

PORTRAYAL OF MATURE MARKET ADVERTISING: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF  
TAIWAN TIMES TELEVISION ADVERTISING AWARD WINNERS FROM 1999 TO 2004

By

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To my family, my love and all the people who helped me come this far

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School  
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This study was designed to obtain a better understanding of how older people were portrayed in Taiwan's award-winning television commercials. A quantitative content analysis based on 607 Taiwan Times Advertising Award winners from 1999 to 2004 was conducted. Variables used included award year, appearance of people, language, product type, setting, appearance of 50+ people, ethnicity, role, activity, competency, product-related role, and information role.

Findings showed that older people, especially women, were underrepresented in Taiwan's award-winning television commercials, which is consistent with similar studies conducted in U.S. and U.K. The findings also suggest that older people were generally portrayed in the positive way. This study also provided an overall image of older people in these award-winning television commercials.

In addition, since rarely studies related to this topic could be found in Taiwan's advertising literature, this study can serve as cornerstone to spur future studies of older people's portrayals in Taiwan's advertising.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose of the Study**

As an old Chinese proverb says, “When you are reaching fifty, you will realize the mission which God has assigned you and understand the rule of universe.” Fifty years old is an age marker for people to realize their own destiny. In other words, when people are 50, they are mentally and physically capable of achieving their career and family objectives. However, when their children have grown up and left the family for career purposes, 50-year old people start to think about retirement. It is generally considered the first time they truly face reaching the elder stage in their life. Therefore, in this study “older” people are considered as people who age over 50. For the purpose of this exploration, this generation of people will be referred to as the “mature market”.

Today, the world population, especially in developed countries, is aging faster than ever. The declining childbirth and increased longevity means consumers are getting older than ever. In 2006, the life expectancy of world population was 67 years old and the percentage of people aged 65 or older in the world was 7% (PRB, 2006). The speed of global population aging is fast. In 2004, the global population aged over 65 was estimated at 461 million in 2004, an increase of 10.3 million just since 2003. The global population over the age of 65 is projected to increase 24% between 2000 and 2010 and to reach 15 billion by 2050 (Kinsella & Phillips, 2005). According to the United Nations, in 1985, people over age 60 accounted for about 9% of the world’s population. By the year 2020, the elderly population will account for 13% of the world’s total population.

In addition, the mature people have a great purchasing power, compared to other age groups (Melillo, 2002). For example, in the U.S. the median net worth of households headed by

adults ages 65 and older increased 69 % from 1984 to 1999. The mature market controls \$7 trillion, more than 70 % of all U.S. wealth (Health Association of the United States, 2001).

People ages 45 and over in the UK hold nearly 80% of all financial wealth, and are accountable about 30% of consumer spending (Long, 1998; Kavanagh, 1995).

Given the current and potential importance of mature markets, one would expect that many advertisers would make substantial use of this age segment as models in advertising. However, the marketing and advertising industries have been criticized for ignoring mature consumers, not only in the markets that they target, but also the characters they depict in advertising. Most of current advertising or media strategies are more focused on young people (Peterson, 1992; Long, 1998; Benady, 2004). It is wise for marketers to follow where the money goes. In consideration of the size of mature market, alienating, neglecting or offending mature consumers can be very costly.

Taiwan is becoming a graying society as well, and there is evidence that Taiwanese elderly have a great buying power. Despite this importance, the mature market consumer is the least researched and understood market segment in Taiwan. Very rare research related to the Taiwanese mature market advertising has been done. With Taiwan's mature market's high potential, marketers wanting to compete in this market must have a keen understanding of how older people are portrayed in Taiwanese advertising.

According to the definition from United Nations, a country will be marked as an aging country when the population over age 65 accounts for more than 7% to 10% of total population or the population. Under this definition, most of developed countries are aging countries, including Taiwan. The main purpose of this study is to increase understanding of how mature people are portrayed in Taiwan's advertising.

## **Background**

### **Taiwan at a Glance**

Located in Eastern Asia off the southeastern coast of China, Taiwan is a small and densely populated island country, a population of 23 million lived in geographical area of 35,980 square kilometers (about the size of West Virginia). Despite its geographical limit and diplomatic isolation from China, Taiwan has successfully transformed itself from an undeveloped, agricultural society to one of Asia's big traders, and one of the world's leading producers of computer technology, known as an economic miracle (CIA, 2007; BBC, 2007).

Currently, Taiwan has a highly developed economy. In 2005, Taiwan has a remarkable gross domestic product (GDP) of \$630 billion (ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in the world), GDP per capita of \$27,500 (ranked 34<sup>th</sup> in the world) (CIA, 2007; EIU, 2006). In 2004, national income per capita was \$12,851 and private consumption per capita was \$8,772 (Taiwan Executive Department, 2006).

### **Aging in Taiwan**

The slowing growth rate, together with longer life expectancies, has started to change Taiwan to a graying society. The annual rate of population growth has slowed steadily over the past few decades, dropping from 3.5% in 1960 to 2.4% in 1970 and 1.9% in 1980. Since 1991, the annual rate of population growth has been under 1% (EIU, 2006). The 2006 estimated annual rate of population growth is only 0.61% (CIA, 2007).

In September 2006, the average age of total population was 36.11 years and there were 2.26 million people age over 65 in Taiwan, currently represent 9.91% of population (Taiwan National Statistics, 2006), with compared with only 6.2% in 1990 and 2.5% in 1960 (EIU, 2006). In addition, the estimated life expectancy of total population was 77.43 years (ranked 54<sup>th</sup> in the world), with males expected to live 74.67 years on average and females to live 80.47 years (CIA,

2007). There are 5.86 million people age over 50 in Taiwan who currently represent 25.64% of population (Taiwan National Statistics, 2006).

The Council for Economic Planning and Development of Taiwan Executive Department estimates that the proportion of the population over age 65 will rise to 13% by 2016, over 20 % by 2026, and reach 37 % by 2051 (Council for Economic Planning and Development, 2006; EIU, 2006). It will take estimated 20 years for the percentage of Taiwan's population aged over 65 to rise from 10% to 20%. Compared to Sweden's 85 years, Germany's 56 years, and Japan's 24 years, the rate of aging in Taiwan is extremely rapid (EIU, 2006).

Considering the proportions between genders, the ratio of male and female in Taiwan population will be 50.70 to 49.30 by Sep, 2006. If one only looks at the number of people ages 65 and over, there are 1,121,013 males and 1,142,409 females (the ratio is 49.53:50.47), meaning that females outnumber males as they get older (Taiwan National Statistics, 2006). According to data from Directorate General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics (2006), 56% of females over 60 and 79% of males over 60 have a spouse. In other words, females are the predominate gender in Taiwanese mature market.

The Council for Economic Planning and Development (2006) of Taiwan Executive Department also estimates that the mature market is increasing to worth estimated NTD 3,5937 billion (about US\$1,089 billion) by 2025 compared to NTD 8,118 billion (about US\$ 246 billion) in 2001. According to recent news from *Chinatimes*, an estimated 5.3 % average growth rate of Taiwanese mature spending will catch marketers' eyes.

People in Taiwan are generally retired between 60 and 65 years of age. According to the data from Taiwan National Statistics (2006), older people over 65 usually live with their family

(83.8%), including their spouse (19.5%), their children (61.7%), and other family members (2.6%). There were 8.5% of people over 65 who live alone, as shown in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1 Percent of resident arrangement of older people age over 65 in 2002

| Resident Arrangement           | %    |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Live alone                     | 8.5  |
| Live with spouse               | 19.5 |
| Live with children             | 61.7 |
| Live with other family members | 2.6  |
| Live in nursing home           | 7.5  |
| Others                         | 0.2  |

## Media in Taiwan

The media environment in Taiwan is extremely competitive and is known as one of the freest in East Asia (Freedom House, 2006; BBC, 2007). In 2004, Taiwan had about 1,200 registered news agencies, more than 3,000 registered newspapers, 160 radio stations, and five terrestrial television stations. Furthermore, 60 domestic and 19 foreign companies offered 93 and 42 satellite channels, respectively, providing a wide range of views (Government Information Office, 2006).

The Taiwanese media industry grew by 5.8 % in 2005 to have a value of \$7.2 billion and it was forecasted to increase at a stable rate to reach a value of \$9.5 billion by the end of 2010. The publishing sector, accounting for 45.5% of the overall value, is the largest in the Taiwanese media industry, and followed by the broadcast and cable TV sector, movies and entertainment sector, and advertising sector, accounting for 36.50%, 12.80% and 5.20%, respectively (Datamonitor, 2005).

The rate of newspaper reading in Taiwan is declining (Datamonitor, 2005) mainly due to a high cable TV penetration and the rapid proliferation of the Internet over the past decade (Government Information Office, 2006). Taiwan's cable and satellite TV penetration rate is

about 85%, the highest in any Asian country (TAIWAN, 2005; BBC, 2007) and the Taiwan's Internet penetration rate is 60.3% which rank 28th in the world in 2005 (Internet World Stats, 2006).

Since 1990, the movie market in Taiwan has been greatly dominated by foreign movies due to lack of investment on domestic film industry, aggressive marketing by distributors of international films and changing tastes among audiences (Government Information Office, 2006).

Taiwanese government has taken actions to end any political ownership of the broadcast media (TAIWAN, 2005; BBC, 2007). The transition from an analogue to a digital platform with the free media environment and audience base in Taiwan make it attractive for transnational corporations to penetrate and operate profitably.

### **Advertising in Taiwan**

In 2005, Taiwan's total advertising spending was \$2.12 billion, 7.10% increased compared that in 2004. The five-year growth rate of total advertising spending from 2000 to 2005 is 18.65%, and it is expected to reach a value of \$2.22 billion in 2006. Taiwan's per capita expenditure of US\$93.17 on advertising in 2005 was higher than both in Asia-Pacific overall (US\$21.12) and in the world (US\$62.90) (GMID, 2006).

Since 1996, TV has replaced print to claim the most part of advertising spending. In 2005, TV claims 53.27% of advertising spending, print 40.85%, radio 4.62%, and online 1.26% respectively (GMID, 2006).

In order to help the economy develop, Taiwan opened its market for foreign investment about 30 years ago. Foreign advertising agencies were also permitted to enter Taiwan's advertising industry, therefore intensifying the competition. Taiwan's advertising industry has been dominated by foreign-capital agencies for several years. According to Brain Magazine's (2006)

report, J. Walter Thompson, Leo Burnett, and Taiwan Dentsu were the top three advertising agencies in terms of income and billings in 2005. The best performance in 2005 was J. Walter Thompson, which had three successive years of good performance. Most of the top advertising agencies were owned totally or partially by foreign companies. United Advertising was the only local agency out of the top ten advertising agencies in Taiwan.

Taiwan's advertising industry continues to develop, and advertising research does as well. Some advertising research related to ad appeals in Taiwanese advertising could be found. For example, Shao, Raymond, and Taylor (1999) discussed that advertising appeals in Taiwan tend to be dominated more by westernized cultural values than by Chinese traditional values, based on interviews with managing directors of advertising agencies in Taiwan.

