. It may imply that this watch is only for those white-collar people.' (T15)

Others thought the watch was fashionable.

'Watch is a symbol of fashion, leading you to a new level.' (T19)

MP2B: Wonderbra

Once again, the Americans and Taiwanese provide similar associations with a minor disparity in ranking in the Wonderbra advertisement as shown in Table 19. The inter-rater reliability reached 98.1%.

As shown in Table 19, both of the participants in the two groups regard the Wonderbra advertisement as being degrading (19 Americans and 14 Taiwanese):

'I am disgusted. I feel like this ad is demeaning and plays off a woman's body. Why would a woman want to convey that she's an airhead?' (A8)
'This is not moral. It conveys a message that women can deal with everything only with their outer beauty.' (T15)

Interestingly, we found some male participants from both groups held the same perspective as their female counterparts did, like A8's instance above.

Table 19

Personal Associations towards the Wonderbra Advertisement

| Rankings of perceptions/ Participants	American	Taiwanese
The most prominent feeling	Degrading (15, 41%)	Degrading (17, 39%)
The second most	Attractive (12, 33%)	Impressive (13. 30%)
The third most	Impressive (4, 11%)	Attractive (7, 16%)
Others	Others (5, 15%)	Others (6, 15%)
Total	36 (100%)	43 (100%)

Other than vilifying the advertisement, some participants stated that they were impressed or attracted to see an advertisement of this sort. Among them, there were also males and females.

'A beautiful lady attracts people to look at her first. Big breasts attract people to pay attention to them.' (A12)
'For lack of a better word, I would not go as far as saying I am shocked but if the advertiser is looking to urge that type of feeling to the viewer, they are certainly doing a good job.' (A14)

Comments belonged to the category of "Others" are also interesting. I would just name a few because some of them were overlapping. An American felt irritated because of the slogan yet could not help feel jealous at the same time:
'1. Irritated. 2. Jealous.' (A3)
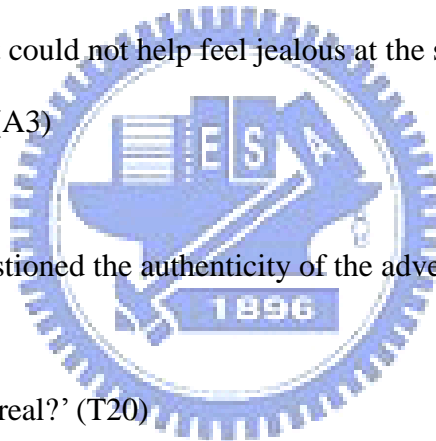
One Taiwanese questioned the authenticity of the advertisement:

'Could ad of this sort be real?' (T20)

Others issued a warning to other viewers about being manipulated:
'The second most prominent feeling I get is that I am being manipulated into looking at this ad so that I will buy it or encourage women to buy it.' (A1)

Personal Perspectives towards Advertiser's Intention in Advertisements

Different from the personal associations, participants' responses directly addressed the advertiser's intention. The analytical process and presentation format below followed that used in the analysis of personal associations, except that we used an English noun to stand for a particular theme.

Once again, we found participants from the two groups harbored disparate, yet

sometimes similar views across the four advertisements.

Folgers Coffee is manhole cover

Table 20 reveals the implicatures from the two groups. The most strongly

implicated theme in the American group is 'empowerment,' followed by

'omnipresence,' 'aroma,' and 'warmth.' The inter-rater reliability reached 100%.

Table 20

Strong/Weak implicatures in the Folgers Coffee Advertisement

American	Taiwanese
1. Empowerment (8, 30%)	1. Warmth (10, 43%)
2. Omnipresence (6, 21%)	2. Omnipresence (7, 30%)
3. Aroma (6, 21%)	3. Empowerment (4, 18%)
4. Warmth (4, 14%)	4. Others (2, 9%)
5. Others (4, 14%)	
Total: 28 (100%)	Total: 23 (100%)

In the American group, empowerment theme is the most strongly implicated

advertiser's message. No matter how the Americans deprecated the coffee's hygiene,

8 of them still thought the advertiser was conveying the message that their coffee

could rejuvenate people who drink it. Four Taiwanese also agreed on the

empowerment brought by Folgers.

'The advertiser wanted people of a busy city to wake up and drink Folgers.' (A5)
'It conveys the coffee helps keep awake.' (T3)

The omnipresence and the aroma theme both have 6 responses from the

participants. The omnipresence theme is more strongly implicated than the aroma

theme because the former received higher ranks from the participants. Omnipresence

theme was also found among 7 Taiwanese responses.

Omnipresence theme

'Coffee is easily accessible.' (A2)

'I think the advertiser tries to say that this brand of coffee is easy to get in everyone's life.' (T5)
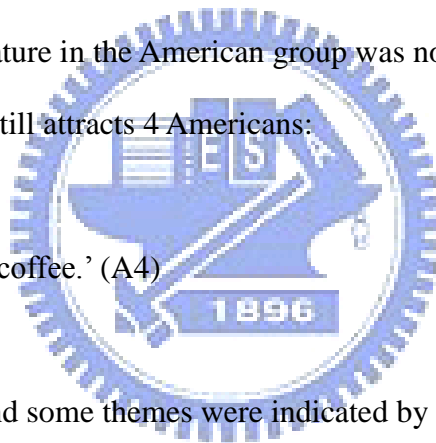
Aroma theme

'Aroma of the coffee.' (A3)

Meanwhile, the warmth of the coffee is the strongest implicature in the Taiwanese group.

'The smoke makes people want to have a cup of coffee especially in cold winter.' (T4)

The warmth implicature in the American group was not as strong as in the Taiwanese group, but it still attracts 4 Americans:

'Warm satisfying cup of coffee.' (A4)

In addition, we found some themes were indicated by only 1 participant in each group. In the American group, there were also two responses which we could not place them under any category, because they did not state any advertiser's purpose.

Humor theme

'Folgers has a sense of humor.' (A11)

Freshness theme

'Freshness.' (A15)

Unidentified themes

'Drank the coffee.' (A12)

'Their coffee brand is the best for everyone.' (A13)

In the Taiwanese group, two additional themes were established; however, we were unable to comprehend their stances fully since no elaborations were made.

Impression theme
'I think may want the consumers who have the impression about their brand.' (T2)
Modernity theme
'The image of City life. Action in the city, which is modern.' (T18)

Bic Razor is lawn mower

Almost an equal number of the American and Taiwanese participants reached a unanimous agreement on the 'efficiency' theme which was the most strongly implicated message in Bic Razor (See Table 21). The inter-rater reliability reached 98.6%.

Table 21

Strong/Weak Implicatures in the Bic Razor Advertisement

American	Taiwanese
1. Efficiency (15, 68%)	1. Efficiency (17, 77%)
2. Others (7, 32%)	2. Others (5, 23%)
Total: 22 (100%)	Total: 22 (100%)

Examples from an American and a Taiwanese were cited below to illustrate the efficiency theme:

'The advertiser wanted people to buy Bic razor because it can shave really well.' (A5)
'The razor is big enough to effectively clean your beard.' (T17)

Some responses in the American group caused difficulty for us to categorize them.

Safety theme

'A close shave is good for everyone. A close shave is relaxing, indicated by the razor resting against a white board.' (A6)

Shaving is both a relaxing and a dangerous action because if one is not careful, one might cut himself/herself badly. From the example above, A6 thought Bic Razor is a safety-guaranteed razor.

'The right tool with no fuss for a sportsman.' (A15)
'It is sporty. It is local and is a part of the community.' (A17)

Interestingly, two participants related Bic Razor to sports. First, participant A15 thought Bic Razor fits sportsmen perfectly. We searched his questionnaire again trying to find any clues about why Bic Razor fits sportsmen but in vain. As for Participant A17, his reason for saying Bic Razor is sporty is that he pictured the grassland as a soccer field (found elsewhere in the questionnaire). However, what exactly did he mean by sporty? People who use Bic Razor can move it across their faces with ease? We did not attempt to draw any conclusions but venture reasonable guesses. Therefore, we did not regard these sports-related themes as a legitimate implicature. The following are the themes in 'Others' from both groups. We were unable to establish a theme name for some responses. First of all, from the American group:

'It advertises the fact that Bic has razors, but it doesn't tell you about the quality or features of them.' (A8)

A8 seemed familiar with the brand Bic. In fact, Bic makes not only shavers but also stationery and lighters.

'Buy the razor.' (A12)

This participant obviously did not realize what Bic was promoting. The following themes were sorted from the Taiwanese group.

Mobility theme
'It could stop where you want. It's the only tool you could use.' (T10)

Clearly, mobility is accentuated in T10's comment. It is a unique tool, and it is second to none.

Multi-function theme
'The razor can solve every kind of hair problem.' (T11)

This participant really rated Bic Razor highly! But can a razor really heed various kinds of hair problem?

IWC Watch is bus strap

There was a great variety of implicatures across the two groups, as shown in Table 22. The inter-rater reliability reached 97.7%. The top two implicatures in the American group, fineness and precision, were both related to the watch face:

Fineness theme
'Consider how nice this IWC wristwatch looks good on you—now purchase one for yourself.' (A14)
Precision theme
'Precision.' (A3)
'The IWC watch tells time precisely.' (A7)

Table 22

Strong/Weak Implicatures in the IWC Watch Advertisement

American	Taiwanese
1. Fineness (4, 16%)	1. Try-on (5, 18%)
2. Precision (3, 12%)	2. Trend (3, 11%)
3. Sturdiness (2, 8%)	3. Sturdiness (2, 7%)
4. Others (16, 64%)	4. Others (17, 64%)
Total: 25 (100%)	Total: 27 (100%)

These two themes were followed by sturdiness theme in which participants described the toughness of the watch:

Sturdiness theme

'This watch is built tough, everyday tough. It can handle even the most relentless abuses.' (A9)

As for the Taiwanese participants, we found the strongest implicature is the try-on theme.