Tse, Belk, and Zhou (1989) indicated that "advertising appeals in Taiwan showed substantial transition from utilitarian values to more hedonistic desires" (p. 470).

Zandpour, Chang, and Catalano (1992) found that Taiwan advertisements were more subtle in approach and more likely to use symbolism than the French or U.S. advertisements. Thus, the authors concluded that Taiwanese TV commercials generally link the product to traditional Chinese value, such as respect for the elderly and an emphasis on family value.

Wang, Jaw, Pinkleton, and Morton (1997) found that Western appeals were used more than Eastern appeals in Taiwanese advertisements and more Westernized than some other Eastern countries, such as Japan.

However, very few of studies mention about the portrayals of older people in Taiwanese advertising and none directly focuses on this topic.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

There has been extensive academic interest in the older consumers in U.S. and U.K. since 1980s. These studies have covered a range of issues about the use of mature models over the age of 50 and the implication that their appearance in advertising may have. These findings can serve as a compass for understanding the use of mature people in Taiwanese advertising better.

First of all, there is no consistent definition of “older people” or “the elderly” among researches when reviewing the literature related to older mature models used in advertising (Nielsen & Curry, 1997) Some studies referred simply to “older people” or “the elderly” and gave no chronological age, while others used 45+, 50+, 55+, 60+ and 65+ as their lowest age for older models. The most common lower-range used to define this age group in U.S. studies was 60+, while the age threshold dropped to 50+ in the U.K.

Many research studies provide subjective criteria to define an “elderly” portrayal in advertisements, including direct mention of age, extensive gray or white hair, extensive wrinkling of the skin around the face and/or hands, use of ambulatory aids (e.g. cane, crutches, wheelchairs, etc.), being retired or being a grandparent, or by portraying them as a parent of a son or daughter who was middle-aged or older (Gantz, Gartenberg, & Rainbow, 1980; Kvaniscka, Beymer, & Perloff, 1982; Greco, 1993; Robinson & Skill, 1995; Harwood & Roy, 1999; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006).

### **Appearance of Older People in Media**

Content analysis is the most common method used for reporting and understanding the portrayals of people in advertising. The series of content analysis-based studies conducted since 1980s constantly indicate that the portrayals of mature people, especially older females, were underrepresented relative to their actual proportions in the population across a variety of different

media forms, such as prime-time television programs (Lauzen & Dozier, 2005; Robinson & Skill, 1995), films (Markson, 2000), television commercials (Greco, 1993; Peterson & Ross, 1997; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006) and magazine advertisements (Gantz et al., 1980; Kvaniscka, Beymer, & Perloff, 1982; Baker & Goggin, 1994; Harwood & Roy, 1999; Carrigan & Szmigin, 1999). In other words, the percentage of elderly in media does not reflect their numbers in the population.

These studies also determined that the stereotyping based on age and gender exists in media. For example, Peterson and Ross (1997) indicated that older people were not utilized as frequently in TV commercials, even for brands which appear to be targeted to them. In prime-time television programs, female characters in their 30s and male characters in their 30s and 40s were more likely to be used.

Leadership and occupational power increased with age. However, middle-aged males were more likely to play leadership roles and wield occupational power than females (Lauzen & Dozier, 2005). The results from Markson's (2000) study on film also showed that men were more likely to be depicted as "vigorous, employed, and adventurous", while women were depicted as "rich dowagers, wives/mothers, or lonely spinsters" (p. 137).

An interesting result of a cross-national study indicated that although older women were under-represented in both countries, more older models appeared in Indian womens' magazines than in U.S. womens' magazines. This distinction could be explained by cultural differences, which seem to suggest that Indian society still prescribes a more traditional role for women than the USA (Harwood & Roy, 1999).

### **Portrayal of Older People in Advertising**

Some researchers mentioned that advertising frequently depicted mature people as individuals with decreased sexual attractiveness and sexual intimacy (Baker & Goggin, 1994). Ads also emphasized the incapacity in old age (Carrigan & Szmigin, 1999). In contrast to the

research findings showing that mature people are portrayed in a less desirable way compared to their younger counterparts in advertising, other researchers have found that they are generally portrayed in the positive way in magazine advertisements (Harwood & Roy, 1999) or television commercials (Greco, 1993; Peterson & Ross, 1997; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)

Kvaniscka, Beymer, and Perloff (1982) indicated that the magazines designed specifically for mature audiences contain a higher percentage of mature models in advertisements, and they are depicted in a more favorable way. However, Carrigan and Szmigin (1999) suggested that there might be a perceptible gap between what advertisers see as a positive portrayal and what the actual target audience perceives one to be.

There is a distinction between advertisements with and without the elder representations in terms of the numerical composition of the group in ads. In magazine advertisements, Gantz, et al. (1980) found that ads with elderly models contained more people than ads without elderly models. However, Kvaniscka, et al. (1982) found just the opposite; ads with elderly models contained less people than ads without them. This is consistent with Greco's (1993) finding that suggested more ads featuring a single older person were observed in the research of comparing the results of a 1985 study and a 1990 study in television commercials. However, according to the data in Greco (1993) study, older people usually appeared with multiple age groups.

Older people portrayed in U.S. magazine advertisements were often shown with their spouse, their coworkers, or in a situation where they were serving or being served, while older people in Indian magazine advertisements were more often shown with unknown individuals (Harwood & Roy, 1999). The elderly in magazine advertising were often depicted as information advisor and often shown at home, business situation and outdoor (Greco, 1993).

With regard to role prominence, some researchers found that mature people were mostly featured in minor or background roles in TV commercials (Greco, 1993; Roy & Harwood, 1997). Other researchers found that older people were mostly depicted as major roles in magazine advertisements (Harwood & Roy, 1999). The authors inferred that the difference might be the case with portrayals of all age groups because minor or background roles may be rare in magazine advertisements.

In Simcock and Sudbury (2006) study, older models are significantly underrepresented in all role categories (major, minor and background) in UK television commercials, except the utilities and government advertising

Gantz et al.'s (1980) study found that the elderly most frequently appeared in ads for corporate image, liquor, and travel, Kvaniscka et al. (1982) noted the elderly's presence in ads for an easy chair lift product, food products, and beauty aids. Similarly, Baker and Goggin (1994) found this group present in ads for products designed to minimize the effects of aging, such as hair dyes, denture adhesives, bran cereal, laxatives, and vitamins in study. On the other hand, Simcock and Sudbury (2006) found that older people are significantly underrepresented in advertisements for products such as cosmetics and other beauty aids, fashion and clothing, mobile telephones, charities and fast food (p. 100).

Additionally, older models appeared more in commercials for health-related products (Greco, 1993). Zhang et al. (2006) also indicated the association of aging with ill-health in advertising, which implied the portrayals of older adults were often presented for ill-health or for health-related products.

Generally, older people appear in advertisements for a wide variety of products and services such as retailing, liquor, food, holidays and leisure, travel, insurance, and other financial

services and utilities (Gantz, et al., 1980; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006). Greco (1993) suggested that ads with elderly persons featured a slightly wider range of products and settings in 1990 than in 1985, perhaps in response to the call by academicians for advertisers to include more elderly in ads. The incidence and portrayal of the elderly in television commercials has apparently improved since the late 1970. There are more elderly characters appearing in television advertising than ever.

### **How Mature Audiences Perceive Mature Models in Media**

Older people think they are more likely to be portrayed in an unfavorable way than younger consumers. Therefore, they tend to have a strong negative reaction to their portrayals in advertising and are less likely to appear in ads (Festervand & Lumpkin, 1985). Furthermore, the elderly generally do have a more negative attitude toward advertisements than younger consumers and do not consider advertising to be a good source of purchase-related information (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2001; Festervand & Lumpkin, 1985) due to lack of credibility and inaccurate portrayals of the elderly in advertisements (Festervand & Lumpkin, 1985). For example, a survey consists of 30,000 people aged 50 and older, 74 percent said they cannot relate to television advertising (Benady, 2005).

Older consumers would like to see more mature people featured in advertisements and they perceive those advertisements with positive older role models as more credible and believable than those with younger models (Nelson & Smith, 1988; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2001; Benady, 2005), especially ads for elderly-related products (Nelson & Smith, 1988) Furthermore, the natural depiction of older people in advertisements may be more desirable to the mature consumers (Nelson & Smith, 1988). However, many mature consumers view themselves as being 10 to 15 years younger than their actual chronological age and react more positively to ads whose models are somewhat younger than they are (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2001; Benady, 2005).

With regard to media use, visual media are preferable to radio as a tool of promoting products or providing information to the elderly (Festervand & Lumpkin, 1985). People age 65 and older are known as heavy viewers of television. The heavy television viewers tend to perceive the aged in television commercials as “realistic” and “just like people I meet every day” (Schreiber & Boyd, 1980) and be more negative toward the portrayal of the elderly in TV commercials (Greco, 1993). Moreover, elderly persons with high self-esteem tend to perceive television programs as less real-to-life, while their low self-image counterparts are more trusting and believing of television fare. The portrayals of the elderly may reinforce a low inactive self-image in the eyes of the elderly with lower self-image (Kvaniscka, Beymer & Perloff, 1982).

Some researchers suggested that the negative portrayal of older people in advertising may penetrate their value system, hinder the development of healthy self image and negatively affects their self-perception (Carrigan & Szmigin, 1999; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2001; Robinson & Umphrey, 2006). There is also an influence on the younger people. Robinson and Umphrey (2006) indicated that portraying older people in a stereotypical way support the stereotype that younger people have of older people and then they tend to view aging is a bad thing.

Therefore, advertisers and marketers need to be aware of these influences and improve the way they portray older people in their advertisements (Robinson & Umphrey, 2006). Positive portrayals of the elderly in media can be helpful in promoting positive self-image and a more productive integration into society (Korzenny & Neuendorf , 1980). Carrigan and Szmigin (1999). This also suggests that the public can perceive old age in a positive way and that marketers do not necessarily use negative connotations to associate products with older consumers.

## **Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture**

Geert Hofstede's dimensions of culture has been one of most important model to assist advertisers in better understand the intercultural differences within regions and between countries. Hofstede identified four primary dimensions to classify countries and differentiate cultures. These include: Power distance (PDI), Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS), and Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) in his original research model. The fifth dimension, long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO), was added after conducting an additional study (Mueller, 2004; Geert Hofstede, 2007). Marketing and advertising researchers have recognized that Hofstede's dimensions can be applied to explain the differences in marketing communications and to predict the effect of commercials messages (Mueller, 2004).

The first dimension, power distance index (PDI), refers to a society's level of equality or inequality among people. In cultures ranking higher on the power distance index, people tend to more accepting social hierarchies and authorities. In contrast, cultures with lower power distance index, people tend to accept equality and believe opportunity for everyone (Mueller, 2004; Geert Hofstede, 2007). As shown in Figure 2-1, Taiwan's power distance index is 58 (Geert Hofstede, 2007), which means the level of equality among people in Taiwan society is medium. There are opportunities for everyone although social hierarchies and authorities existed in Taiwan's society.

The second dimension, individualism versus collectivism (IDV), is the extent to which individuals are integrated into groups. A high individualism ranking indicates that the ties between individuals are loose. A low individualism ranking suggests a society is more collectivistic, in other words, the ties between individuals are close. Taiwan's individualism index is 17, which means Taiwan is a collectivistic society where social ties are much higher. The collectivistic societies tend to reinforce extended families where people respect elder and take responsibility for taking care of other members in their societies. The advertisings in

collectivistic cultures tend to portray people in groups rather than as individuals (Mueller, 2004; Schimmack, Oishi, & Diener, 2005; Geert Hofstede, 2007)

The third dimension, masculinity versus femininity (MAS), pertains to the distribution of roles between the genders. A high masculinity ranking indicates a high degree of gender differentiation and the culture tends to stress on stereotypical masculine traits, such as achievement, dominance and heroism. In contrast, a low masculinity ranking indicates a low degree of gender differentiation the culture tends to emphasize feminine traits, such as modesty, taking care of weak and quality of life (Mueller, 2004; Geert Hofstede, 2007). Taiwan's masculinity index is 45, which means the degree of gender differentiation is medium in Taiwan's society.

The fourth dimension, uncertainty avoidance index (UAI), deals with the level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity within the society. A high uncertainty avoidance ranking indicates people in these cultures need rules, regulations and controls to reduce the uncertainty. A low uncertainty avoidance ranking indicates people in these cultures are relatively comfortable with ambiguity and are tolerant of others' behaviors and opinions (Mueller, 2004; Geert Hofstede, 2007). Taiwan's uncertainty avoidance index is 69, which means people in Taiwan tend to prefer certainty and direct information rather than uncertainty and confused information.

The fifth dimension, long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO), deals with the degree the society embrace the long-term traditional values. A high long-term orientation ranking indicates that the society advocate the values of long-term commitments and respect for tradition. For example, there is usually including a senior executive in meetings and elders tend to be decisions maker. East Asian countries tend to be classified to long-term orientation cultures. In contrast, a culture with short-term orientation does not reinforce the concept of long-term

traditional orientation. Taiwan's long-term orientation index is 87, which means people in Taiwan are patient, perseverant, and respect for one's elders and ancestors (Newman & Nollen, 1996; Mueller, 2004; Geert Hofstede, 2007). Table 2-1 presents an exhibit of Taiwan's scores on the Hofstede cultural dimensions.

### **Hypotheses**

There are very few of studies related to the portrayals of mature people in Taiwanese advertising and none directly focuses on this topic have been done. Furthermore, the majority of Taiwan's advertising agencies were owned by transnational companies, so Taiwan advertisements have been influenced by the Western values. The purpose of this study is to examine the portrayal of the mature market in advertising to explore the similarities and differences in past research findings. As has been stated before, the term "mature" will be used in lieu of "older" or "elderly" to refer to those individuals ages 50 and over. Therefore, this study develops the following hypotheses derived from the relevant literature — most of which come from research conducted in the U.S and U.K. — and from Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

- **H1:** The percentage of mature people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising will be less than the percentage of mature people in population.
- **H2:** The percentage of mature females will be less than the percentage of mature males in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising.
- **H3:** Mature people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising are more likely to be portrayed in a positive way.
- **H4:** Mature people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising are more likely to be shown with others.
- **H5:** Mature people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising are more likely to be portrayed as major roles.

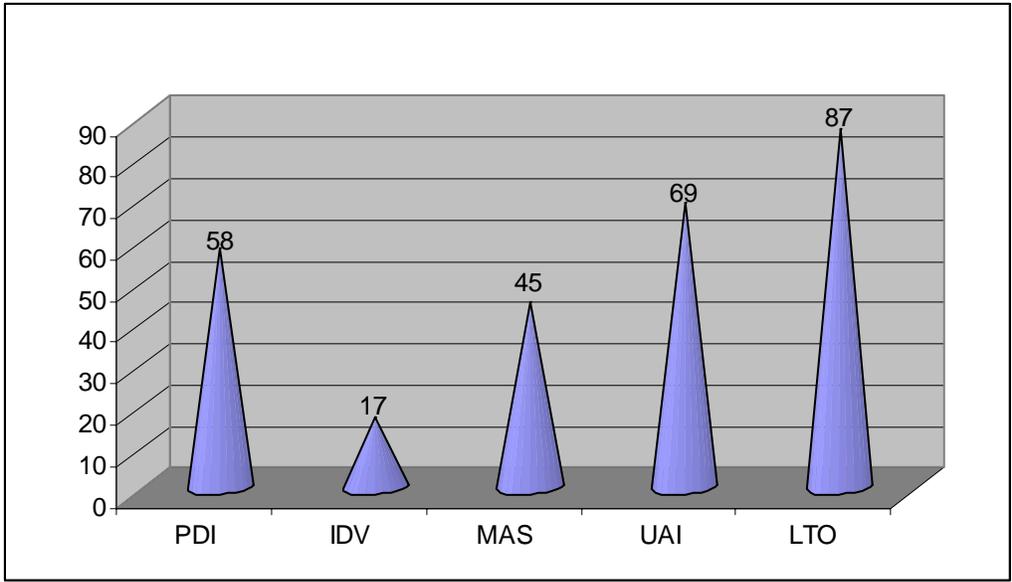


Figure 2-1: Taiwan's Hofstede's cultural dimensions scores (Geert Hofstede, 2007)

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Content Analysis**

According to Davis' (1997) book, Advertising Research, content analysis is systematic, objective and quantitative, and generally be used to identify trends in advertising practices. Some researchers mention that content analysis allows researchers to treat qualitative data in quantitative ways (Leiss, Kline & Jhally, 1990). Also, content analysis is known as one of the most efficient research methods to probe the meanings within or behind specific contexts.

The study was designed to investigate the presence of the mature people age over 50 in Taiwanese advertising. Hence, content analysis was chosen as the research method to examine the proposed research hypotheses.

### **Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis, the smallest element of a content analysis, was defined as the individual units that the researchers make descriptive and explanatory statements about (Wimmer & Dominick, 1991; Babie, 2001). The unit of analysis in this study was the single award-winning television commercial among the whole collection of Taiwan Times Advertising Awards from 1999 to 2004, which total a sample size of 641 television commercials.

### **Research Sample**

The researcher elected to draw the research sample from Taiwan Times Advertising Award-winners for several reasons. First, Times Advertising Award is also the most highly respected and well known advertising award in Taiwan. The latest annual award event held in November 2006 was the 29th Taiwan Times Advertising Awards. The award-winning advertisements are professionally judged by elites of Taiwan's advertising industry and sufficiently representative of social trends of the time. Second, no previous studies have explored

how mature people are portrayed in Taiwan's advertisements, no matter television commercials or magazine advertisements. Third, the collections of Times Advertising Award-winning advertisements are more available and acquirable than other ways of collecting advertising in Taiwan for several consecutive years. .

This study focused on television commercials mainly because there tend to be more characters portrayed in television commercials than in magazine advertisement across product categories. The main purpose of this study was to determine the representation and role portrayal of mature people. Therefore, collecting samples from television commercials are more likely to reach sufficient sample size for analyzing. Note that ads without people portrayed were excluded from the data analysis.

All ads in the sample were drawn from annual Taiwan Times Advertising Award-Winning Television Commercial Collection 1999-2004. Choosing years from 1999 to 2004 were for the following reasons. First, 2004 annual Times Advertising Award-winning advertisements collection book is the latest and available one. Second, excluded those advertisings prior to 1999 were because those ads were too long ago to represent current social trends or reflect current situation.

The focus of the study was to explore the portrayals of mature people in Taiwanese award-winning television commercials. As duplicated advertisements were not expected to increase the understanding of the portrayals, the decision was also made to omit them from the study. After omitting duplicate ads, there were a total 607 qualified television commercials content analyzed, including 103 commercials in 1999, 108 commercials in 2000, 114 commercials in 2001, 101 commercials in 2002, 88 commercials in 2003 and 93 commercials in 2004.

## **Coding Categories and Variables**

There were total of 13 categories and 29 variables were coded in this study. The categories included: award year, appearance of people, language, product type, setting, appearance of 50+ people, ethnicity, role, activity, competency, product-related role, and information role. Coding categories are discussed in greater detail in the following sections. The final codebook used to analyze the ad content is presented in appendix.

All commercials were coded by year and the appearance of people. All commercials with people were coded by language, product type and format. All commercials with 50+ characters were coded by appearance of 50+ people, ethnicity, role, activity, competency, product-related role and information role.

## **Definition of Coding Categories**

### **Year**

Six years, from 1999 (22nd) to 2004 (27th), were used to code all Times Advertising Award-winning television advertisings.

### **Appearance of People**

This category counted the number of people in the ads. “Ads with only body parts, such as hands, or bodies without faces are not classified as ads with people” (Greco, 1993, p.146). Coders were instructed to count only human beings in the ads, not drawings, cartoons, puppet characters and any computer-generated graphics. Considering scene of crowd, coders will simply indicate “more than 10” if more than 10 characters are in one commercial.

### **Language**

In accordance with the Cho (2005) study, the language used in Taiwan’s television commercials was coded into seven categories: Chinese (Taiwan’s official language), dialects

(such as Taiwanese, Hakka and other languages used in Taiwan), English, mixed (using more than two different languages), others (such as Japanese, Korean and other foreign languages), none (no language was spoken in the commercial) or cannot be coded (unclear language was used in the commercial).

The background music is not coded as the language used in the commercials. The voice over slogan, often in the end of commercials, is also not considered as the language used in the commercials if it was spoken by an off camera individual. However, it will be coded as the language used in commercial if the slogan is stated or the music was sung by one of the characters in the commercial.

### **Product Type**

Based on the common categories listed in Times Advertising Award collection from 1999 to 2004, there are 23 product categories developed and used in this study, including (1) fast food, (2) non-fast food / seasoning, (3) restaurants / cafes, (4) tobacco, (5) alcohol, (6) non-alcohol beverages, (7) apparel and accessories, (8) beauty aids / cosmetics, (9) health products (including health food, medicine and health equipment), (10) household appliances (such as washing machine, refrigerator and air conditioner), (11) domestic products (such as toothpaste, soap and cleaners), (12) technological products / electric products, (13) automobiles/ transportation equipment, (14) electric, water, gas, and waste management services, (15) communication services, (16) banking / financial services, (17) grocery retail, drug store and pharmacy, (18) public services / public administration, (19) industry / corporate image, (20) culture / education, (21) travel / leisure / entertainment, (22) publication / mass media (including website), and (23) others. The brand name of product or service promoted in the commercial was also specified for reference.

## **Format**

The commercial formats were sorted by eight categories according to Arens (1999) book, including straight announcement, presenter, testimonial, demonstration, musical, slice of life (problem solution), lifestyle and others (or cannot be determined). The brief definition of each format was provided in code book help coders to judge easily and accurately.