Try-on theme
'Try it on and you will know how well it fits you.' (T15)

As for the trend theme, participants thought the IWC watchmaker attempted to invite everyone to wear their watch because pilots do:

Trend theme
'The watch can make men look like handsome pilots.' (T11)

Sturdiness theme was also retrieved from 2 Taiwanese:

Sturdiness theme

'By using the bus strap, I think the advertiser tries to show that the watchstrap is tough and can be used for a long time.' (T5)

There was a large number of responses that entailed this watch advertisement had caused great elusiveness to most of the American and Taiwanese participants. Participants whose responses belonged to this sort described that the watch advertiser did not communicate anything to the consumers. The following two examples demonstrate this no-message-communicated implicature:

'I am not sure what the advertiser is trying to communicate except maybe that you should buy this watch because pilots use it.' (A1)
'The advertiser did not communicate anything in this ad' (A5)

Wonderbra is woman

Once again the implicatures were identical, except there is a minor sequential difference between the two groups, as presented in Table 23. The inter-rater reliability reached 96.3%.
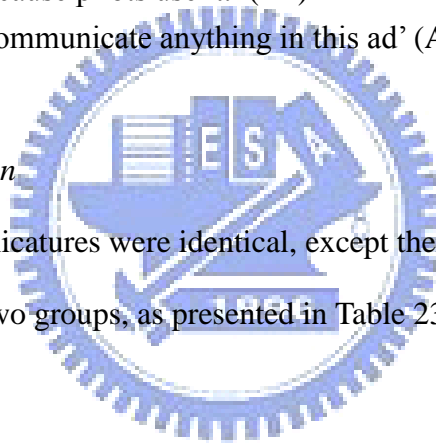
Table 23

Strong/Weak Implicatures in the Wonderbra Advertisement

American	Taiwanese
1. Transformation (13, 56%)	1. Appearance-first (11, 55%)
2. Appearance-first (9, 39%)	2. Transformation (9, 45%)
3. Others (1, 5%)	3. Others (0)
Total: 23 (100%)	Total: 20 (100%)

Transformation theme
'If you buy this bra, your breast would look like this.' (A4)
'Our bra will make you look like this.' (A7)
'Wonderbra will make you look like a real woman.' (T13)

The advertiser here sent a clear message to all the female viewers which is, their bra will make them undergo transformation, from plain to attractive (or even seductive). The second strongly implicated theme also closely relates with the transformation theme.

Appearance-first theme
'The advertiser is trying to communicate that if you appear to have large breasts and lots of cleavage, men will not care if you are supposedly deficient in other areas – and that they will be interested in you.' (A1)
'The message is clear. Good looks are the most important for a woman!' (T6)

In fact, most of the American participants combined these two themes (transformation and appearance-first) into one single point, like what follows:

'If you wear this bra, you can look like her and then it doesn't matter what else you can or cannot do because every man will want you and that is what every woman must want.' (A11)
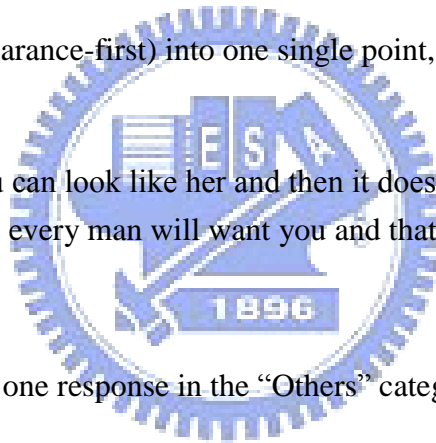
Lastly, there is only one response in the "Others" category.
'Wearing our bra will make you feel carefree (if you are a woman.)' (A19)

Let us now focus on the two cases which reflect certain cultural norms from the Taiwanese group. Both these two cases belong to the appearance-first theme.

'1. To all the female consumers: put on this bra to be sexy and chic! (this is the most important part coz most women want to be sexy and chic)
2. Be someone more than a housewife who only knows how to cook! (this is only the secondary appeal to the consumers, probably a lot of women either can cook, and can be sexy or do not cook, but are still unattractive…something like that…)' (T16)

Participant T16 made her own statement conspicuous by listing two points. The following is another paragraph where she made additional comments under question

item 3:

'As a Taiwanese woman, actually I agree what the slogan said. Girls here were taught to take care of family or cook for the family since kids. If they pay more attention to their appearances instead of other traditional stuff, they are blamed sometimes.' (T16)

Evidently, what she composed above was to strengthen her stance on the second point (regarding housewife). Her stance reflects the stereotypical image of traditional Chinese women who would be highly accredited if she heeds domestic matters well.