## **Appearance of 50+ People**

In this study, mature people were defined as people 50-years old or older. According to the definition in the Greco (1993) and Simcock & Sudbury (2006) studies, the elderly were defined by three kinds of subjective criteria: direct mention of age, physical features and references of age. Therefore, characters were classified as people age over 50 determined by the following subjective criteria including direct mention of age over 50, gray hair or white hair, wrinkling of the skin around the face, neck, and/or hands, use of ambulatory aids, canes or wheelchairs, reference to being retired, reference to as “grandmother” or “grandfather”, and a portrayal as a parent of a son or daughter who was middle-aged or older (Gantz, Gartenberg, & Rainbow, 1980; Greco, 1993; Harwood & Roy, 1999; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006).

The numbers of 50+ people, as well as 50+ males and females respectively, were counted in order to provide a measure of the occurrence of the use of 50+ people in commercials by reporting the proportion of 50+ people to the total number of people in the advertisement.

The features of 50+ people with other age groups were coded to understand their portrayals with individuals from other age groups. In other words, when 50+ character appeared in a scene, did they appear alone, with one other younger person only, with one other 50+ person only, with other 50+ people only, or with various age groups?

The prominence of 50+ characters was also examined according to their role as a major, minor, or background character. Major characters were defined as people who appeared the central to the ad and who had a prominent role in product promotion. If the character was a spokesperson, was on camera for more than one-half of the ad, or spoke throughout the ad as a main character or reference, they were considered a major character. There could be more than one major character in a commercial (Greco, 1993; Robinson & Skill, 1995; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006).

Minor characters were defined as people who played a supporting role in product promotion on ads. The characters 1) may not have a major speaking part, 2) were not scene as the prominent reference for other characters in the commercial, or 3) were on camera for less than one-half of the ad. There could be more than one minor character in a commercial (Greco, 1993; Robinson & Skill, 1995; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006).

Background characters were people who were not actively involved in ad's message, but whose presence may give the ad greater context. The characters did not speak and were seen only for a few seconds or camera did not zoom in on them. These people were more a face in the crowd or passer-by (Greco, 1993; Robinson & Skill, 1995; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006).

### **Setting**

The settings where the 50+ characters appeared were classified by private, public, combination and cannot be coded. The private settings were further sorted by 6 categories including kitchen/ dining room, living room, bedroom, other places inside the house, indoors away from home, and other private setting. The public settings were further sorted into six categories, including public place (such as streets, stores, restaurants... etc.), riding inside transportation, business office / working place, school, outdoors away from home and other public setting.

All settings were coded when 50+ characters appeared in more than two settings, whether public or private. If 50+ characters appeared in private and public setting in one commercial, it would be coded as combination settings and further coded all the settings used in the advertising. If the setting was unclear to be determined, it was coded as cannot be coded.

### **Ethnicity**

Fifty-plus characters were determined as Eastern or Western based on visual appearance. According to the definition in Cho (2005) study, the characters were assigned as Eastern if they looked Taiwanese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or other Asian groups. On the other hand, the characters were coded as Western if they looked Caucasian, or other non-Asian groups.

### **Role**

The 50+ character's interpersonal relationship with other characters in Taiwanese award-winning television advertising was coded into seven categories: spouse/couple, parents/grandparents, other family members, friends, occupational partners, others, and not applicable/cannot be coded. If there was a specific role portrayed by a 50+ characters in the commercial but cannot be coded into the first five categories, it was coded as others and specified. If there was no obvious role portrayed by 50+ character in the commercial, it was coded as not applicable/cannot be coded

### **Activity**

Activities which 50+ characters were involved in the commercial were coded into nine categories: family events, working, recreation, dining, sleeping, chatting with others/speaking to others, walking/on transportation, sitting/taking rest, and others.

### **Competency**

Competency of the 50+ character was coded into three categories including strong competency, weak competency and neither strong or weak competency. Similar to Peterson and

Ross (1997), and Simcock and Sudbury (2006) studies, strong competency was defined when the character displayed mental and physical competence in carrying out the role portrayed. The character was featured as authoritative, skillful or controlling, and enjoyed a particular activity. In contrast, weak competency was coded when character displayed mental or physical incompetence in carrying out the role portrayed, exemplified by the appearance of being impaired, helpless, uninformed, weak, lazy, a victim, or displaying stereotypically negative behavior associated with age, such as bad temper, and forgetfulness. It was coded as neither strong nor weak competency if the character's display or presentation of skill is neither authoritative nor unauthoritative, but can be considered relatively non-descript.

### **Product-Related Role**

Four categories, authorities/spokespersons for the product, product user, decorative role and not applicable/cannot be coded, were used to examine the credibility of the primary 50+ major and minor characters in this study. Mature characters were coded as "authorities/spokespersons for the product" when they were appointed to endorse a product in advertising, and they are usually celebrities, experts or satisfied customers. Mature characters were coded as product users when they were showing using the product in advertising. Otherwise, mature characters were coded as "decorative role" when they appear with product but did not directly involved with product use in advertising. If there were no obvious interaction between mature characters and product, it was coded as not applicable/cannot be coded.

### **Information Role**

Information role was determined by how the primary 50+ major and minor characters interacted with other characters in delivering information in the commercial. According to Greco (1993) study, information giver role was the character portrayed as giving advice, or providing information to others present in the ad or in the audience. The information receiver role was the

character portrayed as receiving advice, or the recipient of information about a product or service. In this study, the information gave or received by the 50+ characters was not necessarily limited to the product information. If there were no obvious interaction between 50+ characters and other characters, it was coded as not applicable/cannot be coded.

### **Coder Training and Coding Procedure**

Before starting actual coding work, a codebook itemizing variables with definition was developed for ease of data collection. Then, a coding sheet was formulated for coders to record their observations.

In order to reduce bias, two independent coders were employed in this study. One was researcher herself, as the primary coder, and the other one was a male Taiwanese staff of University of Florida, as the secondary coder. The second coder was chosen for three reasons: 1) to reduce gender bias, 2) based on his similar background with the researcher, and 3) based on his familiarity with Taiwan's language and culture.

Once two coders were selected, they were trained in a coding process, including familiarization of the codebook and practice of coding work. After finishing the preparation, two coders viewed and discussed separate sample of 60 advertisements that were not included as part of the current study to improve the coding work. Finally, the two coders worked independently to analyze each television advertisement in the research sample.

### **Inter-Coder Reliability**

There are 30 variables were coded for each sample of unit. The sample size is 607. Therefore, there were totally 18210 (30\*607) coding decisions made by each coder

According to Davis (1997) and Wimmer & Dominick (1991), inter-coder reliability refers to the levels of agreement when coders independently assign the same code to the same stimulus under the same instrument. There are many methods for calculating inter-coder reliability.

Holsti's formula, as listed below, was adopted in this study because it is simple, straightforward, and easy to apply.

$$\text{Reliability} = 2M / N1+N2 \quad (3-1)$$

where:

*M is the total number of coding decisions on which the two coders agree*

*N1 and N2 are the total number of coding decisions made by coders one and two*

In terms of coding decisions made by each coder, two coders disagreed in only 232 of 18210 coding decision. The inter-coder reliability was found to be 98.73%. It is statistically valid because 90% was considered a minimum reliability coefficient when using Holsti's formula (Wimmer & Dominick, 1991).

Slightly changed the original Holsti's formula as following:

$$\text{Reliability} = 2M / N1+N2 \quad (3-2)$$

where:

*M is the total number of commercials on which the two coders agree*

*N1 and N2 are the total number of commercials coded by coders one and two*

When two coders have agreement on all 30 variables of one commercial, it was considered as commercial on which two coders agree. In terms of commercials coded by each coder, two coders agreed in 495 of 607 commercials. The inter-coder reliability was found to be 81.55%. It is generally considered as an acceptable level because it was over 80% (Davis, 1997).

### **Validity**

Validity refers to the accuracy of the procedure. According to Davis (1997), validity is usually defined as "high degree of correspondence between a concept's operational definition and the specific observable event used to record the concept" (p. 270). In other words, does the procedure actually measure what it intends to measure? The most common method used to assess validity in content analysis is the face validity, which is determined subjectively by the expert (Wimmer & Dominick, 1991).

In this study, the total 30 variables were operationally designed base on previous content analysis studies related to the elderly portrayals in television commercials, such as Greco (1993), Peterson and Ross (1997), Simcock and Sudbury (2006), and so on, or related to the Taiwan Times award-winning advertising, such as Cho (2005). Additionally, each code was designed to examine the hypotheses of this study and explore the main purpose of this study: how mature people are portrayed in Taiwan's advertising. Therefore, this study represents acceptable validity because the procedure of this study actually describe measure what it intends to describe.

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS release 13.0) was used for data analysis. Cross-tabulation was used to examine the relationships between variables. Chi-square was used to identify the difference in the frequency distribution among categories and examine if the pattern is significant. Critical p-value (.05) was used to identify the statistical significance.

CHAPTER 4  
FINDINGS

**Description of the Sample**

There were a total 607 qualified television commercials selected from the whole collection of Taiwan Times Advertising Award winners from 1999 to 2004, including 103 commercials in 1999, 108 in 2000, 114 in 2001, 101 in 2002, 88 in 2003 and 93 in 2004, as shown in Table 4-1. The variable “Award Year” indicate the year these television commercials were awarded, not the time periods in which these television commercials were aired.

Table 4-1: Frequency and percent of Taiwan award-winning TV commercial by award year

| Award Year | N   | %     |
|------------|-----|-------|
| 1999       | 103 | 17.0  |
| 2000       | 108 | 17.8  |
| 2001       | 114 | 18.8  |
| 2002       | 101 | 16.6  |
| 2003       | 88  | 14.5  |
| 2004       | 93  | 15.3  |
| Total      | 607 | 100.0 |

Out of a total of 607 commercials, there were 68 (11.2%) commercials coded as lack of people shown and there were 539 (88.8%) commercials that showed people. In those commercials portrayed people, ads with one and two characters (33.6 %) were mostly shown in Taiwan award-winning television commercials, followed by ads with more than ten characters (24.7%), as shown in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2: Frequency and percent of Taiwan award-winning TV commercial by number of people seen in the ads

|                    | Number of people | N   |     | %     |      |
|--------------------|------------------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Ads without people | 0                | 68  | 68  | 11.2  | 11.2 |
|                    | 1-2              | 204 |     | 33.6  |      |
| Ads with people    | 3-5              | 115 | 539 | 18.9  | 88.8 |
|                    | 6-10             | 70  |     | 11.5  |      |
|                    | >10              | 150 |     | 24.7  |      |
| Total              |                  | 607 |     | 100.0 |      |

As shown in the Table 4-3, among 539 commercials containing people, there were 129 (23.9%) commercials reflecting people over 50. Of 129 commercials containing 50+ people, there were 99 (76.7%) commercials contained at least one 50+ male, 63 (48.8%) commercials contained at least one 50+ female, and 33 (=99-66) commercials namely 25.6% contained at least one 50+ male and one 50+ female.