In the other case, we detected even stronger force of feminism in T17's feedback. The following three points are her thoughts towards the advertiser's intention:

'1. Women should love themselves.
2. The produce helps women to know they are not only the tool of cooking.
3. The produce make women more attractive even that you can't cook.' (T17)

Point two is particularly interesting to us because it may have different impact on female viewers who is either capable of cooking or not. For female viewers who know how to cook, the advertisement might make them realize that being able to cook is a feminine attribute which is as important as to know how to preen oneself. For those who have not yet learned the art of cooking, this advertisement might challenge their social value that women are obliged to learn how to cook.

Participant T17 further made some personal comments on Wonderbra:

'The bra is so wonderful. It can make a woman so attractive that males won't care about whether she can cook or not.' (T17)

Overall, these two particular cases have rendered an image of the conventional women under the Chinese culture. In fact, perspectives regarding female stereotypes

have long been studied in feminist research. Studies such as Sanchez (1993), Stanley (1994), and Stuart (1994) have mentioned that women's stereotypes are a universal issue and which has to be gingerly scrutinized under different cultural milieus.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Overview

In the final chapter, important findings from the present study would be summarized first. Afterwards, research limitations and suggestions for future research will be presented. Pedagogical implications would follow next, which includes lexical competence, vocabulary learning, pragmatic competence along with cultural learning, and a proposal of advertisements as classroom materials. Finally, this thesis would be ended by a conclusion.

Research Summary

In the present study which is about the pictorial metaphors in advertisements, we strived to answer three research questions. First of all, based on the results of successful metaphor interpreters, we learned that the Americans had an overall better performance in identifying and interpreting the advertising pictorial metaphors than the Taiwanese participants. Moreover, the American also outnumbered their counterparts in better metaphor interpreters. In general, the American participants in this study seemed to be more attuned to the advertising pictorial metaphors.

As for the second research question, we found that for the American and Taiwanese participants who failed to interpret the pictorial metaphors, the secondary subjects were often not retrieved in their responses. That is to say, those who did not interpret the metaphors, most of them were unable to indicate the metaphorized subject (65 out of total 78 unsuccessful metaphor interpreters failed to indicate the secondary subjects). In addition, some Taiwanese participants used problematic English words to refer to the secondary subjects in the Bic Razor and IWC Watch advertisement, although they seemed to have the knowledge of what the secondary subjects were in the razor and watch context. Motivated by the participants'

unawareness of the secondary subjects and word choice issue, we discussed their

metaphor interpreting process and the four advertisements again by considering two

major socio-cultural factors, including the awareness of context and

societal-individual concerns and interests. It was assumed that the American and

Taiwanese participants' failure and success on metaphors could be attributed to

various socio-cultural or individual factors.

Finally, in the last stage of analyses of personal associations and perspectives

towards advertiser's intention, it was observed that similarities and disparities were

often found under the same advertisement. The Wonderbra advertisement might be the

best example where two Taiwanese females voiced their support while other peers in

the same group harshly criticized the sexually-discriminating advertisement and

slogan.

Research Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

Some adjustments can be implemented to improve the data collection process

and enhance data validity. These adjustments include conducting post-interviews,

decreasing the number of advertisements, and constructing a webpage for data

gathering.

First of all, there is a need to host post-interviews after collecting the written

responses. The written responses may not fully demonstrate how well a participant

understood an advertisement. For instance, a large number of American responses to

Bic Razor were similar to the following example:

'No other words needed to be said about this advertisement. Its message is very clear.'
(A13)

When the research assistant and I encountered responses of this sort, we were put

into a dilemma because we were not sure whether those participants comprehended

the advertisement or not. Since we did not uncover any vestiges of both the primary and the secondary subject, responses like the above were judged as failure. Consequently, by conducting post-interviews after the completion of questionnaire could bestow participants an opportunity to explicate their writing. From raters' perspective, post-interviews would be conducive to understand the written responses and enhance the inter-rater reliability. In the present study, post-interviews were not included because the research assistant and I both encountered difficulty in re-contacting the participants or arranging appointments for interviews.

The number of advertisements in the present study was also a concern. After gleaning the written responses, we received informal feedback from 6 participants through email. Their feedback has a common concern about the number of advertisements in the questionnaire. They still felt that the four advertisements along with the repetitive question items were too overwhelming, making the questionnaire loathsome. While we were examining the responses, a few participants tended to write less as the questionnaire wore on. This may relate to the number of advertisements which caused early fatigue to the participants. It was estimated that 25 to 35 minutes were needed to complete the questionnaire. However, participants in both groups spent an average of 40 to 45 minutes to finish the task. Therefore, for future studies, we and for those who intended to conduct a similar study might consider dwindling the number of advertisements for fear that participants might affect the data-gathering process.

The last point is that other formats of the questionnaire could be adopted, such as a webpage. The following are some possible advantages of using a webpage to collect data:

(1) *Time-saving*: Researchers do not have to spend time giving instructions and

monitoring participants on site. Instead, they can wait in front of their computers

for data reply. Numerous emails with heavy loaded attached files are no longer needed.

(2) *Less-appalling*: Usually, when one is asked to fill out a questionnaire, the total pages will be checked first. By making use of a webpage, participants will probably be more motivated towards the task (the premise is that the researchers do not show the total page numbers in the first place). Hence, participants' efforts might be less likely affected.

(3) *More efficient*: Cyberspace not only makes data-saving easier, but allows researchers to process data with higher efficacy. Through proper settings, the server could collect and display individual data within a single webpage. Thus, the researchers will not have to scroll down page after page examining participants' written responses.

(4) *Synchronous*: For a cross-cultural study where data are gathered by two researchers at two different locations, webpage offers instant access to data in a synchronous fashion. Researchers can even have on-line discussions without waiting for each other.
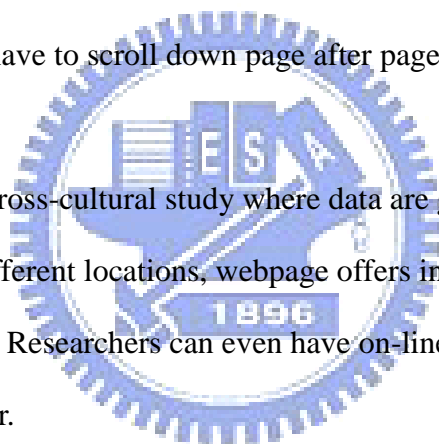
However, using a webpage to collect data also has some disadvantages. For example, setting up a webpage could be highly time-consuming, especially for researchers who are not familiar with the technology. Some unexpected technical glitches might also occur during the data-storing process. In general, a webpage could be an ideal method to collect and store data if professional maintenance is done.

<div align="center">Pedagogical Implications</div>

There are some pedagogical implications in terms of English education in EFL context based on the results in this study.

Lexical Competence and Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary became a critical issue when we were examining the issue of

secondary subject, especially for the non-native speakers. There are two situations where the Taiwanese participants encountered difficulties in vocabulary. The first situation is where some Taiwanese directly translated the Chinese equivalents into English to refer to the secondary subject. For example, there are two Taiwanese who used "ring-pull" to refer to the bus strap in the IWC Watch advertisement. This direct translation technique often took place when a non-native speakers had no knowledge for the correct target word.

The other situation alludes to that Taiwanese participants employed wrong words in context. This is best exemplified in the Bic Razor advertisement where a number of occurrences of 'weeder' were unearthed. In this case, it is also highly questionable that those who used weeder for lawn mower did not know what a weeder looks like or how it functions in reality.

The results of the present study indicate that even advanced English learners (English major graduate students) do not have a good command of vocabulary. They either have a small vocabulary repertoire or have problems in word choices.

Research has shown that lack of vocabulary contributes to writing difficulty for foreign language learners (Santos, 1988; Astika, 1993) and that vocabulary is one of the most important features that determine writing quality (Raimes, 1985; Uzawa & Cumming, 1989; Leki & Carson, 1994; Walters & Wolf, 1996). From what we concluded from the present study, the problematic word choices might be related to other socio-cultural or individual factors, not merely just that the participants have insufficient lexical competence.

Pragmatic Competence and Cultural Learning

For years, researchers have reached a consensus that communicative competence as well as pragmatic competence can fully equip language learners with the ability to express themselves successfully in the target language (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993;

Nikula, 1997). It is because pragmatic competence involves contextual factors which play a decisive role for proper language use.

The classic empirical study of Bouton (1988) on conversational implicatures has shown that non-native speakers of English had insufficient pragmatic awareness to interpret conversational implicatures in English. Based on Bouton (1988)'s finding, I argue that understanding non-verbal implicatures in advertising communication is as important as conversational implicatures because both types of impliatures require communicative and pragmatic competence.

Schmidt (1993) suggested that if an English learner attempts to acquire pragmatics, he/she needs to take language functions into socio-cultural context into account. In the present study, the four advertisements are made by the people in America. It is true that advertisers often inject local cultural elements in advertisements which might make people outside of the circle confused. In addition, a culture norm has a significant effect in molding one's train of thoughts. The Western philosophy rooted in the advertisements might prevent people in other cultures from understanding the westerners' figurative language like metaphors. Therefore, while teaching linguistic knowledge in the target language, EFL pedagogues should encourage cultural learning, too.

Advertisements as Valuable Classroom Materials

Based on the results in my study, I propose two pedagogical merits if advertisements are adopted as part of classroom language learning materials.

First of all, advertisements are a good source for the training of identifying pictorial metaphors. Advertisements are highly attainable and they are easy to be stored as digital files if available. A pictorial metaphor training course could allow EFL learners to acquire knowledge of identifying metaphors in advertisements and to discuss cultural issues. There is a need to learn how to decipher pictorial metaphors in

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advertisements because it could help EFL learners understand different thinking and

philosophies in the context where the target language is spoken. Figure 14

demonstrates the possible procedure of a pictorial metaphor training course.

The other advantage is advertisements are conducive to cultural learning. Much

has been done and said that learning a foreign language involves a certain degree of

acculturation, which refers to the behavior of adjusting oneself into the target culture.