Table 4-3: Frequency and percent of Taiwan award-winning TV commercial by number of 50+ people seen in the ads and gender

|            | Ads with 50+ people |       | Ads with 50+ male |       | Ads with 50+ female |       |
|------------|---------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
|            | N                   | %     | N                 | %     | N                   | %     |
| 0          | 410                 | 76.1  | 30                | 23.3  | 66                  | 51.2  |
| 1          | 77                  | 14.3  | 71                | 55.0  | 48                  | 37.2  |
| 2          | 27                  | 5.0   | 17                | 13.2  | 7                   | 5.4   |
| 3          | 12                  | 2.2   | 4                 | 3.1   | 3                   | 2.3   |
| 4          | 4                   | .7    | 3                 | 2.3   | 2                   | 1.6   |
| 5 and more | 9                   | 1.7   | 4                 | 3.1   | 3                   | 2.4   |
| Total      | 539                 | 100.0 | 129               | 100.0 | 129                 | 100.0 |

### Language

Table 4-4 showed that Chinese (63.6%) was the most used language in Taiwan award-winning television commercials with people, followed by none (14.6%) and mixed (11.9%). Mixed language means that two or more different language used in one commercial, for example, Chinese and Taiwanese or Chinese and English were often used at the same television commercial in these Taiwan award-winning commercials.

More specifically speaking, for those ads with 50+ people, Chinese (48%) was found the most often used one, and then followed by mixed (22.8%), dialect (9.4%), and none (9.4%). For those ads without 50+ people, Chinese (68.4%) was used most often, and then none (16.1%), and mixed (8.5%).

A statistically significant ( $X^2 = 88.350, p < .05$ ) difference was found between ads with and without 50+ people regarding the language used in commercials. In general, Chinese was less

likely to be used in ads with 50+ people (48.0%) than in ads without 50+ people (68.4%). Also, commercials in which there was no speaking role for the character portrayed were less likely to be found in ads with 50+ people (9.4%) compared to ads without 50+ people (16.1%). Dialect (such as Taiwanese) and mixed language (most of them were mix of Chinese and Taiwanese) were found more likely to be used in ads with 50+ people than in ads without 50+ people.

Table 4-4: Cross-tab of language used in the ads with and without 50+ people

|         | Ads with 50+ people<br>(N=129)<br>% | Ads without 50+ people<br>(N=410)<br>% | Ads with people<br>(N=539)<br>% |
|---------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Chinese | 48.0                                | 68.4                                   | 63.6                            |
| Dialect | 9.4                                 | 2.7                                    | 4.3                             |
| English | 6.3                                 | 1.8                                    | 2.9                             |
| Mixed   | 22.8                                | 8.5                                    | 11.9                            |
| None    | 9.4                                 | 16.1                                   | 14.6                            |
| Others  | 3.9                                 | 2.4                                    | 2.8                             |
| Total   | 100.0                               | 100.0                                  | 100.0                           |

$X^2 = 88.350$ ,  $df = 5$ ,  $p (= .000) < .05$

### Product Types

Table 4-5 showed the product categories of the advertised products or services in these commercials. The 539 commercials containing people were grouped into 20 product categories listed in Table 4.4. Financial service (10.2%) was the most frequently occurring one, followed by automobile (8.3%), communication services (8.2%), and non- alcohol beverage (7.6%) in those ads with people. Similar results were found in those ads with people younger than 50. However, the 50+ people were most often seen in the advertising promoting non-fast food (10.6%), public service (10.2%), non-alcohol beverage (8.7%), and automobiles (8.7%).

With regard to product types, there were differences between ads with and without 50+ people. Commercials containing 50+ people were more likely to promote “non-fast food/seasoning” (10.6%) and “public services/public administration” (10.2%) than commercials containing no 50+ people. On the other hand, commercials with 50+ people were less likely to

advertise “apparel and accessories” (1.6% versus 4.2% in ads with 50+ people versus in ads without 50+ people), “beauty aids/cosmetics” (2.4% vs.6.1%), “domestic products” (0.8% vs. 4.6%), and “banking/financial services” (7.1% vs. 11.2%) than commercials without 50+ people. A statistically significant ( $X^2 = 48.245, p < .05$ ) difference existed between ads with and without 50+ people regarding the product types promoted in commercials.

Among 539 Taiwan award-winning television commercials containing people, there were 11 brand names shown over 10 times in total during six years, listed as the following by order: Uni-President, Government, Mitsubishi, TransAsia, McDonald, Ericsson, 7-11, Lottery, TECO, KG Telecom.

Table 4-5: Cross-tab of product categories promoted in the ads with and without 50+ people

|  | Ads with 50+<br>people<br>(N=129)<br>% | Ads without<br>50+ people<br>(N=410)<br>% | Ads with<br>people<br>(N=539)<br>% |
|--|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Fast food                                  | 3.9                                    | 3.9                                       | 3.9                                |
| Non-fast food / seasoning                  | 10.6                                   | 5.5                                       | 6.7                                |
| Restaurant / café                          | .8                                     | 1.7                                       | 1.5                                |
| Alcohol                                    | .8                                     | 1.2                                       | 1.1                                |
| Non- alcohol beverage                      | 8.7                                    | 7.3                                       | 7.6                                |
| Apparel and accessories                    | 1.6                                    | 4.2                                       | 3.6                                |
| Beauty aids / cosmetics                    | 2.4                                    | 6.1                                       | 5.2                                |
| Health product                             | 1.6                                    | 1.2                                       | 1.3                                |
| Household appliances                       | 6.3                                    | 6.6                                       | 6.5                                |
| Domestic products                          | .8                                     | 4.6                                       | 3.7                                |
| Technological products / electric products | 3.5                                    | 5.2                                       | 4.8                                |
| Automobiles / transportation equipment     | 8.7                                    | 8.3                                       | 8.3                                |
| Communication services                     | 7.9                                    | 8.3                                       | 8.2                                |
| Banking / financial services               | 7.1                                    | 11.2                                      | 10.2                               |
| Grocery retail / drug store / pharmacy     | 6.3                                    | 4.4                                       | 4.8                                |
| Public service / public administration     | 10.2                                   | 4.1                                       | 5.6                                |
| Industry/corporate image                   | 3.1                                    | 1.6                                       | 1.9                                |
| Travel / leisure / entertainment           | 1.6                                    | 1.9                                       | 1.9                                |
| Publications / mass media                  | 6.7                                    | 6.7                                       | 6.3                                |
| Others                                     | 7.5                                    | 6.2                                       | 6.9                                |
| Total                                      | 100.0                                  | 100.0                                     | 100.0                              |

$X^2 = 48.245, df = 19, p (= .001) < .05$

## Format

According to data, the most often used format in commercials featuring 50+ people was lifestyle (30.7%) which refers to commercials present the user rather than the product, followed by demonstration (18.9%) which refers to products in the commercials may be demonstrated in use, and slice of life (16.5%) which refers to commercials dramatize real-life situations dealing with a problem. These three formats accounted for over 50% of those commercials with people. In commercials featuring no 50+ people, the first three most used formats were lifestyle, demonstration and slice of life as well, but the order was slightly different. Demonstration (28.5%) was the most often used format in commercials without 50+ people, followed by lifestyle (19.7%) and Slice of life (13.6%).

However, it was more likely to use lifestyle format in ads with 50+ people than in ads without 50+ people and it was less likely to use demonstration format in ads with 50+ people than in ads without 50+ people. There was a significant difference ( $X^2 = 32.321$ ,  $p < .05$ ) between ads with and without 50+ people regarding the format of television commercials.

Table 4-6: Cross-tab of format used in the ads with and without 50+ people

|                       | Ads with 50+ people<br>(N=129)<br>% | Ads without 50+<br>people<br>(N=410)<br>% | Ads with people<br>(N=539)<br>% |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Straight announcement | 3.9                                 | 11.0                                      | 9.4                             |
| Presenter             | 13.8                                | 11.0                                      | 11.7                            |
| Testimonial           | 9.4                                 | 10.0                                      | 9.8                             |
| Demonstration         | 18.9                                | 28.5                                      | 26.3                            |
| Musical               | 2.4                                 | 1.2                                       | 1.5                             |
| Slice of life         | 16.5                                | 13.6                                      | 14.3                            |
| Lifestyle             | 30.7                                | 19.7                                      | 22.3                            |
| Others                | 4.3                                 | 5.0                                       | 4.8                             |
| Total                 | 100.0                               | 100.0                                     | 100.0                           |

$X^2 = 32.321$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p (= .000) < .05$

## Appearance of 50+ People

In those ads featuring 50+ people, when a 50+ character appeared in a scene, he or she usually appeared with others (92.9%) rather than appeared alone (7.1%). They were more likely to appear “with various age groups” (79.9%), and then “with one other younger person only” (9.8%). In less than two percent of the ads were 50+ people featured with one other 50+ person only (1.6%) or with several other 50+ people (1.6%). They were portrayed alone in 7.1% (n=9) of the ads featuring 50+ characters, as data shown in table 4-7.

Table 4-7: Percent of the positioning of 50+ people with others in ads with 50+ people

|                                    | %     |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Alone                              | 7.1   |
| With one other younger person only | 9.8   |
| With one other 50+ person only     | 1.6   |
| With other 50+ people only         | 1.6   |
| With various age groups            | 79.9  |
| Total                              | 100.0 |

N=129

## Setting

As shown in Table 4-8, 50+ people were more often present in public setting (71.7%) than in private setting (19.7%) in Taiwan award-winning television commercials with 50+ people.

Table 4-8: Percent of setting present in ads with 50+ people

|                                  | %     |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Public                           | 71.7  |
| Private                          | 19.7  |
| Combination                      | 6.7   |
| Not applicable / cannot be coded | 2.0   |
| Total                            | 100.0 |

N=129

According to Table 4-9, in private settings, they were more often seen in the living room (12.2%), followed by in the kitchen/dining room (6.7%), indoors away from home (4.7%), other place inside the house (3.5%), and other private settings (1.2%).

Table 4-9: Percent of private setting present in ads with 50+ people

|                              | %    |
|------------------------------|------|
| Living room                  | 12.2 |
| Kitchen / dining room        | 6.7  |
| Indoors away from home       | 4.7  |
| Other place inside the house | 3.5  |
| Other private settings       | 1.2  |

N=129

On the other hand, public places (44.5%), such as streets, stores, restaurants, bus stations, and so on, were where the 50+ people were most often seen in public settings, followed by business office/working place (15.7%), riding inside transportation (9.4%), other public settings (6.7%), school (3.15%), and outdoors away from home (3.15%), as can be seen in Table 4-10.

Table 4-10: Percent of public setting present in ads with 50+ people

|                                 | %     |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Public place                    | 44.50 |
| Business office / working place | 15.70 |
| Riding inside transportation    | 9.40  |
| Other public settings           | 6.70  |
| School                          | 3.15  |
| Outdoors away from home         | 3.15  |

N=129

### Character Types

Table 4-11 indicated that there were 52 (40.2%) commercials featuring 50+ people as major characters, 42 (32.3%) commercials featuring them as minor characters, and 59 (45.7%) commercials featuring them as background characters among those ads with 50+ people (N=129). However, it should be noted that major character, minor characters and background characters could be all featured by different 50+ people in one commercial at the same time.

Table 4-11: Frequency and percent of character types portrayed by 50+ people

|                       | n  | %    |
|-----------------------|----|------|
| Major characters      | 52 | 40.2 |
| Minor characters      | 42 | 32.3 |
| Background characters | 59 | 45.7 |

N=129

## Ethnicity

In commercials featuring 50+ people as major characters, Eastern models, appearing in 43 (82.4%) commercials, were present overwhelmingly compared to Western models in only nine (17.6%) commercials. Similar statistical results was found for those commercials featuring 50+ people as minor characters, as Table 4-12 shown. The 50+ characters were more likely to be presented by Eastern models, such as Taiwanese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other Asians, than Western models in these Taiwan advertising award-winning television commercials with 50+ people. However, there was no significant difference.

Table 4-12: Frequency and percent of ethnicity portrayed by 50+ people

|         | Major |       | Minor |       | Total |       |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|         | N     | %     | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| Eastern | 43    | 82.4  | 37    | 87.8  | 80    | 85.1  |
| Western | 9     | 17.6  | 5     | 12.2  | 14    | 14.9  |
| Total   | 52    | 100.0 | 42    | 100.0 | 94    | 100.0 |

$X^2 = 0.535$ ,  $df=1$ , n.s.

## Role

The analysis for to role portrayed by 50+ people excluded the category for “Others” which included peripheral roles such as teacher, master, neighbor, or passer-by, etcetera, (33.0%) and “cannot be coded” (2.1%) in order to generate more valid results about intimate, proximal relationships between characters. As expected the findings showed that 50+ people were most often portrayed as parents/grandparents (28.7%) because of their age, followed by occupational partners (21.3%), spouse/couple (7.4%), friends (6.4%) and other family members (1.1%), as shown in Table 4-13.

When featured as occupational partners, 50+ people were often been portrayed as boss, superior, or janitorial cleaner. Comparing major and minor characters featured by 50+ people

with regard to role, the results were similar and it was no significant difference was found in this concern.

Table 4-13: Frequency and percent of role portrayed by 50+ people

|                       | <u>Major</u> |       | <u>Minor</u> |       | <u>Total</u> |       |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                       | N            | %     | N            | %     | N            | %     |
| Spouse/couple         | 5            | 8.8   | 2            | 4.9   | 7            | 7.4   |
| Parents/grandparents  | 17           | 33.3  | 10           | 24.4  | 27           | 28.7  |
| Other family members  | 0            | 0     | 1            | 1.2   | 1            | 1.1   |
| Friends               | 3            | 5.9   | 3            | 6.1   | 6            | 6.4   |
| Occupational partners | 11           | 21.6  | 9            | 22.0  | 20           | 21.3  |
| Others                | 14           | 27.5  | 17           | 41.5  | 31           | 33.0  |
| Cannot be coded       | 2            | 2.9   | 0            | 0     | 2            | 2.1   |
| Total                 | 52           | 100.0 | 42           | 100.0 | 94           | 100.0 |

$X^2 = 5.59$ ,  $df=6$ , n.s.

### Competency

According to Table 4-14, 78.7% of 50+ major and minor characters displayed strong competency in the commercials. Only 12.8% of them showed weak competency, for example, uninformed, weak, lazy...etc, and 8.5% of them displayed neither strong nor weak competency in carry out the roles portrayed. There was no significant difference between major and minor characters featured by 50+ people with regard to competency.

Table 4-14: Cross-tab of competency by character types

|                                    | <u>Major</u> |       | <u>Minor</u> |       | <u>Total</u> |       |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                                    | N            | %     | N            | %     | N            | %     |
| Strong competency                  | 41           | 79.5  | 33           | 78.0  | 74           | 78.7  |
| Neither strong nor weak competency | 4            | 7.8   | 4            | 9.8   | 8            | 8.5   |
| Weak competency                    | 7            | 12.7  | 5            | 12.2  | 12           | 12.8  |
| Total                              | 52           | 100.0 | 42           | 100.0 | 94           | 100.0 |

$X^2 = 0.136$ ,  $df=2$ , n.s.

### Product-Related Role

As can be seen in Table 4-15, 50+ characters were often featured as product users (43.6%), followed by decorative roles (37.2%), not applicable (10.7%) and authorities/spokesperson for the products (8.5%). When compared 50+ major with minor characters regarding to their

product-related role, 50+ major characters were more likely than 50+ minor characters to be featured as product users for their advertised products or services. In contrast, 50+ minor characters appeared more often than 50+ major characters as decorative roles in commercials. A statistically significant difference ( $X^2 = 17.512$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was found between 50+ major and 50+ minor characters associated with their product-related role.

Table 4-15: Cross-tab of product-related role by character types

|                           | <u>Major</u> |       | <u>Minor</u> |       | <u>Total</u> |       |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                           | N            | %     | N            | %     | N            | %     |
| Authorities/spokespersons | 7            | 12.7  | 1            | 1.2   | 8            | 8.5   |
| Product users             | 29           | 56.9  | 12           | 29.3  | 41           | 43.6  |
| Decorative roles          | 10           | 18.6  | 25           | 59.8  | 35           | 37.2  |
| Not applicable            | 6            | 11.8  | 4            | 9.7   | 10           | 10.7  |
| Total                     | 52           | 100.0 | 42           | 100.0 | 94           | 100.0 |

$X^2 = 17.512$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p (= .001) < .05$

### Information Role

Table 4-16 showed that 50+ characters were more frequently shown as neither information giver nor information receiver (not applicable, 46.8%) with regard to their information role in commercials. But, they were more likely to be featured as information giver (37.2%) than information receiver (16.0%). Same results found no matter when they were portrayed as major characters or minor characters. No significant difference was found between 50+ major characters and 50+ minor characters in this regard.

Table 4-16: Cross-tab of information role by character types

|                      | <u>Major</u> |       | <u>Minor</u> |       | <u>Total</u> |       |
|----------------------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                      | N            | %     | N            | %     | N            | %     |
| Information giver    | 24           | 46.1  | 11           | 25.6  | 35           | 37.2  |
| Information receiver | 8            | 15.7  | 7            | 17.1  | 15           | 16.0  |
| Not applicable       | 20           | 38.2  | 24           | 57.3  | 44           | 46.8  |
| Total                | 52           | 100.0 | 42           | 100.0 | 94           | 100.0 |

$X^2 = 4.243$ ,  $df=2$ , n.s.

## Activity

As to activities that 50+ characters involved with, working (33.3%) was the most often seen activity in these commercials, followed by others (20.7%), for example, talking, shopping, smiling, ...etc, chatting with others (17.3%), walking/on transportation (13.3%), family event (11.7%), such as wedding ceremony and family reunion, recreation (7.0%), and sitting/taking rest (6.7%).

Table 4-17: Percent of activities 50+ characters involved with

|                             | Major<br>(N=52)<br>% | Minor<br>(N=42)<br>% | Background<br>(N=59)<br>% | Total<br>(N=153)<br>% |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Family events               | 12.7                 | 17.1                 | 6.9                       | 11.7                  |
| Working                     | 36.3                 | 39.0                 | 26.7                      | 33.3                  |
| Recreation                  | 5.9                  | 6.1                  | 8.6                       | 7.0                   |
| Dining                      | 8.8                  | 11.0                 | 6.0                       | 8.3                   |
| Chatting with others        | 20.6                 | 11.0                 | 19.0                      | 17.3                  |
| Walking / on transportation | 8.8                  | 12.2                 | 18.1                      | 13.3                  |
| Sitting / taking rest       | 2.0                  | 2.4                  | 13.8                      | 6.7                   |
| Others                      | 23.5                 | 20.7                 | 18.1                      | 20.7                  |

Table 4-18: Frequency and percent of commercial with 50+ people by award year

|       | N   | %    | Total Ads |
|-------|-----|------|-----------|
| 1999  | 31  | 30.1 | 103       |
| 2000  | 22  | 20.4 | 108       |
| 2001  | 23  | 20.2 | 114       |
| 2002  | 26  | 25.7 | 101       |
| 2003  | 19  | 21.6 | 88        |
| 2004  | 8   | 8.6  | 93        |
| Total | 129 | 21.3 | 607       |

$X^2 = 15.059$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p (=0.01) < .05$

### Others: Ads with 50+ by Award Years

Table 4-18 shows the frequency and percentage of commercials containing 50+ people by award year. The frequencies were range from 8 to 31 and the percentages were range from 8.6% (2004) to 30.1% (1999) per award year. The percent of ads featuring 50+ people were much lower in 2004, only 8.6% commercials containing 50+ people, compared to the percent of ads

featuring 50+ during total six award years. The result shows a statistically significant ( $X^2 = 15.059, p < .05$ ) difference existed when compared the presence of mature people by award year.

### **Test of Hypotheses**

- **Hypothesis 1** predicted that the percentage of mature people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising will be less than the percentage of mature people in population.

- **Hypothesis 2** predicted that the percentage of mature females will be less than the percentage of mature males in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising.

To examine these two hypotheses, two approaches were used to calculate the percentages of mature people in these commercials, 1) the sum of 50+ people, 50+ male and female were seen in these commercials, 2) the numbers of ads with 50+ people, 50+ male and female.

The first approach, the sums of people, 50+ people, 50+ male and 50+ female showed in Taiwanese advertising award-winning television commercials with people, only limited to those ads with less than 10 people, were counted. The reasons were those ads with more than 10 people were coded as 11 instead of coding the exact number of people seen in the commercials. Therefore, the number 11 did not represent the exact number of people showed in the ads.

As shown in Table 4-19, there were totally 1269 people, 84 50+ people, 53 50+ male and 31 50+ female seen in those commercials with people less than 10. In terms of percentage, there were 6.64 % out of all 1269 people shown in these commercials were 50+ people, 4.17% were 50+ male, and 2.48% were 50+ female. Compared to the percentage in Taiwan population, 25.64% were 50+ people, 12.70% were 50+ male, and 12.94% were 50+ female, the percentage for those three groups in these commercials were significantly lower than the percent of these segments in the overall population. Hence, the Hypothesis 1 was supported by the result: the percentage of mature people in Taiwanese advertising award-winning television commercials

(6.64%) were less than the percentage of mature people age over 50 in population (25.64%) and the result showed statistically significant ( $p=.000 < .05$ ).

Moreover, the percentage of mature male in Taiwanese advertising award-winning television commercials (4.17%) did not reflect their proportion of total population (12.7%) either and the result was statistically significant ( $p=.000 < .05$ ). Similarly, the percentage of mature female in these commercials (2.48%) was less than the percentage of mature female in total population (12.94%) and it was a statistical significant result ( $p=.000 < .05$ ).

This results supported Hypothesis 2, as well. According to Table 4-19, the percentage of 50+ female (2.48%) were less than the percentage of 50+ male (4.17%) in Taiwanese advertising award-winning television commercials. There was a significant difference ( $Z=2.38, p=.087 < .05$ ).

Table 4-19: Numbers and percent of 50+ people in ads with people and in Taiwan's population

|  | 50+ people |       | 50+ male  |       | 50+ female |       |
|--|------------|-------|-----------|-------|------------|-------|
|  | n          | %     | n         | %     | n          | %     |
| in ads with people $\leq 10$ *             | 84         | 6.64  | 53        | 4.17  | 31         | 2.48  |
| in Taiwan's population<br>(by Sep, 2006)** | 5,855,443  | 25.64 | 2,899,876 | 12.70 | 2,955,567  | 12.94 |

\* Sum of people shown in these commercials with less than ten people were 1269

\*\* Total population in Taiwan by Sep, 2006 were 22,839,043

The second approach, in terms of ads, the numbers of ads with 50+ people, 50+ male and female were counted. Table 4-20 indicated the percentage of ads with 50+ people, 50+ male and 50+ female among those ads with people less than ten, ads with people more than ten, and ads with people.

The 50+ people were more likely to be seen in ads with more than 10 people than in ads with people less than 10. Although the percentages of ads with 50+ people in ads with people (23.9%) and in ads with people less than ten (16.1%) were lower compared to that in Taiwan's overall population (25.64%), the percentage of ads with 50+ people in those ads containing more

than ten people (43.1%) was much higher compared to the percentage of people in Taiwan population (25.64%). Therefore, the results did not fully support hypothesis one.

Table 4-20: Numbers and percent of ads with 50+ people

|   | ads with 50+ people<br>% | ads with 50+ male<br>% | ads with 50+ male<br>% |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| in ads with people $\leq 10$<br>(N=389) | 16.1                     | 11.5                   | 7.3                    |
| in ads with people $> 10$<br>(N=150)    | 43.1                     | 35.4                   | 22.6                   |
| in ads with people<br>(N=539)           | 23.9                     | 18.4                   | 11.7                   |

No matter in those ads with people less than 10, ads with people more than 10, or ads with people, the percentage of ads with 50+ male were higher than the percentage of ads with 50+ female. The results supported hypothesis two.

- **Hypothesis 3** predicted that mature people in Taiwan’s award-winning television advertising are more likely to be portrayed in a positive way.

Table 4-15 showed that no matter when 50+ characters featured as major characters or minor characters, they were more likely to display strong competency in carrying out the role portrayed. In other words, the 50+ people were more likely to be portrayed in a positive way in Taiwanese advertising award-winning television commercials. This hypothesis was supported by the results of data analysis.

- **Hypothesis 4** predicted that mature people in Taiwan’s award-winning television advertising are more likely to be shown with others.

As shown in Table 4-7, only 7.1% out of 129 commercials containing 50+ people featured the 50+ character alone. In other words, there were 92.9% commercials containing 50+ people portrayed 50+ characters with others. Therefore, the results of finding supported this hypothesis.

- **Hypothesis 5** predicted that mature people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising are more likely to be portrayed as major roles.

As can be seen in Table 4-11, there were 52 (40.2%) commercials featuring 50+ people as major characters, 42 (32.3%) as minor characters, and 59 (45.7%) as background characters out of 129 commercials containing 50+ people. Thus, there is no preference or intendance to portray 50+ people as major characters. Therefore, the results did not support this hypothesis.

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how mature people were portrayed in Taiwan award-winning television commercials. A content analysis based on 607 Taiwan Times Advertising Award-winning television commercials from 1999 to 2004 was conducted. A total 129 commercials containing mature people were further analyzed. Built on similar studies undertaken in US and UK, this current study reinforced the findings that mature people are proportionately underrepresented in advertising in comparison to the overall population. When the total numbers of people in the commercials were used as a measure of representation of mature people, the mature people age over 50 represent only 6.64 percent and were hugely underrepresented when compared to that 25.64 percent of the same segments in total Taiwan's population. Mature female were especially less likely to appear in these television commercials than male. In conclusion, the percentage of mature people over 50, particularly female, in these Taiwan award-winning commercials did not reflect their number in the population.

The results of this study also support those of Greco (1993), Peterson and Ross (1997) and Simcock and Sudbury (2006) that mature people were generally portrayed in the positive way. They were more likely to show competency, such as active, authoritative, or controlling, in carrying out the roles portrayed. It also reinforces Taiwan's Hofstede's cultural dimensions scores that Taiwan is a collectivistic and long-term orientation society which tends to respect elder and tradition.

Mature people rarely appeared alone in Taiwan award-winning commercials containing 50+ people. They usually showed with other age groups. These finding were consistent with Greco (1993) study. It was probably because that most of products did not target on mature

people only, therefore, mature people showed with others can enrich the content of commercials. The result also reinforces Taiwan's Hofstede's cultural dimensions scores that Taiwan is a collectivistic society which tends to portray people in groups than as individuals in advertising.

Of five hypotheses in this study, only hypothesis 5 was not supported by the finding. With regard to role prominence, the tendency of featuring mature people as major role characters were not more than as minor roles and background role characters.

Chinese was less likely to be used but dialects and mixed language, often a mixed use of Chinese and Taiwanese, were more likely to be used while 50+ characters were involved in these commercials. These findings imply that dialects were used more often in those commercials featuring 50+ characters, probably reflecting the language use among different generations in Taiwan. Older generation often speak dialect, such as Taiwanese, in their daily life. Therefore, in commercials with 50+ people, using dialect are more realistic and familiar to the audiences.

Consistent with previous studies, this study also found that mature people appeared in advertising for a wide range of products and services. In Taiwan award-winning commercials, they were often seen in commercials promoting on non-fast food, public service, non-alcohol beverage and automobiles. On the other hand, similar with Simcock and Sudbury (2006) finding, they were underrepresented in advertisements for products such as apparel and accessories, beauty aids/cosmetics and domestic products. From a strategic standpoint it may be inappropriate to use mature people for products, such as cosmetics, that are targeting at younger age group. However, the finding did not support Greco (1993) and Zhang et al. (2006) studies which found mature people often appear in ads for health-related products. It was probably because in this study, the commercials promoting on health-related products were not much seen in these award-

winning commercials, although the percentage of health products in ads with 50+ people (1.6%) was slightly higher than the percentage of health products in ads with people (1.3%).

With regard to format, lifestyle was the most often used format in commercials featuring 50+ people. The lifestyle format was defined as the commercial present the user rather than the product. For example, the commercial presents an active grandfather participate his grandson's basketball game to show the grandfather having strong competency in his daily life, but no related product information were spoken or provided in this commercial for promoting a financial service. When lifestyle was the format used in commercials featuring 50+ people, commercials were more often showing family scene or placing an emphasis on family value. Additionally, demonstration and slice of life formats were often used in commercials with 50+ people as well.

The findings showed similar conclusions with Greco (1993) study regarding commercial settings where mature characters are presented. They tend to appear in public settings, especially in public place (streets, stores...etc) and working place. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that working was the most often activity which 50+ people were involved with in these commercials and they were often portrayed as occupational partners.

When 50+ people were featured as major or minor characters, they were more likely to be portrayed as Eastern than Western. This finding did not reflect Wang et al. (1997) study regarding using more Western appeals in Taiwanese magazine advertisements. The differences may be due to the different advertising types. Same with language use, using Eastern rather than Western seems to be more familiar and intimate to Taiwanese audiences.

It was expected to find that mature people were usually portrayed as parents/grandparents and occupational partners. It was probably because their age and experience, mature people often

featured as authoritative seniors. However, as an occupation partner, an mature character was featured either as the boss, the higher among the high class, or the janitorial cleaner, which means the lower among the low class. It seems that mature people were stereotypically portrayed regarding to their roles.

Regarding to product roles, 50+ people tended to present as product users and decorative roles when they were featured as major and minor characters. More specifically, 50+ major characters were more likely to appear as product users and 50+ minor characters more often appear as decorative roles.

In Taiwan award-winning television commercials, mature people were usually featured as information give rather than information receiver. It was common to see an old character giving advice, although not necessarily related to product information to other characters. For example, a mother taught her son how to choose a wife. On the other hand, when mature people were portrayed as information receivers, they often showed weak competency, such as uninformed or old-fashioned.

### **Implications for Advertising Practitioners**

These findings can provide advertising practitioners as an overall image of current portrays of mature people in Taiwan advertising award-winning commercials. It is noteworthy that the buying power of mature people is increasing which means a highly profitable market for advertisers to enter in. On the other hand, it is important to note that several stereotypical images, such authoritative seniors and uninformed elderly, might limit the creativity of advertising content and influence the feeling of audiences and then alienate the potential customers. Advertising practitioners should use stereotype more carefully and create more effective communication to catch their attention.

### **Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research**

There are some limitations of this study that should be taken into considerations when looking at this study and conducting in the future research. The first and the most important limitation is the sample in this study because it only included commercials from the Taiwan Times Advertising Awards. It is reasonable to expect that they may reflect different presentations of mature people for different types of commercials, such as those broadcasts during prime time or only on local network, or different types of media, such as magazine advertisements. In other words, although some evidences of mature people portrayals in award-winners are found, this doesn't assert that such portrayals also exist in other non-award-winning commercials or in advertising in other media.

Based on this limitation, the researcher suggests that future studies can 1) apply this coding system on different award in Taiwan or different types of award-winning advertisement samples, such as print advertisement, 2) conduct content analysis of different types of commercials, such as prime-time television commercials, 3) examine the portrayals of mature people in different media, such as print advertisement, outdoor advertisement, internet advertisement or prime-time television program.

Second, coders' subjective perception about mature people, especially as to identify the mature people and determine their competency, is another limitation for this study. In addition, the coding system of this study was mainly based on studies from UK and US because of the scarcity of relevant studies in Taiwan. Therefore, the findings could only provide a general image of how mature people were portrayed in Taiwan award-winning commercials, rather than reveal the insight of these portrayals.

With the limitations discussed above, the researcher suggests to 1) increase more research efforts related to mature people based on Taiwan's data in order to expand the scope of literature

2) trace the changes of portrayals of mature people shown in Taiwan award-winning commercials for the next following years, 3) conduct a cross-culture analysis of portrays of mature people in Taiwan and other country's award-winning commercials to explore the culture differences.

Third, this study did not compare the portrayals of mature consumers to that of younger consumers. Therefore, the researcher suggests that future studies can examine if there are differences among the portrayals of different age groups by applying this coding system on younger people in Taiwan's award-winning television advertising.

Finally, this study did not explore how mature consumers feel about their representation and portrayal in award-winning commercials. The researcher also suggests that future studies can dabble in this part. It will provide different meaningful and helpful information for advertiser to create more effective communications toward to mature audience.

APPENDIX  
CODE BOOK FOR THE PORTRAYAL OF OLDER PEOPLE  
IN TAIWAN'S AWARD-WINNING TELEVISION COMMERCIALS 1999-2004

Coder ID: \_\_\_\_\_

ADID # \_\_\_\_\_

(Categorized by the showing order, start with YEAR01, YEAR02, and YEAR03 . . . etc. For example: the first ad of 1999 will be categorized as 199901.)

Variable 1: Award Year

- \_\_\_ (1) 1999 (22<sup>nd</sup> Times Advertising Awards)
- \_\_\_ (2) 2000 (23<sup>rd</sup> Times Advertising Awards)
- \_\_\_ (3) 2001 (24<sup>th</sup> Times Advertising Awards)
- \_\_\_ (4) 2002 (25<sup>th</sup> Times Advertising Awards)
- \_\_\_ (5) 2003 (26<sup>th</sup> Times Advertising Awards)
- \_\_\_ (6) 2004 (27<sup>th</sup> Times Advertising Awards)

Variables 2-6: Ads with People

2. Number of people in the ad: \_\_\_\_\_

(Count only human beings in the ads. Ads with only body parts (such as hands) or bodies without faces are not classified as ads with people (Greco, 1993, p.146); not drawings, cartoons, puppet characters, and any computer-generated graphics.) If more than 10 characters are in a scene, indicate "more than 10." If none, SKIP ALL the following items.

3. Primary language used in the ad:

- \_\_\_ (1) Chinese
- \_\_\_ (2) dialects (Taiwanese, Hakka . . . etc.)
- \_\_\_ (3) English
- \_\_\_ (4) mixed
- \_\_\_ (5) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ (6) none
- \_\_\_ (7) cannot be coded

4. What product category is promoted in the ad?

- (1) fast food
- (2) non-fast food / seasoning
- (3) restaurants / cafes
- (4) tobacco
- (5) alcohol
- (6) non-alcohol beverages
- (7) apparel and accessories
- (8) beauty aids / cosmetics
- (9) health products (such as health food, medicine, health equipment . . .)
- (10) household appliances (such as washing machine, air conditioner . . .)
- (11) domestic products (such as toothpaste, soap, cleaners . . .)
- (12) technological products / electric products
- (13) automobiles / transportation equipment
- (14) electric, water, gas, and waste management services
- (15) communication services
- (16) banking / financial services
- (17) grocery retail, drug store & pharmacy
- (18) public services / public administration
- (19) industry/corporate image
- (20) culture and education
- (21) travel / leisure /entertainment
- (22) publications / mass media (including website)
- (23) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please specify the brand name of product or service promoted in the ad:

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Based on the description below, indicate the ad format demonstrated by the commercial:  
(Arens, 1999, p.395~397)

- \_\_\_\_ (1) straight announcement  
(An announcer delivers the sales message on camera or off screen, as a voiceover, while a demonstration, slide, or film shows on screen.)
- \_\_\_\_ (2) presenter  
(A person or character presents the product and carry the sales message.)
- \_\_\_\_ (3) testimonial  
(A satisfied user tells how effective the product is.)
- \_\_\_\_ (4) demonstration  
(Products may be demonstrated in use, in competition, or before and after.)
- \_\_\_\_ (5) musical  
(The entire message may be sung or orchestras may play symphonic or popular arrangements.)
- \_\_\_\_ (6) slice of life - problem solution  
(Commercials dramatize real-life situations. Often the situation deals with a problem.)
- \_\_\_\_ (7) lifestyle  
(Commercials present the user rather than the product.)
- \_\_\_\_ (8) others / cannot be determined

Variables 7-13: Ads with 50+ People

7. Number of people perceived to be over 50 in the ad: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Over 50 is determined by direct mention of age over 50, gray hair or white hair, wrinkling of the skin around the face, neck, and/or hands, use of ambulatory aids, canes or wheelchairs, reference to being retired, reference to as “grandmother” or “grandfather”, and a portrayal as a parent of a son or daughter who was middle-aged or older) (Greco, 1993, Simcock & Sudbury, 2006) If none, SKIP ALL the following items.

8. Number of male 50+ people in the ad: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Number of female 50+ people in the ad: \_\_\_\_\_

10. How are people 50+ featured in the ad?

- (1) alone
- (2) with one other younger person only
- (3) with one other 50+ person only
- (4) with other 50+ people only
- (5) with various age groups

11. In which kind of setting do the characters operate?

- (1) private (Go To Item 12)
- (2) public (SKIP TO Item 13)
- (3) combination (Go To Item 12)
- (4) not applicable / cannot be coded (SKIP TO Item 14)

12. Specify all the private setting(s) seen in the ad.

- (1) kitchen/ dining room
- (2) living room
- (3) bedroom
- (4) other places inside the house
- (5) indoors away from home
- (6) other private setting: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

13. Specify all the public setting(s) seen in the ad.

- (1) public place
- (2) riding inside transportation
- (3) business office / working place
- (4) school
- (5) outdoors away from home
- (6) other public setting: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Variables 14-20: Portrayals of the 50+ Major Character(s) in the Ad

14. Are 50+ people one of major character(s) in the ad?

(Major characters are defined as people who appear the central to the ad and who have a prominent role in product promotion. If the character is a spokesperson, is on camera for more than one-half of the ad, or speaks throughout the ad as a main character or reference, they are considered a major character. There could be more than one major character in a commercial.) (Greco, 1993, Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No (SKIP TO Item 21)

15. Primary ethnicity presented by 50+ major character(s) in the ad:

- (1) Eastern  
(Eastern models include characters who are Taiwanese, Cantonese, Singaporean, Korean, or other Asian groups) (Cho, 2005, p.34)
- (2) Western  
(Westerns are people originally from North America, Latin America, Europe, or other non-Asian groups) (Cho, 2005, p.34)

16. The role portrayed by the major 50+ character(s) in the ad (select one):

- (1) spouse / couple
- (2) parents / grandparents
- (3) other family members
- (4) friends
- (5) occupational partners
- (6) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- (7) not applicable / cannot be coded

17. In what activity are the major 50+ characters engaged?

- (1) family events
- (2) working
- (3) recreation
- (4) dining
- (5) sleeping
- (6) chatting with others

- \_\_\_ (7) walking / on transportation
- \_\_\_ (8) sitting / taking rest
- \_\_\_ (9) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

18. Competency of the primary 50+ major character

- \_\_\_ (1) strong competency  
(The character displays mental and physical competence in carrying out the role portrayed. The character is shown as authoritative, skillful or controlling, and enjoys a particular activity.) (Peterson & Ross, 1997; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)
- \_\_\_ (2) neither strong nor weak competency  
(The character's display or presentation of skill is neither authoritative nor unauthoritative, but can be considered relatively non-descript.)
- \_\_\_ (3) weak competency  
(The character displays mental or physical incompetence in carry out the role portrayed, exemplified by the appearance of being impaired, helpless, uninformed, weak, lazy, a victim, or displaying stereotypically negative behavior associated with age, such as bad temper, forgetfulness) (Peterson & Ross, 1997; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)

19. Product-related role of the primary 50+ major character

- \_\_\_ (1) authorities / spokespersons for the product
- \_\_\_ (2) product user
- \_\_\_ (3) decorative role
- \_\_\_ (4) not applicable / cannot be coded

20. Information role of the primary 50+ major character

- \_\_\_ (1) information giver  
(The character provides information to others present in the ad or in the audience) (Greco, 1993, p.146)
- \_\_\_ (2) information receiver  
(The character is categorized as the recipient of information about a product or service) (Greco, 1993, p.146)
- \_\_\_ (3) not applicable / cannot be coded

Variables 21-27: Portrayals of the 50+ Minor Character(s) in the Ad

21. Are 50+ people featured as minor character(s) in the ad?

(Minor/supporting character(s) are defined as people who play a supporting role in product promotion on ads. The character(s) 1) may not have a major speaking part, 2) are not scene as the prominent reference for other characters in the commercial, or 3) is on camera for less than one-half of the ad. There could be more than one minor character in a commercial) (Greco, 1993, Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)

\_\_\_ (1) Yes

\_\_\_ (2) No (SKIP TO Item 28)

22. Primary ethnicity presented by 50+ minor character(s) in the ad:

\_\_\_ (1) Eastern

(Eastern models include characters who are Taiwanese, Cantonese, Singaporean, Korean, or other Asian groups) (Cho, 2005, p.34)

\_\_\_ (2) Western

(Westerns are people originally from North America, Latin America, Europe, or other non-Asian groups) (Cho, 2005, p.34)

23. The role portrayed by the minor 50+ character(s) in the ad (select one):

\_\_\_ (1) spouse / couple

\_\_\_ (2) parents / grandparents

\_\_\_ (3) other family members

\_\_\_ (4) friends

\_\_\_ (5) occupational partners

\_\_\_ (6) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ (7) not applicable / cannot be coded

24. In what activity are the minor 50+ characters engaged?

\_\_\_ (1) family events

\_\_\_ (2) working

\_\_\_ (3) recreation

\_\_\_ (4) dining

\_\_\_ (5) sleeping

- \_\_\_ (6) chatting with others/ speaking to others
- \_\_\_ (7) walking / on transportation
- \_\_\_ (8) sitting / taking rest
- \_\_\_ (9) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

25. Competency of the primary 50+ minor character

- \_\_\_ (1) strong competency  
(The character displays mental and physical competence in carrying out the role portrayed. The character is shown as authoritative, skillful or controlling, and enjoys a particular activity.) (Peterson & Ross, 1997; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)
- \_\_\_ (2) neither strong nor weak competency  
(The character's display or presentation of skill is neither authoritative nor unauthoritative, but can be considered relatively non-descript.)
- \_\_\_ (3) weak competency  
(The character displays mental or physical incompetence in carry out the role portrayed, exemplified by the appearance of being impaired, helpless, uninformed, weak, lazy, a victim, or displaying stereotypically negative behavior associated with age, such as bad temper, forgetfulness) (Peterson & Ross, 1997; Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)

26. Product-related role of the primary 50+ minor character

- \_\_\_ (1) authorities / spokespersons for the product
- \_\_\_ (2) product user
- \_\_\_ (3) decorative role
- \_\_\_ (4) not applicable / cannot be coded

27. Information role of the primary 50+ minor character

- \_\_\_ (1) information giver  
(The character provides information to others present in the ad or in the audience) (Greco, 1993, p.146)
- \_\_\_ (2) information receiver  
(The character is categorized as the recipient of information about a product or service) (Greco, 1993, p.146)
- \_\_\_ (3) not applicable / cannot be coded

Variables 28-29: Portrayals of the 50+ Background Character(s) in the Ad

28. Are there people 50+ featured as background character(s) in the ad?

(Background character(s) are people who are not actively involved in ad's message, but whose presence may give the ad greater context. The character(s) do not speak and are seen only for a few seconds; camera does not zoom in on them. These people are more a face in the crowd or passer-by.) (Greco, 1993, Simcock & Sudbury, 2006)

\_\_\_ (1) Yes

\_\_\_ (2) No (SKIP Item 29)

29. In what activity are the 50+ background characters engaged?

\_\_\_ (1) family events

\_\_\_ (2) working

\_\_\_ (3) recreation

\_\_\_ (4) dining

\_\_\_ (5) sleeping

\_\_\_ (6) chatting with others

\_\_\_ (7) walking / on transportation

\_\_\_ (8) sitting / taking rest

\_\_\_ (9) others: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Other Observations:

Please specify any other observations which could be valuable to understanding this ad:

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Tzu-Yin Chen was born and raised in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. She was awarded a bachelor degree from National Taipei University in 2002, with a major in cooperative economics. Following graduation, she worked as marketing assistant at Euzion Industries Inc., a distributor of GE TOSHIBA Silicones Co., Ltd. In fall 2005, she came to the University of Florida to pursue her master's degree in advertising. After finishing the study at the University of Florida, she plans to go back to Taiwan and continue working in marketing area.