Cultural values are often choreographed by advertisers in the form of advertisements

or commercials, as Tanaka commented, "Advertisements often intend to alter the

cognitive environments of viewers with some assumptions" (Tanaka, 1994, p. 183).

Whether assumptions succeed or not in creating harmony or clash, those cultural

values embedded in advertisements could serve as a scope for language learners to

experience how the target culture is molded.
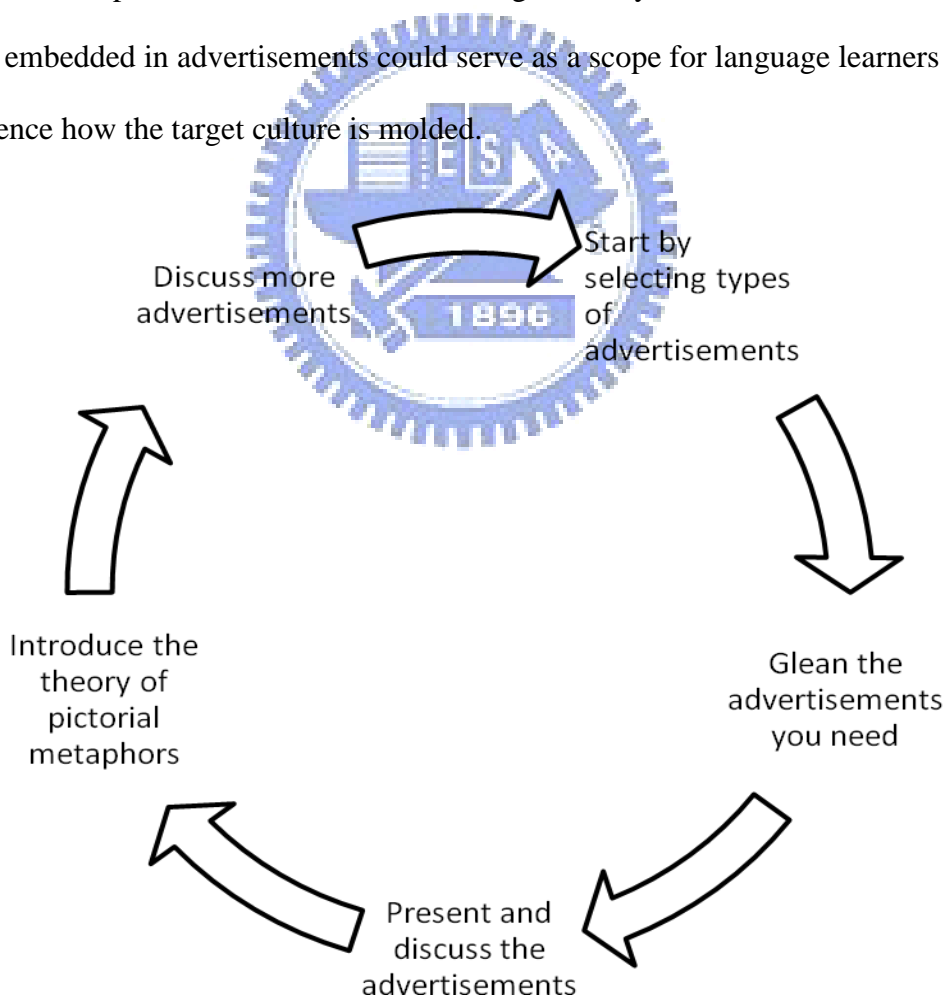
Figure 14. Example of a pictorial metaphor training course

Conclusion

There are two remarks to conclude the present study. Firstly, although the results showed that the Americans performed better than the Taiwanese in interpreting pictorial metaphors, we could not over-generalize this result. We believe there are more variables that might alter this claim in future studies, such as the socio-cultural factors discussed in the previous chapter. For example, if the Taiwanese participants are dealing with advertisements that differ from the four advertisements in the present study, they might have a better performance. If the participants in the two groups are facing ads that contain unfamiliar social norms, they might both fail the task. Therefore, it is risky to claim that the native speakers of English are more likely to interpret pictorial metaphors better than the non-native speakers.

The other point is concerned of the socio-cultural and individual factors that might influence the understanding of metaphors. In order to realize what factors that might have impact on an individual's comprehension of metaphors, a well-organized longitudinal study is needed. The present study could only discuss the metaphor interpretation performances and surmise possible factors based on the results at surface-level.

The relationship between image and word always enthrall people. That is why researchers are still working arduously, trying to provide explicit explanations about how image and word interact with each other. In the future, it is hoped that more structured studies on different types of metaphors can be explored, along with a deeper analysis into advertisement viewers' perspectives and rationales.

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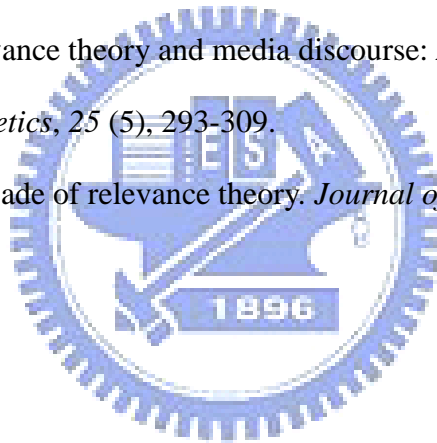
Appendix A

Consent Form and Invitation Letter

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: **A picture says a thousand words: Deciphering pictorial metaphors**
with advertisements in disparate contexts

Research Team: Brian Shih, M.A. candidate, Teaching English to Speakers of Other
Languages, National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

This is a research study. I am inviting you to participate in this research study because
you are a native speaker of English and a M.A. student in the TESOL program.

There are two purposes in this study. First of all, I intend to assess native and
non-native English speakers' ability to identify pictorial metaphors in advertisements.
Secondly, I attempt to explore if participants' cultural backgrounds would have any
effects on their perceptions towards the same advertisements.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

Approximately 20 people will take part in this study at the University of Texas at San
Antonio. A total number of 40 participants are expected to participate in the United
States and in Taiwan.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?

If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last approximately 30
minutes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire in a computer room on campus. The
questionnaire will be shown on the computer. You will need to follow the instructions
and type your responses on your computer.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this study.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

By participating in this study, your knowledge of pictorial metaphors might be improved and your awareness of cultural differences might be heightened, too. In general, I hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because your contributions might shed light on the field of pragmatics and second language acquisition.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

WHO IS FUNDING THIS STUDY?

The researcher is receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

I will keep your participation in this research study confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, I will use identification code numbers only on data forms. If I write a report or article about this study or share the study data set with others, I will do so in such a way that you cannot be directly identified.

IS BEING IN THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

I encourage you to ask questions. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Brian Shih, at brian51992@hotmail.com or contact Stephanie W. Cheng, my advisor, at scheng@mail.nctu.edu.tw, Graduate Institute of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan.

※ You understand the risks, benefits, and procedures involved in participating in this research study, and agree to participate in this study. You give your consent by answering the following questionnaire.

National Chiao Tung University

Graduate Institute of TESOL

1001 University Road, Hsinchu 300, Taiwan

http://tesol.nctu.edu.tw/Etesol/tesol.asp

Invitation Letter

July 23rd, 2008

Dear participants:

I am a graduate student in the Graduate Institute of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) at National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan. I am currently conducting a research project for my master's thesis, titled, "A picture says thousand words: Deciphering pictorial metaphors within advertisements in disparate contexts." The study investigates how native and non-native English speakers feel about the same advertisements. This study will provide insight into the field of second language acquisition, advertising research and pragmatics. Thus your participation is highly appreciated.

Please note that your participation in this research is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any point and for any reason. In addition, your personal information will remain confidential.

To participate in the present study, you will receive a questionnaire containing four advertisements via email, and you will be required to respond to each question in the questionnaire in English. After completion, please send the questionnaire to my email address at brian518992@hotmail.com.

Best wishes,

Researcher: Brian Shih
Advisor: Stephanie W. Cheng

The Questionnaire

Section I_ Demographic information

※**Directions: Please fill out the information required in ENGLISH.**

Age	
Gender	
Nationality	
Graduate program/ University	
Level of study	
Email address	

Proceed to the next page for instructions

Section II_ Instructions

A. **Please respond to each question in English.**

B. **There is no time limit, but you have to finish it at once.**

C. **Do not scroll back to the previous pages to modify your answers.**

D. **Do not proceed to the next page unless you are finished.**

If you understand the above rules, you can move on to the next page.

Section III_ Advertisements perceptions

※Directions: Starting from the next page, you will see four ads sequentially. There will be a question under each ad, and please write down your responses according to what the question asks. Finally, don't forget to read the instructions on the previous page again. Once you start, you are not supposed to roll back to the instruction page.

Now proceed to the next page to start Part 1!

Ad No.1: Folgers Coffee

Note: This is an ad of a coffee brand called Folgers. The words around the coffee cup in the picture read: "**Hey. City That Never Sleeps. Wake Up. Folgers.**"

Question 1: "**Describe in your own words of this ad**."

Ad No.2: Bic Razor
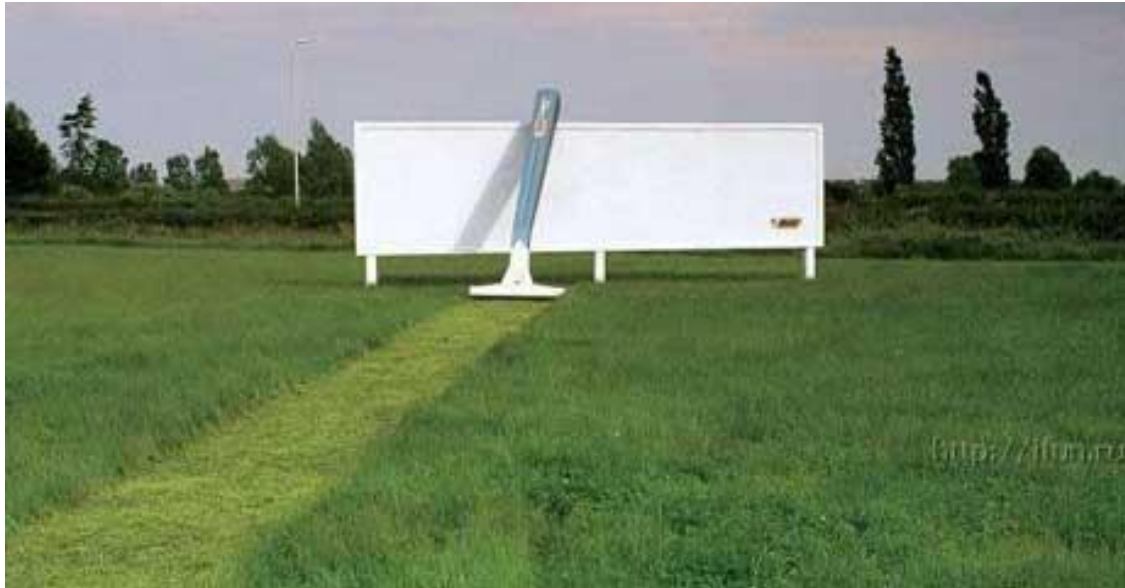
Note: This is an ad of a razor brand called Bic.

Question 1: "**Describe in your own words of this ad**."

Ad No.3: IWC's Big Pilot's Watch

Note: This is a watch series called "The Big Pilot's Watch" from the watchmaker IWC. The slogan reads, "Try it here, the Big Pilot's Watch."

Question 1: "**Describe in your own words of this ad**."

Ad No.4: Wonderbra

Note: This is a bra ad from Wonderbra. The slogan reads, "I can't cook. Who cares?"

Question 1: "**Describe in your own words of this ad.**"

Part 2

Look at this ad one more time.

Question 2: "Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by this ad, and **describe point by point the personal feelings and associations about this picture**. Please indicate **how important** you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

Look at this ad one more time.

Question 2: "Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by this ad, and **describe point by point the personal feelings and associations about this picture**. Please indicate **how important** you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

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Question 2: "Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by this ad, and **describe point by point the personal feelings and associations about this picture**. Please indicate **how important** you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

Part 3

Look at this ad again.

Question 3: "**What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with this ad**? If the message in your view has several aspects, please indicate **the relative importance** of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects to be equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

Look at this ad again.

Question 3: "**What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with this ad**? If the message in your view has several aspects, please indicate **the relative importance** of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects to be equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

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Question 3: "**What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with this ad**? If the message in your view has several aspects, please indicate **the relative importance** of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects to be equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

Look at this ad again.

Question 3: "**What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with this ad**? If the message in your view has several aspects, please indicate **the relative importance** of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects to be equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number."

Final Part

Look at this ad for the final time.

Question 4: "**What proof or evidence** do you find in this ad to support your ideas about what the advertiser has wanted to communicate?
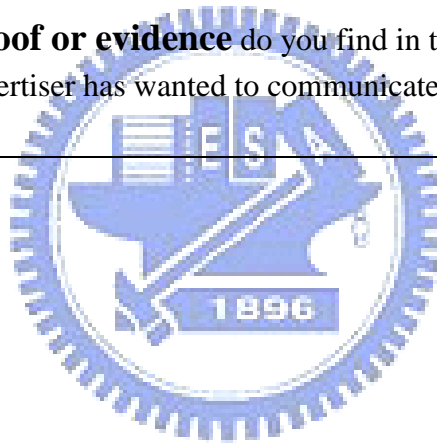
Look at this ad for the final time.

Question 4: "**What proof or evidence** do you find in this ad to support your ideas about what the advertiser has wanted to communicate?

Look at this ad for the final time.

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Look at this ad for the final time.

Question 4: "**What proof or evidence** do you find in this ad to support your ideas about what the advertiser has wanted to communicate?

Appendix C

Pilot Questionnaire

Instructions:

Please read the questions carefully before writing your responses. English is the only language permitted. You are not supposed to return to the previous page to modify your answers. There is no time limit for your writing time.

The following is an ad from a coffee maker named Folgers. The words around the coffee cup read, "Hey. City That Never Sleeps. Wake Up. Folgers."

Scroll to the next page to answer question 1

Question 1: Describe in your own words of this ad.

Write your answers here:

Question 2: Ignore what the advertiser may have meant by this ad, and describe point by point the personal feelings and associations about this picture. Please indicate how important you find each feelings and associations by preceding the most important one by the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several feelings/associations equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number.

Write your answer here:

Question 3: What do you think the advertiser has wanted to communicate with this ad? If the message in your view has several aspects, please indicate the relative importance of each aspect by marking the most important aspect with the number 1, the second-most important by the number 2, etc.? If you consider several aspects to be equally important, you can indicate this by marking each of these with the same number.

Write your answers here:

Question 4: What proof or evidence do you find in this ad to support your ideas about what the advertiser wanted to communicate?

Write your answers here: