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中文美容用品廣告詞之社會語用分析

Analyzing Advertisements of Beauty Products in Mandarin Magazines:

Sociopragmatic Approach

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ANALYZING ADVERTISEMENTS OF BEAUTY PRODUCTS IN MANDARIN MAGAZINES:  
SOCIOPRAGMATIC APPROACH

BY

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## 摘要

本論文探討在女性時尚雜誌中，美容用品廣告所使用的社會語用策略及語言手段。在本研究中，以 Cook (2001)的廣告方法，Searle (1969)的適切條件，Grice (1975)的合作原則，以及 Leech (1983)的禮貌原則做為分析的準則。

研究中分析的資料來自兩本女性時尚雜誌，*Beauty* 和 *Elle*。在語料量化分析方面，收錄了 200 條廣告詞，均分為兩類美容用品：化妝品和保養品。此外，在訪談質化分析方面，有 12 位女性受訪，以便評量 4 條選定的廣告詞之可信度。

語料的量化分析顯示：(1) 不同種類的美容用品有偏好的廣告方式。(2) 合作原則和禮貌原則的分配情形不同。(3) 以女性意識形態來說，化妝品廣告和保養品廣告有相異之處。(4) 不同的語言手段被用來廣告這兩類美容用品。

訪談的質化分析顯示：(1) 受訪者的社會背景(教育程度和年齡)影響她們對廣告的態度。(2) 不同的廣告方式影響受訪者對廣告的態度。(3) 廣告的類別不影響受訪者在適切條件、合作原則、以及禮貌原則上對廣告的態度。基於以上的分析，可以發現潛在消費者對說服力的認知與廣告主不吻合。也就是說，消費者不認為所分析的廣告有說服力，這顯示廣告無法滿足消費者的需求。本研究建議廣告主應該從消費者的觀點出發並補救這個問題。

## Abstract

This study aims at exploring the sociopragmatic strategies and the linguistic devices employed in the beauty product advertisements in women's fashion magazines. In this study, Cook's advertising approach (2001), Searle's Felicity Conditions (1969), Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), and Leech's Politeness Principle (1983) are the criteria for analyses.

This study takes both quantitative analyses and qualitative analyses. For quantitative analyses, 200 pieces of advertisements were collected from two women's fashion magazines, *Beauty* and *Elle*. These data are equally distributed to two types of beauty products: cosmetic products and skin-care products. In addition, for qualitative analyses, twelve women were interviewed to evaluate the effectiveness of the elements contained in four pieces of advertisements selected.

Results of quantitative analyses show (1) that hard-sell approach is preferred on beauty products; (2) that the distribution of the maxims of Cooperative Principle is that Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim are obeyed most frequently, but Quantity Maxim is violated most often; (3) that the distribution of the maxims of Politeness Principle is that Tact Maxim and Modesty Maxim are implemented the most frequently; (4) that cosmetic ads and skin-care ads emphasize on different

components of woman ideology; (5) different linguistic devices are used to advertise the two types of beauty products.

The qualitative analyses of the data show (1) that the subjects' social backgrounds (in this case, education level and age) do affect their attitudes of persuasiveness toward advertisements; (2) that different advertising approaches do influence the subjects' attitudes toward the advertisements; (3) that advertisements of different types of beauty products do not influence the subjects' attitudes toward the advertisements no matter by Felicity Conditions, by Cooperative Principle, or by Politeness Principle. Based on the analyses given above, it is found that the subjects' perception of persuasiveness does not match with that of the advertiser's. To these potential consumers, those advertisements analyzed are not persuasive, which indicates that the advertisements fail to satisfy the consumer's demands. It is suggested that the advertiser takes the consumer's perspective to promote the persuasiveness of advertisements and the consumer's acceptance of the commodities to be sold.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Advertisement as a Way of Persuasion

The general objective of advertising is to persuade the consumer to buy a certain product or a particular idea. To be specific, functions of advertising can be divided into three layers, including (1) to identify a product (or an idea), (2) to convey the characteristics of the product and differentiate it from the others, and (3) to induce the potential consumer to buy the product (or the idea) advertised. In other words, advertisements are a way to substantiate the advertiser's persuasion.

Usually, the content of an advertisement is asserted through verbal expression, to present the referent which the advertiser would want the consumer to accept, to catch the consumer's attention, to change their attitude, and, eventually, to buy the product. Since different consumers have different interests and needs, the advertiser, in order to reach these goals, would appeal to different strategies, linguistic as well as nonlinguistic. Since in female magazines, apparently women are the target consumers of the products advertised, it is presumed that female images would be appreciated through specific application of sociopragmatic strategies and linguistic devices related to these functional strategies.

## 1.2 Research Questions

Since this thesis aims to explore the functional strategies and the related linguistic devices employed in the beauty product advertisements in women's fashion magazines, the following research questions are to be answered.

- (1) What are the approaches of advertising adopted in beauty products advertisements?
- (2) What are the sociopragmatic strategies adopted in beauty products advertisements?
- (3) What are the linguistic devices used to reflect the functional requirements in beauty product advertisements?
- (4) In advertisements, do different kinds of beauty products prescribe different interactions between advertising approaches and sociopragmatic strategies/linguistic devices?

## 1.3 Hypotheses

In this study, it is hypothesized

- (1) that the approach of persuasion preferred by cosmetic ads is different from that by skin-care ads;
- (2) that pragmatic factors (specifically, felicity conditions, Cooperative Principle, and Politeness Principle) would give different influences to different kinds of beauty

products advertisements;

(3) that ideology of women would have significant influences on the ways how beauty products are advertised;

(4) that the consumer's age and education level would have a significant influence on their attitudes toward beauty products, and

(5) that different linguistic devices are used to cope with the functional needs of different types of beauty products described in the four preceding hypotheses.

#### **1.4 Outline of this Thesis**

This thesis contains five chapters. Chapter One gives an introductory statement of this study, including some basic concepts of advertising, the research questions, and the related hypotheses. Chapter Two presents literature review on three aspects of advertisements—the approaches of advertising, the sociopragmatic controls behind advertisements, and the correspondent linguistic devices. Chapter Three describes the research design of this study, including methods of data collection and ways of data analyses. Chapter Four depicts the results of quantitative analyses of the written data. Chapter Five describes the results of qualitative analyses of the interviews. Chapter Six summarizes the major findings, presents a general conclusion to this study, and offers suggestions for future studies.



## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

This chapter reviews previous studies related to beauty product advertisements in female magazines from three aspects, including model and techniques of advertising, sociopragmatic principles, and linguistic strategies.

#### 2.1 Advertising Aspect

##### 2.1.1 The model

Advertising is a form of persuasive communication. In order to persuade the consumer to buy the products promoted, the advertiser uses various strategies to attract the consumer's attention and to produce different effects. To understand these multiple effects and the interrelationships among them, Lavidge and Steiner (1961) propose a model to describe the hierarchy of these effects.

According to Lavidge and Steiner (1961), six steps in the procedure of communication are identified—*awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase*. To be specific, at first step, the customer becomes aware of the product through advertising; at second step, the customer's knowledge about the product is secured; at third step, the customer's liking of the product is ensured; at fourth step, the consumer's preference of the product over other competitor brands, is confirmed;

at fifth step, the customer's desire to purchase the product is convicted; and at final step, the consumer's purchase of the product is realized. Lavidge and Steiner (1961) suggest that these six steps can further be categorized into three dimensions—cognitive, affective, and conative, and the goal of an advertisement is to promote the merchandize through these three dimensions of attitudes. On cognitive dimension, every promotion aims at making the consumer become aware of the product, and then gather related knowledge of the product. On affective dimension, with the help of the promotion, the consumer establishes positive affective attachment to the product, and then yields preference to this product rather than the others. On conative dimension, after reading the ads, the consumer is convinced, and thus purchases the product. In sum, an advertisement implies a procedure to make a consumer move from the initial stage of awareness to the final stage of purchase. When the final step is reached, the consumer is successfully persuaded, and the product is sold.

### **2.1.2 Advertising discourse and ideology**

Advertising ideology and discourse interact with each other. Ideology influences language use; in return, through the observation of language use, people recognize what ideology is and how it is constructed. According to Del Saz-Rubio and Pennock-Speck (2009), ideology presents the way that people perceive the world and themselves. It is the mental framework about the way that the society works.

Advertising discourse is a social and persuasive discourse which reflects and creates an ideology. In this way, advertisements play a part in the construction of meaning through the ideology built.

In advertisements, as in the other kinds of communication, meaning is constructed and conveyed through a continuous process of encoding and decoding. Moreover, Williamson (1978) proposes that advertising transforms the practical *use value* into the symbolic *exchange value*. She calls this transformation “metastructure,” in which “meaning is not just ‘decoded’ from linguistic structure, but transferred to create another.” In other words, the consumer does not just receive meaning from advertising; they re-create it. Similarly, Hall (1997) suggests that members of the same culture must share concepts, images, and ideas, which enable them to think and feel about the world in the same way, and, thus, to interpret the world in a similar way. Advertisements are constructed and produced on the basis of such “shared meanings.”

In addition, advertising works the best when it works with the existing ideology in the consumer. According to Hidalgo (2000), the consumer uses her knowledge to construct her own world. Advertising discourse can reinforce the existing world schema and the identity of a given social group. For example, since advertising depicts lifestyles and self-presentation which individuals use to define their roles in society, it is anticipated that gender identity is constructed in advertisements

(Plakoyiannaki and Zotos, 2009). Moreover, advertising on mass media has been a major means to introduce stereotypical female role. It plays a powerful role in depicting women, not just by how they actually behave, but also by how people think women should behave. According to Goffman (1979), this depiction of women even serves to convince people how women are, should be, and want to be. In women's magazines, it has clearly been shown that women have been assigned decorative roles attached with physical attractiveness, such as sex objects (Zotos and Plakoyiannaki, 2009). In other words, from the advertisements, the consumer receives not only the information about the products, but also the social-cultural expectations about women.

A woman ideology constructed and represented in the advertisements consists of three elements: (1) desirable physical features for women, including a slender figure and youthful, white, and clean appearance in order to be "healthy beauty," to make them feel confident; (2) any bodily conditions opposite to the desirable features are considered as problematic, women with which are perceived to be lack of confidence; and (3) the belief that bodily management can be done effortlessly and effectively. These stereotypical expectations urge women to make adjustments in order to improve their looks in order to become better persons. In this way, advertisements, as a reflection of the social value system, also denote social-cultural discrimination, which implies that female is a lesser gender, and that women are

intrinsically unconfident of their appearance, talent, and value.

### 2.1.3 Strategies for persuasion in advertising

In order to persuade the consumer to buy the product, the advertiser uses a variety of advertising strategies. Cook (2001) distinguishes between *hard-sell* advertising and *soft-sell* advertising. Hard-sell advertising makes a direct appeal to the customer, while soft sell is more subtle, relying on mood and “on the implication that life will be better with a given product.” Another way to categorize the strategies of advertising is Simpson’s (2001) *reason* and *tickle*. According to Simpson, reason advertisements suggest people why they should buy a given product, i.e. giving reasons. On the other hand, tickle advertisements appeal to people’s emotion, mood, and humor. In other words, *reason* equals fact and needs, while *tickle* equals emotion, imagination, and desires. Every advertisement contains both of the two appeals, more or less. However, the concepts of reason and tickle are related with strength of (in)directness. The greater the appeal to reason, the more direct the discourse is; the greater the appeal to tickle, the more indirect the discourse is.

Maynard (1995) analyzes the advertising text based on a scale of *intimacy* and *product alone*. Intimacy refers to the closeness between the text and the reader. The feeling of intimacy can be enhanced when the advertisement talks in accordance with the way the consumer does. Once the intimacy between the consumer and the

advertisement is obtained, the possibility of buying the product is derived. On the other hand, product alone, which pursues the least intimacy, is about the information of the product, without any emotional attachment to the consumer. On top of the concepts of intimacy and product alone in the advertisements, gender difference is an influential control. Maynard (1995) indicates that intimacy appears more often in young women's magazines, while product alone strategy is targeted at young men.

Moreover, Hudson (1980) indicates that language may reflect the social relations between the participants of communication, most particularly the *power* and *solidarity*. The former is associated with long social distance, controlling others, superiority, and high social status; the latter is related to closeness and friendliness. Following Hudson's idea, in advertising, solidarity, not power, is excessively used to create a sense of friendship and empathy between the advertiser and the consumer since it is believed that when being treated as a "close friend," the consumer becomes more emotionally involved, and thus more likely to be persuaded, more willing to buy the product. These strategies for persuasion in advertising are related to this study and will be discussed in the following chapters.

## **2.2 Sociopragmatic Aspect**

In previous section, it is proposed that the major goal of an advertisement is to persuade the consumer to buy the product. In order to reach this illocutionary goal,

pragmatic principles must have been adopted, and it is in obeying or violating the principles and their maxims and submaxims, the needs of advertisement are satisfied.

## **2.2.1 Speech act theory**

### **2.2.1.1 Components of a speech act**

According to the speech act theory proposed by Austin (1962), language users make utterances in order to perform certain actions. That is, when people say something, people do something at the same time. Austin indicates that three kinds of act are contained in a speech act—locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. First, a locutionary act is an act to say something. By saying, it means that people perform the act of uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference. Second, an illocutionary act is an act to do something, which is the communicative purpose of that specific verbal expression. Third, perlocutionary act is an act that casts a psychological effect onto the hearer. In short, when language users speak, they put certain expressions together to make a meaningful utterance, with a certain intention in their mind, and certain impacts on their interlocutors.

Advertising is a speech act of persuasion. In advertisements, the advertiser by saying the advertising expressions, tries to persuade and may actually persuade the readers to buy the products advertised. That is, the illocutionary purpose is to persuade the potential consumer to buy the target products, and the perlocutionary

force is the effect of the advertisement in changing the consumer's thought, their attitude, and thus their behavior (i.e. their buying the product).

Following Austin, Searle (1969) classifies illocutionary acts into five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. First, *assertives* illustrate what the speaker believes to be the truth or a lie. The illocutionary point of these acts is to commit the truth of the expressed proposition. The examples are stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining and reporting. Advertising discourse uses assertives very often because they enable the advertiser to communicate certain facts about the product being advertised. Second, *directives* reflect the speaker's want for the hearer's changes. What the speaker wants to change might be the hearer's current condition or behavior. The purpose of these illocutionary is to produce an effect through some actions which is done by the hearer. The examples are order, command, and advice. Advertising, as a way to persuade (i.e. persuading the consumer to buy or to accept the commodity advertised), is a member of *directives*. Third, *commissives* refer to the speaker's intention to commit some future action which can give a beneficial or a disadvantageous effect on the hearer. In advertising discourse, commissives are used less frequently found than assertives and directives. Fourth, *expressives* illustrate the speaker's state of mind and reflect the speaker's likes and dislikes. They have a purpose to express a psychological state of the hearer in the



situation. The examples are thanking, congratulating, apologizing, threatening, and condoling. The last type of illocutionary act is *declarations*, speech acts that change the reality in accord with the proposition of the declaration. The examples are naming, appointing, and sentencing. Searle regards this speech act as the special one because the action can only be made by people who have an authority to do this action. In advertisements, the last two types of illocutionary acts are found less frequently because they are speaker-oriented. In advertising, it is the hearer, namely, the consumer, that matters.

#### **2.2.1.2 Felicity conditions of a speech act**

According to Searle (1969), for a speech act to be successfully constituted, it must fulfill the requirements of the felicity conditions, which include propositional content condition, preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition. For example, in the utterance “I promise to give you a gift,” the propositional content condition is about what the speaker intends to give to the hearer; the preparatory condition prescribes the speaker’s ability to be able to give the hearer a gift, and the hearer also wishes the speaker to do the act onto him; the sincerity condition describes the speaker’s real intention of giving the hearer a gift; the essential condition confines the speaker’s future act that he must give a gift to the hearer.

In advertising, the propositional content condition indicates what the advertiser says about the merchandise advertised. The preparatory condition reveals that the advertiser believes that he or she is able to offer the product with distinctive features as described. The sincerity condition reflects the advertiser's interest in the consumer's benefit. However, in reality, what the advertiser wants is to gain profit from the persuasion. The essential condition is related to the advertiser's attempt to motivate the consumer to buy the product. This future act is realized when the consumer actually purchases the product advertised.

Since advertising is a speech act of persuasion, it fulfills the requirements of the felicity conditions, either by obeying the conditions or by violating them.

### **2.2.1.3 Indirect speech acts**

Speech acts are either direct or indirect. Searle (1975: 60) describes indirect speech acts as "cases in which one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by ways of performing another," implying that the form and the function of a given utterance do not need to have a direct one-to-one relationship. That is, in a direct speech act, there is a direct correspondence between the literal meaning of a structure and the speaker's intended meaning; however, in an indirect speech act, the literal meaning does not coincide with the speaker's intended meaning. In other words, in order to decode an indirect speech act, the hearer needs to make inference, with the help of the

communicative context, to obtain the speaker's intention (ie. the primary illocutionary point).

Indirect speech acts occur when speakers, being restricted by socio-cultural conventions, are unable to express explicitly what they want to perform. In this case, in order to behave in a socially acceptable way, they execute a set of conventional rules in a particular way based on the relationship between the interlocutors and other contextual factors. Hearers, who share with the speakers the same social-cultural norms and the same conventional rules, should be able to derive what speakers want to say. In other words, speakers imply their meaning, and hearers infer for it (Thomas, 1995: 58).

As in ordinary face-to-face conversations, advertising communication is full of indirect speech acts because the advertiser hides her intention of persuading the potential consumer to "buy the product" in various speech acts, such as recommendation, offers, and promises. In this way, the potential consumer has to make inference so as to be persuaded by the advertisement and then buys the product advertised.

### **2.2.2 Cooperative Principle (CP)**

Implicature is based on the fact that whenever the interlocutors are involved in a communicative situation, it is necessary for them to act in a cooperative way. The

first to describe the rules according to which participants behave in a cooperative way was Grice (1975). Based on this premise that people intend to communicate with each other successfully, Grice proposes *The Cooperative Principle* (hereafter, CP), proclaiming that interlocutors should “make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice, 1975: 45). What is to say and how it is to be said are described by Grice as the maxims and submaxims of the CP, observing which is necessary for being cooperative in verbal communication and, thus, for achieving one’s communicative goal. The following are the maxims and submaxims of Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975:45-46).

- A. Maxim of Quantity
  - (a) Make your contribution as informative as is required.
  - (b) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
- B. Maxim of Quality
  - (a) Do not say what you believe to be false.
  - (b) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- C. Maxim of Relation
  - (a) Be relevant.
- D. Maxim of Manner
  - (a) Avoid obscurity of expression.
  - (b) Avoid ambiguity.
  - (c) Be brief.
  - (d) Be orderly.

In advertising discourse, the advertiser can produce an effect on an advertisement by obeying or by violating the maxims. In order to attract and to persuade the potential consumer, it is assumed that violating the maxims, which is

marked, is more effective and should be used more frequently than conforming to them. However, the advertiser must balance between obeying the maxims and violating them in order to avoid deceptive advertising.

### **2.2.3 Politeness Principle (PP)**

Although Cooperative Principle is powerful in describing how people act cooperatively in communication, it cannot explain why people communicate with each other indirectly. For example, a hearer may choose to ignore the speaker or a speaker may intentionally mention something not relevant to the on-going topic. To explain why such indirect communication emerges, the notion of politeness is proposed. In advertising, politeness is also used to attract and to persuade the consumer. In order to achieve this goal, the advertiser has to provide the consumer with benefits and to satisfy their desire. Meanwhile, persuasion is a kind of speech act that influences the hearer's decision and freedom of action, which is regarded as imposition. To explain how persuasion is verbalized, Politeness Principle is needed.

#### **2.2.3.1 Politeness Principle by Leech (1983)**

In a conversation, politeness works as a device that enables the interlocutors to demonstrate that they are aware of each other's social needs, and allow them to treat each other with respect. Grice's CP fails to explain why speakers sometimes express themselves so indirectly. Hence, in order to supplement Grice's CP, Leech (1983)

introduced the Politeness Principle (PP, hereafter). Like CP, PP is based on the observance of the certain maxims and submaxims. Leech (1983: 132) proposes the following ones.

- (A) Tact maxim
  - (a) Minimize cost to other
  - (b) Maximize benefit to other
- (B) Generosity maxim
  - (a) Minimize benefit to self
  - (b) Maximize cost to self
- (C) Approbation maxim
  - (a) Minimize dispraise of other
  - (b) Maximize praise of other
- (D) Modesty maxim
  - (a) Minimize praise of self
  - (b) Maximize dispraise of self
- (E) Agreement maxim
  - (a) Minimize disagreement between self and other
  - (b) Maximize agreement between self and other
- (F) Sympathy maxim
  - (a) Minimize antipathy between self and other
  - (b) Maximize sympathy between self and other

The first four maxim are in pairs. Maxim A and Maxim B form a pair, with the former focusing on the hearer's cost and benefit, and the latter on the speaker's. Following a similar line, in the pair of Maxim C and Maxim D, the former focuses on (dis)praise to the hearer, and the latter to the speaker. In addition, Maxim E and Maxim F focus on the interaction of the speaker and the hearer, with the former emphasizing (dis)agreement, and the latter antipathy or sympathy. Also, according to Leech, in each maxim, the first sub-maxim (a) is more important than the second one

(b). In beauty products advertising, “self” means the advertiser, and “other” refers to the potential consumer. It is presumed that observance of the maxims and submaxims ensure a smooth flow of conversation. Further, according to Leech, PP works under the condition that the participants are cooperative, which means that CP and PP are interrelated. However, in terms of contextual needs, the observance of one principle may conflict with the observance of the other principle. Therefore, in order to be socially acceptable, the observance of PP comes prior to the observance of CP.

In advertisements, the Tact Maxim is applied to secure the minimization of the potential consumer’s cost and the maximization of her benefit. As far as the nature of advertising is concerned, the advertiser must obey this maxim, especially the submaxim of maximizing the consumer’s benefit. What the advertiser emphasizes most is the benefits that the potential consumer can have on buying the product. Since the advertiser cannot directly ask the potential consumer to buy the product, they put stress on the advantages of purchasing the product, which are mostly presented as an improvement of one’s health and physical appearance.

Similarly, the Generosity Maxim concerns benefit and cost as well, but it assigns the minimization of the benefit and the maximization of the cost to the speaker (in this study, the advertiser). The advertiser seems to avoid the Generosity Maxim as much as they can. It is unwise for them to mention the benefits which they

may obtain from the sale of the product. The advertiser does not want to make themselves sound selfish and concerning only with gaining profit for their own sake.

The Approbation Maxim refers to the minimization of dispraise of other and to the maximization of the praise of other. Regarding advertising, the advertiser is expected to make efforts to express admiration toward her consumer, and to avoid criticizing her consumer. After all, being exposed to praise is always more pleasant than being exposed to criticism. As a result, the advertiser strives harder to praise than to dispraise her consumer.

In a similar way, Modesty Maxim, which also reflects the notion of praise and dispraise, is directed toward the speaker, i.e. the advertiser. Opposite to the implementation of Generosity Maxim, presumably the speaker should avoid this maxim because it is not proper in any social conventions to praise oneself. However, in order to sell the product, the advertiser must praise the product and claim that the product is effective and efficient to reach the consumer's goals. In doing so, the advertiser violates Modesty Maxim.

As for Agreement Maxim and Sympathy Maxim, these two maxims take both speakers and hearers into consideration. According to the submaxims of Agreement Maxim, the advertiser should manage to minimize disagreement but to maximize agreement between herself and the consumer in advertising communication.



As to Sympathy Maxim, the observance of its submaxims allows the advertiser to minimize antipathy and to maximize sympathy between herself and the consumer. In advertisements, the advertiser is expected to take the consumer's side, showing sympathy to the consumer's problems. Compared with the other maxims, this particular maxim is less frequently implemented in advertising discourse; after all, if the advertiser mentions too much about the consumer's flaws, the consumer may mistake the advertiser's sympathy for antipathy or dispraise.

## **2.3 Linguistic Aspect**

### **2.3.1 Metadiscourse**

Metadiscourse refers to the ways by which writers (or speakers) project themselves in their texts to interact with their interlocutors. It plays an important role in organizing a discourse, engaging the audience, and signaling the writer's or the speaker's attitude (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001). Writing and speaking are more than just ways to communicate ideas; moreover, they are social acts through which interlocutors interact with each other to affect the ways that certain ideas are presented and understood (Hyland, 2005, and Amiryousefi and Rasekh, 2010). Hyland (2005:3) even proposes that metadiscourse involves the personalities, attitudes, and assumptions of speakers (or writers). In addition, Crismore et al. (1993) define metadiscourse as linguistic material in texts, which does not add propositional

meanings to the content, but organizes texts coherently and convincingly, and helps listeners (or readers) organize, interpret, and evaluate the given information.

A variety of metadiscourse taxonomies have been proposed (Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore et al, 1993; Hyland, 2005). Vande Kopple (1985) introduces two main categories of metadiscourse—*textual* and *interpersonal*. Textual metadiscourse is composed of text connectives, code glosses, illocution markers, and narrators, while interpersonal metadiscourse contains validity markers, attitude markers, and commentaries. Crismore et al. (1993), following the same line, keep the two major categories of textual and interpersonal. Further, according to them, the textual metadiscourse is divided into two categories, *textual* markers and *interpretive* markers to differentiate organizational function from evaluative function. According to Crismore et al., textual markers include those features that help organize the discourse, and interpretive markers are those features used to help readers to interpret and understand the writer's meaning better.

Hyland (2005) divides metadiscourse into two categories, *interactive* and *interactional*. Interactive metadiscourse is concerned with the writers' awareness of their receivers and making the argument satisfactory for them; whereas interactional metadiscourse is related to the writers' intention to make their views explicit and to engage the readers by anticipating responses to the text. The interactional elements of

metadiscourse are subcategorized, according to their specific functions, into *hedgers*, *boosters*, *attitude markers*, *self-mentions*, and *engagement markers*—which, following Halliday’s (1994) concept of metafunctions, serve ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. Halliday believes that when people use language, they usually fulfill these three functions. The ideational function of language use is to represent experiences and ideas, which equals the notion of propositional content; the interpersonal function to encode interaction, allowing interlocutors to engage with others; and the textual function to organize the text, coherently relating what is said to the readers.

In Dafouz’s (2008) study, the persuasive function of metadiscourse has been widely discussed and carried out to analyze how metadiscourse markers attain persuasion and how such persuasion is metadiscursively articulated. Fuertes-Olivera et al. (2001) discuss metadiscourse in advertising English, especially slogans and headlines. Interlocutors, on the bases of the shared knowledge and common frame of reference, obtain the meanings of each other’s verbal expressions. As a result, it is found that there is solidarity between the writer and the reader. In order to achieve solidarity of this kind, metadiscourse is crucial in organizing the words as a coherent text and in conveying the writer’s intention and personality. In advertisements, these words are presented as texts that function between informing and manipulating

(Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001). In order to find out the functions of metadiscourse, some linguistic devices, hedgers and boosters in particular, are examined in this study.

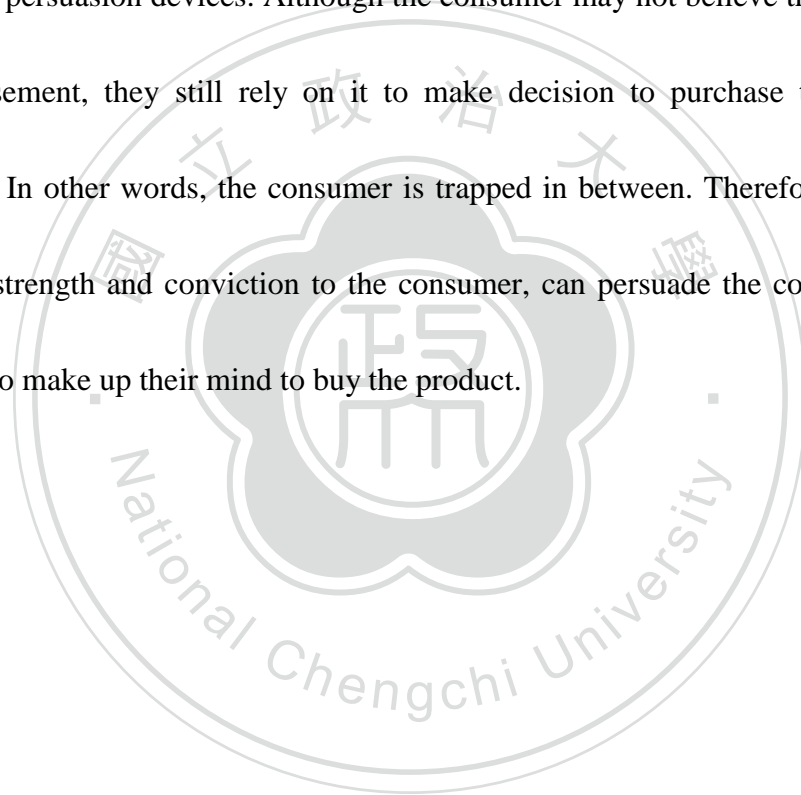
### **2.3.1.1 Hedgers**

Hyland (2005) defines hedgers as a linguistic device to indicate the writer's decision to present propositional information tentatively, so it withholds complete commitment to a proposition. Hedgers (such as *might*, *probably* and *seem*) not only signal a tentative assessment of referential information, but also serve as markers of interpersonal metadiscourse. The functions of them are to tone down the force of the messages, to introduce some degree of uncertainty, and to assure the hearers that the speakers do not intend to interfere with the hearers' freedom to act (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001). In other words, through the use of hedgers, speakers can avoid imposition on their interlocutors. With similar thought, hedgers may help the speakers avoid or alleviate the force of their disagreement with the hearers.

### **2.3.1.2 Boosters**

Boosters are another category of markers of interpersonal metadiscourse. As Hyland (1998: 368) suggests, "Boosters are then rhetorical, persuasive strategies which function to mark, or rhetorically manipulate, consensual understandings based on shared community membership." Holmes (1982) uses boosters to refer to lexical items that the writer uses to create an impression of certainty and assurance for a

statement. They strengthen the utterance's illocutionary force. Boosters, like *clearly*, *obviously* and *of course*, allow writers to express conviction, to show their confidence in the truth of a particular proposition, and to mark their involvement and solidarity with their audiences (Hyland, 1998). In other words, boosters offer writers a medium to engage with their readers to create interpersonal solidarity. In advertising, boosters are used as persuasion devices. Although the consumer may not believe the content of an advertisement, they still rely on it to make decision to purchase the products advertised. In other words, the consumer is trapped in between. Therefore, boosters, by giving strength and conviction to the consumer, can persuade the consumer, and lead them to make up their mind to buy the product.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

Based on the theories Chapter Two reviews, this chapter introduces research design, which includes data sources and quantity, criteria for analyses, essential functions, and measurements.

#### **3.1 Data Collection**

##### **3.1.1 Data from magazines**

The data to be used in the thesis are from two women's fashion magazines, namely, *Beauty* and *Elle*, the world's best-selling fashion magazines, from January to December in 2011, focusing on fashion, beauty, health, and entertainment. The potential readers of these two magazines are aged from 18 to 35.

In total, 200 pieces of advertisements were collected. These data are equally distributed to two types of beauty products: cosmetic products and skin-care products.

##### **3.1.2 Data from interviews**

The data from the interview are qualitative analyses, and the gap between the advertiser and the consumer is to be examined. Since it is impossible for the interviewees to evaluate all of the 200 pieces of advertisements, only four of them were used to test on the subjects' reaction on certain data which include felicity

conditions, Cooperative Principle, and Politeness Principle adopted in these advertisements. Among these four pieces of advertisements, two are cosmetic ads, and the other two are skin-care ads.

For qualitative analyses in this thesis, twelve women, as potential consumers, were interviewed. All of those subjects use cosmetic products and skin-care products, and they are equally distributed to two age groups (with the older age group ranging from 35 to 45 years old, and the younger group ranging from 20 to 30 years old), and two education levels (with the higher education group consisting of those who have received or are taking formal schooling of college education, and the lower education group containing those who did not receive college education).

The subjects were asked to rate the strength of the persuasiveness of each element contained in the four selected advertisements (as given below) on a 5-point Likert scale, with point-5 being strongly persuasive and point-1 being strongly unpersuasive. The whole procedure of each interview lasted for about 20 minutes.

The four selected advertisements are as follows:

- a. 從早到晚，不泛油光不黯沉！讓底妝更加持久的救星！（蜜粉餅）
- b. 2011 春迷，加勒比海春妝，浪漫呈現（眼影）
- c. 全效亮眼按摩精華，消除疲憊浮腫雙眼，溫和不刺激的清涼對策（眼部精華）
- d. 清新的薄荷&茶種香氣與舒爽的使用感，愉悅身心（乳液）

## 3.2 Criteria for Analyses

In quantitative analyses as well as in qualitative analyses, the data were analyzed according to the ways of persuasion, the felicity conditions, the maxims of Cooperative Principle, and the maxims of Politeness Principle adopted in the data.

### 3.2.1 Ways to persuade

Two ways of persuasion—hard-sell approach and soft-sell approach—the former makes a direct appeal to the customer to purchase the product and the characteristics of the product, and the latter resorts to emotions and the closeness between the advertiser and the consumer. It was predicted that the two different kinds of beauty products—cosmetics and skin-care products—have different preferences to the two appeals of persuasion. Examples (1) and (2) are illustrations for the two ways of persuasion.

- (1) 研究證實淡斑效果高達 94%，使肌膚如白瓷般淨透亮白
- (2) 2011 春迷，加勒比海春妝，浪漫呈現

Example (1) is hard-sell approach, while example (2) is soft-sell approach. In example (1), the advertisement describes the physical effects of using the products. In example (2), the advertisement appeals to the psychological and emotional reactions after the consumer uses the product.



### 3.2.2 Felicity Conditions (FC)

Persuasion, as a speech act, must satisfy the felicity conditions for it to be constituted. These felicity conditions include propositional content condition, preparatory condition, sincerity condition and essential condition. In implementing the felicity conditions, the advertisement may not always obey the four felicity conditions; instead, more than often they violate the conditions in order to create perlocutionary effects on the potential consumer, to attract their attention and interest, and then buy the merchandise advertised. For these reasons, it is necessary to examine how the four felicity conditions are manipulated in advertisements. Four examples are given as follows<sup>1</sup>.

- (3) 清透如紗的水感礦物粉底液，溫柔、滑順包覆著肌膚
- (4) 不論你是彩妝新手或是玩妝高手，只要NARS 晶采全效凝膠一罐在手，就能輕鬆畫出多種明星般的耀眼妝容
- (5) 倩碧首席皮膚專家相信，香料和陽光傷害會刺激皮膚，我們堅持100%不含香料
- (6) 這樣煥發透亮感的上質光潤肌，SKII 可以給你

All of the above examples contain propositional contents. Example (4) presents the preparatory condition because it shows the advertiser's ability to satisfy the consumer's need. Example (5) displays the advertiser's sincerity to do what is good

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<sup>1</sup> The four examples all satisfy the four felicity conditions. However, in order to give more transparent explanations, each example illustrates only one felicity condition.

for the consumer. Finally, example (6) demonstrates the essential condition because it shows that the advertiser will do what she promises to do.

### 3.2.3 Cooperative Principle (CP)

In this study, the four maxims of Grice's CP (including Quality Maxim, Quantity Maxim, Relevancy Maxim, and Manner Maxim) were used to explain how a successful persuasion is conducted. For advertising to be a successful communication, the advertiser and the potential consumer must cooperate with each other. The advertiser, in order to induce certain effects on the consumer to persuade her to buy the beauty products, may either obey or violate the maxims of CP. The following examples illustrate how maxims of CP are manipulated.

- (7) 從早到晚，不泛油光不黯沉！讓底妝更加持久的救星！
- (8) 逆轉時光，重返年輕
- (9) 24 小時 DNA 美白，打造 360°鑽石透白肌
- (10) 2011 春迷，加勒比海春妝，浪漫呈現

Example (7) obeys Quality Maxim because “不泛油光不黯沉” is what the advertiser believes to be true. Besides, example (7) also obey Relevancy Maxim and Manner Maxim: the word “底妝” is exactly about the cosmetics, and the description of its function is brief and clear.

On the other hand, in example (7), “救星” (“saver”) violates Quantity Maxim because this is not the information required. Example (8) to (10) are examples for violating the maxims. In example (8), both “逆轉時光” and “重返年輕” are impossible and fail to be true, which violates Quality Maxim. In example (9), “DNA” and “鑽石” are not related to cosmetics or skin conditions at all, so they violate Relevancy Maxim. In example (10), Manner Maxim is violated because “春迷·加勒比海春妝” is ambiguous and not clear enough for the consumer to understand.

When both the advertiser’s and the consumer’s points of view are taken into consideration, sometimes, there is a gap between them, as examples (11) and (12) show.

(11) 極透、無瑕，不間斷雙重美白保養

(12) 不論你是彩妝新手或是玩妝高手，只要NARS 晶采全效凝膠一罐在手，就能輕鬆畫出多種明星般的耀眼妝容

From the advertiser’s point of view, examples (11) and (12) obey all the four maxims, namely Quality Maxim, Quantity Maxim, Relevancy Maxim, and Manner Maxim. However, from the consumer’s point of view, it is not necessarily true because “極透”, “無瑕”, “不間斷”, “只要... 一罐”, “輕鬆畫出” and “明星般” are all exaggerative and are uneasy to achieve simply by using the product advertised; thus, the consumer may not completely believe what the advertisement says. That is, the advertisement may not

be persuasive enough for the consumer.

### 3.2.4 Politeness Principle (PP)

Leech's (1983) PP offers some explanations to how the maxims of PP are manipulated. However, in advertisements, not all of the six maxims (namely, Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim) are equally frequently adopted. Also, it was presumed that Tact Maxim and Approbation Maxim, which are hearer-oriented, are used more frequently than the others because in logical thinking, the advertiser has to and would want to show the potential consumer that the target merchandise is beneficial to the potential consumer. After all, nobody would want to buy anything that is useless or not very useful. Moreover, related examples are presented as follows.

- (13) 我看見肌膚的改變，變得淨白、透亮、無瑕
- (14) 只要NARS 晶采全效凝膠一罐在手，就能輕鬆畫出多種明星般的耀眼妝容
- (15) 讓肌膚如輕覆薄紗，有效改善肌膚黯沉，妝容明亮耀眼
- (16) 極持色，極炫色，驚艷感官，一抹鮮明如妳
- (17) 以頂級珍貴修護成分，實現渴望的年輕

Example (13), through obeying Tact Maxim, points out what benefits the potential consumer can have after using the commodity. In example (14), “只要一罐” describes the low cost to the potential consumer. Example (15) violates

Approbation Maxim because it points out the consumer's skin problem, which is undesirable, although factual, to the potential consumer. Example (16) violates Modesty Maxim, for the advertiser highly praises her own product as something extremely functional and effective. Example (17) observes Sympathy Maxim because the advertiser hopes the consumer to be beautiful as the potential consumer does. Example (13) also observe Sympathy Maxim because the use of pronoun “我” is a shifting of “你”, which means the advertiser takes the consumer's side and show sympathy.

### **3.2.5 Ideology**

In women's fashion magazines, gender ideology is prominent and vitally important. Through it, women are told how they should behave. Basically the components of a woman ideology include physical appearance, psychological status, and social recognition. Physical appearance means the skin condition, and psychological status indicates emotions. Social recognition refers to role, uniqueness, identity, and beauty. According to Plakoyiannaki and Zotos (2009), women have been given decorative roles, for example, as sex objects, emphasizing physical attractiveness only. In this thesis, stereotypical impressions of women embedded in the advertisements are examined to see whether such traditional value system still functions in the modern society of Taiwan. Six examples are given below to illustrate

the point.

- (18) 全面守護白、淨、水嫩肌膚
- (19) 讓肌膚沉浸於豐富的滋養中，舒緩於愜意的氛圍裡
- (20) 精算過的4種不同質感蜜粉餅，能調理膚色，呈現洗練的妝感
- (21) 超模訂製，量身打造雙眸奢華秀服
- (22) 令人過目難忘的重量級眼妝，覺醒你的超模體質
- (23) 極透、無瑕，不間斷雙重美白保養

Example (18) is about the physical appearance of ideology, reminding the potential consumer that she should always keep white, clear, and soft skin. Example (19) is related to the psychological status of woman ideology which prescribes that women should always look for comfort and relaxation. Examples (20) to (23) regard the social recognition of ideology, role, uniqueness, identity, and beauty, respectively. In example (20), “洗練” indicates a certain role as “a competent career woman.” In example (21), “量身打造” means “design for you in particular,” which is uniqueness. In example (22), “超模” is a kind of identity for women to identify with. In example (23), “美白” points out the aesthetic which women should have and care about.

### 3.2.6 Linguistic Devices

#### 3.2.6.1 Referential contents

There are four aspects of the referential contents in verbal representations of advertisements of beauty products—*time*, *singularity*, *annexation*, and *scope*. First, the time aspect includes instancy (such as 瞬間/一瞬，轉眼間，下一秒，立即)，

duration (such as 日夜不間斷, 全天(候), 一整天, 24 小時), and simultaneity (同時, 同步), all of which aim at the efficiency and effectiveness of the beauty products advertised. Next, singularity is concerned with first appearance of the referent (such as 首度, 第一次, 第一(款), 史上第一瓶) and exclusiveness (such as 獨家, 獨特), both emphasizing the uniqueness of the product. As for of annexation, it refers to the addition of information (such as 再, 更, 又, 也, 不僅, 不只), indicating that the product advertised is multifunctional, i.e. of greater value than the potential consumer can imagine. Lastly, The scope aspect aims to intensify the width (such as 全面, 全方位, 任何, 所有, 幾乎, 每個) and the depth (such as 徹底, 透徹, 極, 超) of the functions of the products advertised.

### 3.2.6.2 Hedgers vs. boosters

Hedgers and boosters are linguistic devices used in interpersonal metadiscourse. Hedgers function to tone down the negative force of a message and to assure the consumer that the advertiser does not intend to interfere with their freedom to act. Opposite to hedgers, boosters are used to express the speaker's conviction, to show confidence in the proposition, and to mark the solidarity with the hearer. In advertising, boosters are widely used to persuade the consumer. Since the consumer relies heavily on the information offered in the advertisement to decide whether to buy the product or not, boosters, powerful expressions which can help to persuade the

consumer that the product is valuable and worth buying, may effectively urge the consumer to make decisions.

Hedgers serve to offer suggestions for problems, while boosters give expressions with exaggerated contents. In this study, it is wondered whether these two linguistic devices are used differently in the two types of beauty product advertisements. Two examples are provided as given below.

- (24) 不論你是彩妝新手或是玩妝高手，只要NARS 晶采全效凝膠一罐在手，就能輕鬆畫出多種明星般的耀眼妝容
- (25) 極透、無瑕，不間斷 雙重 美白保養

In Example (24), “彩妝新手” and “只要” both tone down the utterance. “彩妝新手” means “the novice of using cosmetics”, and “只要” indicates “if only.” Both of them do not emphasize or exaggerate something, so they are hedgers. “多種明星般” and “耀眼” are boosters used to exaggerate the effect of the product. In example (25), five boosters are used to enhance the functions and effect of the product. By using the boosters, the advertiser sounds certain and confident of the product advertised.

### 3.2.7 Essential functions

To identify whether the advertisements obey the maxims of FC, CP, and PP, the essential functions of the beauty products in the data collected are defined to set a norm for judgment. More specifically, if the advertisement serves the essential



functions and does not offer any functions other than the essential functions, it is counted as obeying the maxims; otherwise, it is counted as violating<sup>2</sup> the maxims.

The essential functions of these beauty products of which the advertisements are examined in this thesis are given below. Cosmetics include foundation, powder, BB cream, sunscreen, mascara, eye shadow, and lipstick; skin-care products include various essence, lotion, and cream.

1. Essential functions of cosmetics:
  - (1) Face (foundation, powder, and BB cream): adorning skin colors and covering skin flaws
  - (2) Eyes (mascara and eye shadow): making the eyelashes darker, longer, and thicker; giving colors to eye areas
  - (3) Lips (lipstick): giving colors to lips, making lips softer and plumper
2. Essential functions of skin-care products:
  - (1) Essence: supplying water to skin and making it more moisturized
  - (2) Lotion: making skin whiter, smoother, and helping block moisture
  - (3) Cream: giving skin nourishment and hydrating it

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<sup>2</sup> Grice (1975) thinks there are four different situations about the violation of principles, namely violating, opting out, clash, and flouting. In this thesis, they are all included in the term “violating.”

### 3.3 Measurements

All the data used in the thesis are categorized by the criteria mentioned above first. Then, the frequencies and percentages of each category and subcategory are calculated in quantitative analyses; in qualitative analyses, 5-point Likert scale is adopted. Afterwards, major patterns are described and explained.



## Chapter 4

### Quantitative Analyses of the Written Data

This chapter presents quantitative analyses of data about ways to persuade, felicity conditions, Cooperative Principle, Politeness Principle, ideology, and modification.

#### 4.1 Approaches of Advertising

According to Cook (2001), there are two ways for the advertiser to persuade the consumer: hard-sell approach, which appeals to concrete reasons for purchase and the information of the product, and soft-sell approach, which resorts to emotions and the closeness between the advertiser and consumer. It was predicted that different approaches are adopted in different types of beauty product advertisements.

##### 4.1.1 Distribution of advertising approaches in beauty products advertisements

Based on data analyzed, the distribution of the two advertising approaches in beauty product advertisements is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of advertising approaches in beauty product advertisements as a whole

Hard-sell	Soft-sell	Both	Total
92.0% (184)	3.0% (6)	5.0% (10)	100.0% (200)

According to Table 1, in advertisements of beauty products, hard-sell approach is used far more frequently than soft-sell (92% vs. 3%); and 5% of the data reveal that both approaches are adopted in the same advertisement. This result shows that hard-sell approach is preferred for beauty products advertisements.

#### 4.1.2 Comparison between types of beauty products advertisements by advertisement approaches

It was anticipated that cosmetic ads and skin-care ads would rely on different approaches of advertisements. In specific, skin-care ads would use hard-sell approach more often than cosmetic ads do; while cosmetic ads would depend on soft-sell approach more heavily than skin-care ads. Table 2 presents the results of data analyses.

Table 2. Types of beauty products advertisements by advertisement approaches (A= approaches of advertising, B= types of beauty products)

A \ B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Hard-sell	47.8% (88)	52.2% (96)	100.0% (184)
Soft-sell	100.0% (6)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (6)
Both	60.0% (6)	40.0% (4)	100.0% (10)
Total	50.0% (100)	50.0% (100)	100.0% (200)

As Table 2 demonstrates, hard-sell approach, as expected, is used more frequently in skin-care advertisements (52.2%) than in cosmetic advertisements

(47.8%). In skin-care advertisements, the point is to change the nature of the consumer's skin; therefore, it is expected that advertisements of this kind appeal directly to the effects of the products and the benefits to the consumer's skin. Since hard-sell approach, which is more concrete than soft-sell approach, is used more frequently in skin-care ads.

In terms of soft-sell approach, it is used exclusively in cosmetic ads. Since cosmetic products focus on the instant change of people's outlook, and since using the make-up is just like wearing a mask which may change the consumer's emotions instantly, soft-sell approach, which advocates sensibility, is used more frequently in cosmetic advertisements than in skin-care advertisements. In sum, cosmetic ads and skin-care ads have different preferences for the two approaches of advertising.

#### **4.1.3 Comparison between advertising approaches by types of beauty products advertisements**

It was predicted that cosmetic ads would prefer soft-sell approach, while skin-care ads rely more heavily on hard-sell approach. Results of data analysis are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Differences between hard-sell approach and soft-sell approach in the two types of ads (A= approaches of advertising, B= types of beauty products)

A \ B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Hard-sell	88.0% (88)	96.0% (96)	92.0% (184)
Soft-sell	6.0% (6)	0.0% (0)	3.0% (6)
Both	6.0% (6)	4.0% (4)	5.0% (10)
Total	100.0% (100)	100.0% (100)	100.0% (200)

According to Table 3, when the nature of the beauty products is taken into consideration, it is noticed that 88.0% of the cosmetic advertisements take hard-sell approach, but only 6% of them take soft-sell approach or both. In skin-care advertisements, hard-sell approach is used dominantly, while soft-sell is never used alone. In other words, both cosmetic advertisements and skin-care advertisements prefer hard-sell approach to soft-sell approach.

The above findings seem to imply that the advertiser in Taiwan strongly emphasizes efficiency of the beauty products, and they think that the consumer prefers the way of communication which would assure obvious and time-saving effects. That is, the consumer is enabled to become beautiful quickly, to gain others' admiration and praise, and to establish self-esteem. In this way, although the concept of beauty is abstract and subjective, the advertiser uses concrete and rational ways to promote their beauty products.

## 4.2 Felicity Conditions in Advertisements

According to Searle (1969), every successful speech act must meet the requirements of the four felicity conditions. Advertising, as a speech act of persuasion, is no exception. Since intrinsically each advertisement must have a propositional content to refer to the merchandise to be sold, basically all advertisements satisfy the requirement of the propositional content condition. However, on the surface, the propositional content of an advertisement may or may not be directly related to the products themselves. For this part, a more thorough examination of the verbal relevancy in the advertisements with the commodity to sell is given in 4.3.1 (namely, Distribution of CP in Beauty Product Ads, p.45 of this thesis). Other than propositional content condition, the other three felicity conditions (namely, preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition) are analyzed in this section.

### 4.2.1 Distribution of felicity conditions in beauty products advertisements

The distribution of three felicity conditions being fulfilled in beauty product advertisements is provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of felicity conditions in beauty products advertisements

Preparatory Condition	Sincerity Condition	Essential Condition	Total
33.4% (1109)	33.6% (1115)	33.0% (1087)	100.0% (3311)

According to Table 4, when all beauty product advertisements are taken as a whole, it is noticed that the proportion of each felicity condition is about the same. This result indicates that the three felicity conditions are equally conformed in beauty product advertisements. A possible explanation is that in order to achieve successful persuasion, the advertiser fulfills the three felicity conditions in her advertisements to give her promise to the consumer that she has the ability, sincerity, and certainty to improve the consumer's skin conditions.

#### 4.2.2 Comparison between types of beauty products advertisements by felicity conditions

It is examined that the pattern described above in 4.2.1 further is modified by the types of advertisements. Table 5 depicts the differences between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads by the three felicity conditions.

Table 5. Types of beauty products advertisement by felicity conditions  
(A= felicity conditions, B= types of beauty products)

A \ B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Preparatory	47.5% (527)	52.5% (582)	100.0% (1109)
Sincerity	48.2% (538)	51.8% (577)	100.0% (1115)
Essential	47.7% (519)	52.3% (568)	100.0% (1087)
Total	47.8% (1584)	52.2% (1727)	100.0% (3311)

According to Table 5, the proportions of cosmetic ads and skin-care ads are close to each other (47.8% vs. 52.2%, respectively), with skin-care ads scoring slightly higher than cosmetic ads do. A possible explanation is that in skin-care ads,



the reasons why the consumer should take an action of buying the products are directly given, and skin-care products are necessity for the consumer compared with cosmetics; thus, the three felicity conditions are used more often in skin-care ads than in cosmetic ads.

#### 4.2.3 Comparison among felicity conditions in two types of beauty products

It was hypothesized that the three felicity conditions would be satisfied in beauty products advertisements. Table 6 presents the results of data analyses.

Table 6. Felicity conditions in two types of beauty products  
(A= felicity conditions, B= types of beauty products)

A \ B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Preparatory	33.2% (527)	33.7% (582)	33.4% (1109)
Sincerity	33.9% (538)	33.4% (577)	33.6% (1115)
Essential	32.9% (519)	32.9% (568)	32.8% (1087)
Total	100.0% (1584)	100.0% (1727)	100.0% (3311)

According to Table 6, the three felicity conditions are implemented in approximately the same frequencies in each of the two types of beauty products advertisements, with essential condition scoring the least in both cosmetic ads and skin-care ads.

#### 4.3 Cooperative Principle in Advertisements

Advertising, as a kind of communication, prescribes cooperation between the advertiser and the consumer during the interaction, with both parties of the

communication presuming that the advertiser will comply with CP in giving the consumer correct, informative, relevant, and orderly information. In this section, the implementation of the four maxims of CP in the two types of advertisements is examined.

#### 4.3.1 Distribution of CP maxim in beauty products advertisements

It was expected that the distribution of CP in beauty product ads is different. That is, the extents to which beauty product ads rely on the four maxims are different. Results of data analyses are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Distribution of CP in beauty product ads

Quality	Quantity	Relevancy	Manner	Total
29.0% (1439)	23.0%(1142)	19.1% (940)	28.9% (1428)	100.0%(4949)

According to Table 7, when all beauty product advertisements are taken as a whole, it is noticed that Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim score the highest among the four maxims (with the former taking 29.0% of the beauty product advertisements, and the latter 28.9%), followed by Quantity Maxim (23.0%) and Relevancy Maxim (19.1%). These findings indicate that advertisements of beauty products, in general, rely more heavily on Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim than on Quantity Maxim and Relevancy Maxim. It is likely that the advertiser put more stress on meeting the requirements of truthfulness and clarity of the information content to show their

sincerity and honesty, and to warrant the efficiency and reliability of their products.

### 4.3.2 Implementation of CP maxims in beauty products advertisements

The maxims of pragmatic principles can either be conformed or violated. In this part, the way how the CP maxims are implemented in beauty product ads is examined.

#### 4.3.2.1 Comparison between ways of implementation by CP maxims

It was expected that the ways of implementation by CP maxims are different.

Table 8 describes the results.

Table 8. Distribution of ways to implement CP maxims in beauty products advertisements (A= maxims of CP, B= implementation of CP)

A \ B	Conforming	Violating	Total
Quality	96.0% (1382)	4.0% (57)	100.0% (1439)
Quantity	0.9% (10)	99.1% (1132)	100.0% (1142)
Relevancy	46.7% (439)	53.3% (501)	100.0% (940)
Manner	99.3% (1419)	0.7% (9)	100.0% (1428)
Total	65.6% (3250)	34.4% (1699)	100.0% (4949)

According to Table 8, the four maxims as a whole are more frequently obeyed than violated (65.6% vs. 34.4%). It is explained that the advertiser may think that obeying the maxims are easier for the consumer to accept and understand. Table 8 also reveals that Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim are always conformed; Quantity Maxim is always violated; as for Relevancy Maxim, it is more frequently violated than obeyed, with a gap not significantly large. A possible reason why Relevancy

Maxim is more frequently violated is that the advertiser and the consumer share knowledge from the context. Therefore, even though some of the advertisements on the surface are not related to the beauty products, it is expected that the consumer, through the help of Relevancy Maxim, is still able to understand the advertisements and to make inference for the advertiser's intention. In other words, unlike Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim, violation of Relevancy Maxim would not confuse or mislead the readers. In addition, violation of Relevancy Maxim may even help to catch the consumer's attention, which, in turn, may help to persuade the consumer to change their mind and take action of buying the products advertised.

As for Quantity Maxim, it shows that in beauty products advertisements, the quantity of information tend to be used more than required. One possible cause is that if the advertisements only offer the basic effects of the products, they do not look attractive or persuasive enough for the consumer to take action. In order to talk the consumer into buying the products advertised, the advertiser gives extra information other than the essential functions of the commodities to attract the consumer. In this case, Quantity Maxim is violated.

#### **4.3.2.2 Comparison among CP maxims by ways of implementation**

It was anticipated that not all of the four CP maxims are obeyed equally frequently, nor are they violated equally often. Table 9 describes the result of data

analysis.

Table 9. CP maxims by Ways of Implementation (A= maxims of CP, B= implementation of CP)

A \ B	Conforming	Violating	Total
Quality	42.5% (1382)	3.3% (57)	29.0% (1439)
Quantity	0.3% (10)	66.6% (1132)	23.0% (1142)
Relevancy	13.5% (439)	29.4% (501)	19.1% (940)
Manner	43.7% (1419)	0.7% (9)	28.9% (1428)
Total	100.0% (3250)	100.0% (1699)	100.0% (4949)

According to Table 9, in maxim conformation, Manner Maxim and Quality Maxim score the highest (43.7% and 42.5%), with Relevancy Maxim coming next (13.5%), and Quantity Maxim (0.3%) the lowest. It shows that in beauty product ads, Manner Maxim and Quality Maxim are emphasized.

In maxim violation, Quantity Maxim scores the highest (66.6%), followed by Relevancy Maxim (29.4%), Quality Maxim (3.3%), and Manner Maxim (0.7%). It shows that from the advertiser's point of view, violating Quantity Maxim would not prohibit the readers from understanding the advertisements. Further, when the advertiser gives the consumer more information about the products than needed, this violation of the second submaxim of Quantity Maxim may actually enhance the effects of advertisements (i.e. boosting the benefits which the products can offer), and hence persuade the consumer into buying them. Relevancy Maxim, although scoring

less than Quantity Maxim, it still takes 29.4% of the data. The advertisements violate Relevancy Maxim by describing something not related to skin or cosmetics, with many cases under metaphorical usage. It seems, to the advertiser, the violation of Relevancy Maxim would not cause the readers misunderstanding; however, the violation of Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim may hinder the consumer from obtaining true and clear information about the products. In order to persuade and to convince the consumer, the advertisements are not likely to say something untrue or unclear, except that they want to exaggerate the effectiveness of the products or to make the sentences vague.

#### **4.3.3. Comparison between types of beauty products advertisements by CP maxims**

It was expected that the two types of advertisements would differ from each other in the interactions among the nature of the ads, the four maxims of cooperation, and the ways of implementing the maxims. Table 10 depicts the results.

Table 10. Types of beauty products advertisements by CP Maxims (A= maxims of CP; B= types of beauty products; C= ways of maxim implementation, with “+” meaning maxim conformation, “-” meaning maxim violation)

A	B		Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
	C				
Quality	+		46.2% (639)	53.8% (743)	100.0% (1382)
	-		59.6% (34)	40.4% (23)	100.0% (57)
Quantity	+		33.3% (3)	66.7% (7)	100.0% (10)
	-		51.0% (578)	49.0% (554)	100.0% (1132)
Relevancy	+		52.8% (232)	47.2% (207)	100.0% (439)
	-		52.9% (265)	47.1% (236)	100.0% (501)
Manner	+		47.2% (671)	52.8% (748)	100.0% (1419)
	-		55.5% (5)	44.5% (4)	100.0% (9)
Whole	+		47.5% (1545)	52.5% (1705)	100.0% (3250)
	-		51.9% (882)	48.1% (817)	100.0% (1699)

According to Table 10, in conforming the CP maxims as a whole, skin-care ads exceed cosmetic ads; in violating the maxims, it is the opposite. In either case, the discrepancy between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads is small, which means the nature of the two types of ads does not influence the implementation of CP maxims too much.

However, when the four maxims of CP are examined individually, it is found that in conforming the Quality, Quantity, and Manner maxims, skin-care ads all score higher than cosmetic ads. As for the conformation of Relevancy Maxim, it is the opposite pattern, with cosmetic ads scoring higher than skin-care ads. Since the essential functions of skin-care products are to maintain skin condition and/or to

repair skin flaws, not to change the user's facial features, it is not surprising that they offer factual statements rather than fantasies. In conforming Relevancy Maxim, the pattern is the opposite, with cosmetic ads scoring slightly higher than skin-care ads. Also, it is noticed that cosmetic ads, in addition to using terms related to the consequences after using the cosmetics, do use statements related to fantasies.

In violating the maxims, cosmetic ads consistently score higher than skin-care ads. Since cosmetics is presumably associated not only with the camouflage of the skin flaws but also with the emotions and psychological feelings when the consumer's facial features are changed by the products, it seems reasonable and tolerable that the advertisements exaggerate the effects of the cosmetics, use vague or even irrelevant words, and provide too much or too little information related to the products.

#### **4.3.4 Comparison between ways to implement CP maxims by types of beauty products advertisements**

It was anticipated that not all of the four CP maxims are obeyed equally frequently, nor are they violated equally often in the two types of ads. Table 11 describes the result of data analyses.



Table 11. Ways to implement CP maxims by types of beauty products advertisements (A= maxims of CP; B= types of beauty products; C= ways of maxim implementation, with “+” meaning maxim conformation, “ - ” meaning maxim violation)

A	C	B	
		Cosmetic	Skin-care
Quality	+	94.9% (639)	96.9% (743)
	-	5.1% (34)	3.1% (23)
	Total	100.0% (673)	100.0% (766)
Quantity	+	0.5% (3)	1.2% (7)
	-	99.5% (578)	98.8% (554)
	Total	100.0% (581)	100.0% (561)
Relevancy	+	46.6% (232)	46.7% (207)
	-	53.4% (265)	53.3% (236)
	Total	100.0% (497)	100.0% (443)
Manner	+	99.2% (671)	99.4% (748)
	-	0.8% (5)	0.6% (4)
	Total	100.0% (676)	100.0% (752)
Whole	+	63.6% (1545)	67.6% (1705)
	-	36.4% (882)	32.4% (817)
	Total	100.0% (2427)	100.0% (2522)

According to Table 11, in general, the two types of ads behave similarly. In conformation of CP, it is 63.6% vs. 67.6% for cosmetic and skin-care ads, respectively; and in violation of CP, it is 36.4% vs. 32.4%, respectively. As for the gaps between the two ways of implementation in each type of advertisements, the discrepancy is 27.2% in cosmetic ads, and 35.2% in skin-care ads. The gap in skin-care ads is larger than that in cosmetic ads, showing that skin-care ads tend to obey CP maxims more frequently than cosmetic ads do.

Moreover, in cosmetic ads as well as in skin-care ads, Manner Maxim and Quality Maxim are CP maxims that are obeyed most frequently. It is anticipated that Manner Maxim and Quality Maxim are observed more frequently; after all, the advertiser wants to provide correct and clear information to persuade the consumer to buy the products advertised.

Another regularity noticed is that Relevancy maxim and Quantity Maxim are violated frequently. This finding shows that, first, in advertisements, the shared knowledge and context are clear, and both the advertiser and the consumer know that the focus is beauty; therefore, even though the advertiser uses many expressions not directly related to facial beauty, it is expected that the consumer knows what those expressions mean. Another reason why Relevancy Maxim is frequently violated is that the advertiser uses some words which are not associated with skin to draw the consumer's attention. Next, Quantity Maxim is violated often because in order to attract the consumer's attention, the advertiser tends to give extra information, namely, the information other than the essential functions of the products, to prove that the products advertised are good to choose.

#### **4.4 Politeness Principle in Advertisements**

The six maxims of Leech's Politeness Principle (including Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and

Sympathy Maxim) can also be used to describe and to explain how cosmetic ads and skin-care ads are constructed. Table 12 demonstrates how these maxims and their submaxims are implemented in advertisements of beauty products.

Table 12. Applicable Maxims of PP in beauty product ads  
 (“+” = obeying the maxims, “-” = violating the maxims, NA= not applicable)

Maxims of PP	Submaxims of PP	Ways of Implementation
Tact Maxim	Maximize H’s Benefit	+
	Minimize H’s Cost	+
Generosity Maxim	Maximize S’s Cost	+
	Minimize S’s Benefit	NA
Approbation Maxim	Maximize Praise of H	NA
	Minimize Dispraise of H	-
Modesty Maxim	Maximize Dispraise of S	NA
	Minimize Praise of S	-
Agreement Maxim	Maximize Agreement between S and H	+
	Minimize Disagreement between S and H	+
Sympathy Maxim	Maximize Sympathy between S and H	+
	Minimize Antipathy between S and H	NA

According to Table 12, in the twelve submaxims, only six of them are related to this study, namely, maximizing H’s benefit, minimizing H’s cost, maximizing S’s cost, minimizing dispraise of H, minimizing praise of S, and maximizing sympathy between S and H. Among these six submaxims, four of them are obeyed, and the other

two are violated. To be specific, in terms of Tact Maxim, the advertiser offers the benefit to the consumer and fulfills her desire directly. Meanwhile, the consumer's cost is minimized. The advertiser emphasizes that the consumer does not have to buy too many bottles of beauty products, which is also a benefit to the consumer. Therefore, Tact Maxim is obeyed.

As for Generosity Maxim, the advertiser may mention her cost sometimes in order to show her credibility and sincerity to the consumer; thus the first submaxim of Generosity Maxim is obeyed. On the other hand, the consumer does not care about the advertiser's benefit or cost, and the advertiser will not mention her own benefit because basically advertisements are consumer-oriented and because the advertiser's true benefit which is to earn money from the consumer is the cost of the consumer and is irrelevant to the consumer's decision to buy the product advertised; thus it is unwise to mention the advertiser's benefit, and the second submaxim of Generosity Maxim is not applicable.

In terms of Approbation Maxim, it is logically impossible for the advertiser to praise the consumer. If the advertiser praises the consumer's skin before using the products, the consumer has no need to buy the beauty products, and the advertiser fails to elicit profits from the consumer. The advertiser only praises the effect of the product. Thus, the first submaxim of Approbation Maxim is not applicable. As for the

second submaxim, it is violated. The advertiser chooses to point out the consumer's skin problems to reveal that she sees and is concerned about the consumer's problem. Very often it is this concern that helps to persuade the consumer that the products advertised can really help her and that she should take action buying the products. The advertiser implies that she is so empathetic with the consumer's problem and so eager to help the consumer to resolve the problem that she even risks a chance to offend the consumer. However, in social psychology, the skin flaws should not be mentioned; hence, these cases are few in the written data.

As to Modesty Maxim, the first submaxim is not applicable because no advertiser would dispraise the product advertised. Instead, the advertiser boosts her product, which explicitly violates the second submaxim of Modesty Maxim. In doing so, the advertiser reinforces the merits of her product and the effect of using it. It is very likely that this reinforcement convinces the consumer that the product is worth buying.

As for Agreement Maxim, it can be merged with Sympathy Maxim. Since the advertiser and the consumer share the same goal, namely, to improve the consumer's skin condition and facial appearance, the advertiser's agreement means sympathy for the consumer; thus, it seems to be redundant to keep both maxims.

In terms of Sympathy Maxim, the first submaxim, maximizing sympathy between the advertiser and the consumer, is obeyed. In advertising, the advertiser shows concern and sincerity to the consumer, so the advertiser maximizes sympathy. The second submaxim of Sympathy Maxim, minimizing antipathy between the advertiser and the consumer, is inapplicable because no advertiser will stand opposite to the consumer's desire and needs, to provoke the consumer and, hence, hinder them from buying the products.

Based on what mentioned above, this section will focus on five of the submaxims, namely, maximizing H's benefit, minimizing H's cost, minimizing dispraise of H, minimizing praise of S, and maximizing sympathy between S and H.

#### **4.4.1 Comparison of the types of advertisements by PP maxims**

It was anticipated that cosmetic ads and skin-care ads would differ from each other in the application of the maxims and the submaxims of Leech's Politeness Principle. Results of data analyses are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Comparison of the types of advertisements by PP maxims (A= maxims of PP; B= types of beauty products; C= ways of maxim implementation, with “+” meaning maxim conformation, “-” meaning maxim violation)

A		C	B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Tact Maxim	Maximize H's Benefit	+		49.4% (224)	50.6% (229)	100.0% (453)
	Minimize H's Cost	+		100% (2)	0% (0)	100.0% (2)
Approbation Maxim: Minimize H's Dispraise		-		34.2% (12)	65.8% (23)	100.0% (35)
Modesty Maxim: Minimize S's Praise		-		37.4% (52)	62.6% (87)	100.0% (139)
Sympathy Maxim: Maximize Sympathy between S and H		+		46.1% (6)	53.9% (7)	100.0% (13)
PP as a Whole				46.1% (296)	53.9% (346)	100.0% (642)

According to Table 13, in general, PP is applied more frequently in skin-care ads than in cosmetic ads (53.9% vs. 46.1%, respectively). This pattern also extends to the applications of the four maxims, namely Tact Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim, with skin-care ads consistently using these maxims more often than cosmetic ads. However, conspicuous gaps between the two types of advertisements locate only in Approbation Maxim and in Modesty Maxim. A possible explanation to these phenomena is that skin-care ads appeal to the effects of the products advertised, and their function is to improve the consumer's skin

conditions; therefore, the advertiser obeys Tact Maxim to sustain the consumer's benefits, and violate Modesty Maxim to uphold the merits of their own products.

In Approbation Maxim, maxim violation is 65.8% in skin-care ads, but only 34.2% in cosmetic ads. The reason may be that, in skin-care ads, the consumer's skin problems are mentioned directly, and the advertiser's products can help the consumer improve her skin. In this way, the violation of Approbation Maxim in skin-care ads is higher. As for cosmetic ads, the focus is to put on the perfect skin after the use of the product, so there is not much need to mention the consumer's skin problems constantly; therefore, frequent violation of Approbation Maxim is needless.

In the application of Sympathy Maxim, maxim conformation is 46.1% in cosmetic ads and 53.9% in skin-care ads. This pattern indicates that in both types of ads, the advertiser tries to show sympathy and concern to the consumer such as by using pronoun "I" to shift the stance, which suggests that the advertiser stands on the same side with the consumer.

#### **4.4.2 Comparison of PP maxims by types of beauty products advertisements**

It was anticipated that not all of the four PP maxims are obeyed equally frequently, nor are they violated equally often in the two types of ads. Table 14 describes the result of data analyses.



Table 14. Comparison of PP maxims by types of beauty products advertisements (A= maxims of PP; B= types of beauty products; C= ways of maxim implementation, with “+” meaning maxim conformation, “-” meaning maxim violation)

A		C	B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Tact Maxim	Maximize H's Benefit	+		75.9% (224)	66.3% (229)	70.7% (453)
	Minimize H's Cost	+		0.6% (2)	0% (0)	0.3% (2)
Approbation Maxim: Minimize H's Dispraise		-		4.0% (12)	6.6% (23)	5.4% (35)
Modesty Maxim: Minimize S's Praise		-		17.5% (52)	25.1% (87)	21.6% (139)
Sympathy Maxim: Maximize Sympathy between S and H		+		2.0% (6)	2.0% (7)	2.0% (13)
PP as a Whole				100.0% (296)	100.0% (346)	100.0% (642)

According to Table 14, among the four maxims, Tact Maxim is applied most frequently both in cosmetic ads (75.9%) and in skin-care ads (66.3%), and the second is Modesty Maxim (17.5% vs. 25.1%, respectively). The reason may be that advertisements are consumer-oriented and are primarily about consumer's benefits, so Tact Maxim is involved. Moreover, since in business transaction, the advertiser's true intention is to sell the commodity to the consumer, the advertiser needs to praise their own products in order to attract the consumer to buy the product. For this reason, Modesty Maxim is violated in beauty product advertisements.

Other than the two maxims mentioned above, Approbation Maxim is violated more frequently in skin-care ads than in cosmetic ads, but Sympathy Maxim is obeyed more often in cosmetic ads and in skin-care ads. When skin-care ads describe the consumer's skin flaws, although the advertiser dispraises the consumer, and thus violates Approbation Maxim, the advertiser might mean to show concern and sympathy to the consumer's problems, which can be taken as conformation of Sympathy Maxim.

#### **4.5 Ideology of Women**

##### **4.5.1 Beauty product advertisements as a whole**

In advertisement discourse, ideology is one of the crucial factors that would determine how an idea is verbally wrapped. In women's fashion magazines, gender ideology prescribes the ways how women should behave and how beauty is evaluated. In this thesis, ideology of women is divided into three components: physical appearance, psychological status, and social recognition. Physical appearance refers to the skin condition, psychological status indicates emotions, and social recognition includes role, the personal features women have; uniqueness, every woman is special; identity, the concepts which women identify with, and beauty, women's being physically attractive. Table 15 demonstrates how these three components are revealed in the data collected.

Table 15. Distribution of the three components of woman ideology

Physical Appearance		51.1% (194)
Psychological Status		8.7% (33)
Social Recognition	Role	3.1% (12)
	Uniqueness	2.6% (10)
	Identity	2.6% (10)
	Beauty	31.6% (120)
	total	40.2% (152)
Total		100.0% (379)

According to Table 15, physical appearance scores the highest (51.1%), followed by social recognition (40.2%) and psychological status (8.7%). This result suggests that the advertiser appeals to physical appearance and social recognition, but women's psychological status is not the focus. A possible reason is that physical appearance and social recognition are under the control of social norms, which are collective expectations of the whole society; while psychological status is concerned with an individual's personal preference. Since the advertiser wants to gain profits from the general public, it is natural that they choose to comply with the social norms, instead of satisfying her own individual differences. For these reasons, the proportions of physical appearance and social recognition score higher than psychological status. Moreover, since personal psychological status reflects an individual's inclination;

therefore, if the advertisement only takes the consumer's psychological status into consideration, it can merely satisfy a small number of consumers, and the profit retrievable is small. Thus, psychological status plays the least important role in beauty product advertisements.

#### 4.5.2 Comparison of types of advertisements by woman ideology

It was expected that skin-care ads would put more stress on physical appearance, while cosmetic ads emphasize social recognition. Table 16 demonstrates the results.

Table 16. Differences between two types of ads by woman ideology  
(A= components of woman ideology, B= types of beauty products)

A	B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Physical Appearance		34.0% (66)	66.0% (128)	100.0% (194)
Psychological Status		57.5% (19)	42.5% (14)	100.0% (33)
Social Recognition	Role	58.3% (7)	41.7% (5)	100.0% (12)
	Uniqueness	80.0% (8)	20.0% (2)	100.0% (10)
	Identity	80.0% (8)	20.0% (2)	100.0% (10)
	Beauty	55.8% (67)	44.2% (53)	100.0% (120)
	Total	59.2% (90)	40.8% (62)	100.0% (152)
TOTAL		46.1% (175)	53.9% (204)	100.0% (379)

According to Table 16, for physical appearance, skin-care ads surpass cosmetic ads (66.0% vs. 34.0%); however, for psychological status and social recognition, it is the opposite, with cosmetic ads overriding skin-care ads (57.5% vs. 42.5%, and 59.2% vs. 40.8%, respectively). Moreover, the largest gap between the two types of ads lies

in physical appearance (with a difference of 32%). It is not surprising that skin-care ads put a heavy stress on physical appearance; after all, the nature of skin-care ads is physical. As for the other two components, the gaps between the two types of ads are relatively small. Based on these findings, it seems to be safe to say that physical appearance is the primary factor to define what attractiveness of women is in Chinese culture.

About the four components of social recognition, *role* means the personal features women have; *uniqueness* indicates that every woman is special; *identity* represents the concepts which women identify with, and *beauty* suggests women's being physically attractive. A general pattern found in the data is that cosmetic ads are expected to be more functional for the purposes of the four components. In social recognition, cosmetic ads are associated with the social roles women play, the uniqueness which women are urged to chase, and the identity which women are bestowed or dream of. Role, uniqueness, and identity all belong to the concepts which are not physically innate, but social-culturally nurtured. To reach goals as such, cosmetic products are more functional than skin-care products. In other words, when using make-up, women do not just change their emotions and appearance; they also change the way other people treat them. Thus, women, after they change their looks, can play different roles and have different identities. This is why cosmetic ads are

strongly related to social recognition. As for beauty, the difference between the two types of ads is small. In Taiwan, women's beauty is emphasized, no matter it is natural beauty, which can be obtained by skin-care products, or artificial beauty, which can be instantly substantiated by cosmetics. Since the use of cosmetics can bring about instantaneous but powerful beauty to women, cosmetic ads score higher than skin-care ads do.

In meeting the needs of psychological status, cosmetic ads (57.5%) score higher than skin-care ads (42.5%). This consequence results from the attribute of the cosmetic ads. Women use cosmetics to make themselves more attractive, which makes them feel confident and delightful about themselves and about the way they are treated. Their emotional status is linked with their appearance after change. In other words, if they want to change their emotions or the way other people look at them, they only have to use cosmetics to make up a mask, no matter how they look originally. In this aspect, women's psychological status is more strongly influenced by cosmetic ads than by skin-care ads.

#### **4.5.3 Comparison of components of ideology by types of advertisements**

It is anticipated that different components of woman ideology will perform differently. Table 17 shows the results of data analysis.

Table 17. Comparison of components of ideology by types of advertisements  
(A= components of woman ideology, B= types of beauty products)

A \ B		Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Physical Appearance		37.7% (66)	62.7% (128)	51.1% (194)
Psychological Status		10.8% (19)	6.8% (14)	8.7% (33)
Social Recognition	Role	4.0% (7)	2.4% (5)	3.1% (12)
	Uniqueness	4.5% (8)	0.9% (2)	2.6% (10)
	Identity	4.5% (8)	0.9% (2)	2.6% (10)
	Beauty	38.2% (67)	25.9% (53)	31.6% (120)
	Total	51.5% (90)	30.5% (62)	40.2% (152)
TOTAL		100.0% (175)	100.0% (204)	100.0% (379)

According to Table 17, in beauty product advertisements as a whole, the priority order of the influences of the three components of woman ideology is that physical appearance (51.1%) and social recognition (40.2%) come prior to psychological status (8.7%). In social recognition, beauty (31.6%) scores the highest, followed by role (3.1%), uniqueness (2.6%) and identity (2.6%). A possible explanation is that beauty is on the surface, which can be judged easily; while role, uniqueness, and identity are underlying concepts, which can not be appreciated easily. Since women's being beautiful is a basic social expectation of women, it is anticipated that the advertisements of beauty products comply to this social norm. When a woman has attractive appearance, she is unique and is thus given an identity. Women have been so strongly conditioned by this social norm that they fail to look at themselves through their own eyes. In beauty product advertisements, sexism on females is so

well reflected

When types of beauty products are taken into consideration, in cosmetic ads, social recognition (51.5%) scores the highest, followed by physical appearance (37.7%), which is followed by psychological state (10.8%); however, in skin-care ads, it is physical appearance that scores the highest (62.7%), followed by social recognition (30.5%), and then psychological status (6.8%). As for psychological status, in cosmetic ads as well as in skin-care ads, it is attended least frequently. This tendency results from the viewpoint that psychological status belongs to personal preferences, and since each consumer has different preferences, if the advertiser appeals to change women's psychological status through the use of beauty products, they fail to cater to the potential consumer's needs, and thus lose the chance to gain the potential profits.

#### **4.6 Linguistic Devices**

In this section, two linguistic components are examined, namely, the referential contents of the advertisements and the use of hedgers and boosters.

##### **4.6.1 Referential contents**

There are four types of referential contents emerged in the beauty product advertisements—*time*, *singularity*, *annexation*, and *scope*. *Time* includes instancy, duration, and simultaneity; *singularity* refers to the first appearance and



distinctiveness of the product; *annexation* indicates the additional function of the product; *scope* contains width and depth. Table 18 presents the distribution of referential contents in beauty product ads.

Table 18. Distribution of referential contents in beauty product ads

Time	Instancy	8.8%	(12)
	Duration	18.5%	(25)
	Simultaneity	3.7%	(5)
	Total	31.1%	(42)
Singularity	First	2.9%	(4)
	Distinctiveness	0.7%	(1)
	Total	3.7%	(5)
Annexation	Total	22.9%	(31)
Scope	Width	27.4%	(37)
	Depth	14.8%	(20)
	Total	42.3%	(57)
TOTAL		100.0%	(135)

According to Table 18, scope scores the highest (42.3%), followed by time (31.1%), annexation (22.9%), and singularity (3.7%). In details, duration of time (18.5%), first of singularity (2.9%), and width of scope (27.4%) score the highest in each of the categories. These results indicate that scope, time, and annexation are emphasized in beauty product advertisements; whereas singularity is the least important category in referential contents. Singularity is the least related to the effect of the beauty products, while scope, time, and annexation are all related to the effect,

efficiency, and function of the beauty product.

In each type of the referential contents, cosmetic ads and skin-care ads differ from each other in certain points, but resemble each other in other points. Table 19 gives the distributions of the types and subtypes of the referential contents found in the two kinds of advertisements.

Table 19. Comparison of two types of ads by referential contents (A= referential contents, B= types of beauty products)

A		B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Time	Instancy		50.0% (6)	50.0% (6)	100.0% (12)
	Duration		44.0% (11)	56.0% (14)	100.0% (25)
	Simultaneity		80.0% (4)	20.0% (1)	100.0% (5)
	Total		50.0% (21)	50.0% (21)	100.0% (42)
Singularity	First		50.0% (2)	50.0% (2)	100.0% (4)
	Distinctiveness		0.0% (0)	100% (1)	100.0% (1)
	Total		40.0% (2)	60.0% (3)	100.0% (5)
Annexation	Total		35.4% (11)	64.6% (20)	100.0% (31)
Scope	Width		48.6% (18)	51.4% (19)	100.0% (37)
	Depth		35.0% (7)	65.0% (13)	100.0% (20)
	Total		43.8% (25)	56.2% (32)	100.0% (57)
Whole			43.7% (59)	56.3% (76)	100.0% (135)

As Table 19 indicates, cosmetic ads and skin-care ads show similar patterns in the expression of time and singularity, but differences between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads in annexation and scope are conspicuous. All of these referential contents aim at two goals: efficiency and effectiveness, with time related to efficiency; and singularity, annexation, and scope related to effectiveness. Results of data

analyses reveal that there is little difference between the two types of advertisements, except annexation and scope in depth. Skin-care ads score higher than cosmetic ads in annexation and depth. This result indicates that skin-care ads use a lot of terms about annexation and depth to emphasize the function and effectiveness the products produce.

Table 20 describes comparison of the referential contents of cosmetic ads and those of skin-care ads.

Table 20. Comparison of referential contents by two types of ads (A= referential contents, B= types of beauty products)

A	B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Time	Instancy	10.1% (6)	7.8% (6)	8.8% (12)
	Duration	18.6% (11)	18.4% (14)	18.5% (25)
	Simultaneity	6.7% (4)	1.3% (1)	3.7% (5)
	Total	35.5% (21)	27.6% (21)	31.1% (42)
Singularity	First	3.3% (2)	2.6% (2)	2.9% (4)
	Distinctiveness	0.0% (0)	1.3% (1)	0.7% (1)
	Total	3.3% (2)	3.9% (3)	3.7% (5)
Annexation	Total	18.6% (11)	26.3% (20)	22.9% (31)
Scope	Width	30.5% (18)	25.0% (19)	27.4% (37)
	Depth	11.8% (7)	17.1% (13)	14.8% (20)
	Total	42.3% (25)	42.1% (32)	42.3% (57)
Whole		100.0% (59)	100.0% (76)	100.0% (135)

According to Table 20, the priority order of the referential contents is scope (42.3%), time (31.1%), annexation (22.9%), and singularity (3.7%). In beauty product advertisements, the advertiser wants to persuade the consumer to buy the products, so

the advertiser uses a lot of terms about scope to emphasize their certainty of the effectiveness of the products advertised. Following a similar line, *time*, which is related to efficiency, tend to emphasize how time-saving for the target products to improve the consumer's appearance and how lasting the effects of those target products are, both of which are the consumer's interest. As for annexation, it is used to emphasize the additional functions of the beauty products. It can help the consumer have extra benefits from the products advertised.

#### 4.6.2 Hedgers and boosters

Hedgers and boosters are modifiers which are frequently found in advertising discourse to persuade the consumer to buy the products. Table 21 shows differences between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads by the use of hedgers and boosters.

Table 21. Distribution of types of advertisements by types of modifiers  
(A= modifiers , B= types of beauty products)

A \ B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Hedger	60.0% (3)	40.0% (2)	100.0% (5)
Booster	39.0% (181)	61.0% (283)	100.0% (464)
None	54.8% (416)	45.2% (343)	100.0% (759)
Total	48.8% (600)	51.2% (628)	100.0% (1228)

According to Table 21, in general, hedgers are rarely used either in cosmetic ads or in skin-care ads. As for boosters, they are used more frequently in skin-care ads (61.0%) than in cosmetic ads (39.0%). In cosmetic ads, this finding seems to indicate

that the advertiser is less confident with the effects of the products due to some of the consumer's personal factors, such as the consumer's knowledge, experience, and skills of using the cosmetics. As a result, the advertiser has to tone down their certainty and use fewer boosters in cosmetic ads than in skin-care ads. Though the uncertainty is not advantageous for the advertiser, it will avoid the consumer's distrust on the exaggerated advertisements of beauty products. That is, the advertiser uses hedgers in a relatively conservative way to trade off the consumer's trust and to sound more reliable. As to skin-care ads, the advertiser has more confidence in the products advertised because the effectiveness can be verified easily; therefore, boosters are used far more in skin-care ads than in cosmetic ads.

Also, it was expected that both hedgers and boosters would be used in both types of ads. Table 22 presents the results of data analysis.

Table 22. Distribution of types of modifiers by types of advertisements  
(A= modifiers , B= types of beauty products)

A \ B	Cosmetic	Skin-care	Total
Hedger	0.5% (3)	0.3% (2)	0.4% (5)
Booster	30.2% (181)	45.0% (283)	37.7% (464)
None	69.3% (416)	54.7% (343)	61.9% (759)
Total	100.0% (600)	100.0% (628)	100.0% (1228)

According to Table 22, most advertisements of beauty products (61.9%) do not carry modifiers; only 37.7% of them contain boosters, and hedgers are rarely used

(0.4%). Also, in the use of boosters, it is found that skin-care ads score apparently higher than cosmetic ads. The reason for this difference lies in the effects of using the two different kinds of products. To be specific, skin-care products are used to improve the facial skin condition, and if the product itself is effective, the improvement of the skin condition will be revealed. That is, since the consequence of using skin-care products can be judged objectively, the advertiser is more certain and confident with these products, which allows the advertiser to exaggerate the functions of these commodities.

When the consumer uses cosmetic to improve her facial outlook, the skills to apply the cosmetic products are important. Since different women have different skills and preferences of using cosmetics, there are individual differences. More importantly, individual differences are also reflected in the judgements of beauty. As a result, the advertiser can not promise that the make-up will definitely make the consumer look better. Since the certainty is relatively low, the advertiser uses fewer boosters.

## Chapter 5

### Qualitative Analyses of the Interviews

This chapter presents qualitative analyses of the interviews, which aim at the subjects' attitudes on a 5-point Likert scale of persuasiveness toward the advertising approaches, felicity conditions, CP, and PP. The related data are first examined by the subjects as a whole, and then by the subjects' social characteristics.

#### 5.1 Advertising Approaches

There are two ways for the advertiser to persuade the consumer: hard-sell approach and soft-sell approach. However, it has never been confirmed that the advertiser and the consumer share the same attitude toward the same beauty product. In this thesis, the criterion for attitude test is persuasiveness. This section presents and analyzes the subjects' attitudes toward the two advertising approaches applied into the two types of beauty products. These subjects' reactions are analyzed, first, with these subjects as a whole, then with subgroupings of the subjects by their educational level and age. Table 26 depicts the results of the interviews.

Table 23. Subjects' attitudes toward the persuasiveness of the advertising approaches by types of beauty products (A=approaches of advertising, B=beauty products, C=subjects)

A	B	C	Whole	Education level		Age	
				High	Low	Old	Young
Hard-sell	Cosmetic		3.16	3.16	3.16	3.16	3.16
	Skin-care		3.66	3.66	3.66	3.66	3.66
	Mean		3.41	3.41	3.41	3.41	3.41
Soft-sell	Cosmetic		2.41	2.33	2.50	2.50	2.33
	Skin-care		3.83	3.33	4.33	3.66	4.00
	Mean		3.12	2.83	3.41	3.08	3.16
MEAN			3.27	3.12	3.41	3.24	3.28

### 5.1.1 General attitudes toward advertising approaches by subjects as a whole

According to Table 23, when all subjects are taken as a whole, the mean of their attitude toward the advertising approach in general is 3.27, which shows the subjects take a light favoring attitude toward the advertisements.

In terms of the advertising approaches, the mean of the subjects' attitude toward hard-sell approach is 3.41, and that of soft-sell approach is 3.12. The gap between the two means shows that hard-sell approach is more persuasive than soft-sell approach. That is, it seems that the potential consumer in Taiwan prefer rational statements (which take hard-sell approach) to statements of fantasy and sensitivity (which adopt soft-sell approach).



### 5.1.2 Attitudes toward types of beauty products advertisements by subjects as a whole

According to Table 23, in terms of two types of beauty products ads, in cosmetic ads, hard-sell approach (Mean=3.16) is preferred to soft-sell approach (Mean=2.41). During the interviews, some subjects claimed that using soft-sell approach for beauty products advertisements is vague, and the statement is not concrete. As consumers, they prefer definite description of the products, taking hard-sell approach as a device more reliable and persuasive than soft-sell approach.

According to the subjects, in skin-care ads, soft-sell approach (Mean=3.83) is more favored than hard-sell approach is (Mean=3.66), although the gap is fairly small. According to the subjects, the use of soft-sell approach, such as describing the psychological state, sounds attractive to them.

Moreover, according to Table 23, the gap between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads is apparently larger when soft-sell approach is applied (with a discrepancy of 1.42) than when hard-sell approach is adopted (with a difference of 0.50). This finding implies that soft-sell approach is relatively less persuasive. According to some of the subjects, since what cosmetic ads aim at is to establish in the consumer a certain kind of image and/or ideology, which are abstract by nature, they would rather that those images and ideology be described in a more concrete and more direct ways of verbal expression. Moreover, unlike skin-care products, the effects of which can easily be

verified, the effects of cosmetic products are subject to vary from person to person due to the consumer's personal preference, which is not necessarily congruent with the advertiser's expectations. Therefore, a negative attitude is induced. On the other hand, the subjects hold a favorable attitude toward soft-sell approach in skin-care ads because the commercial appeal of skin-care is concrete by nature and thus easy to comprehend; soft-sell approach even gives the consumer an extra image when she reads the advertisements. Therefore, in skin-care ads, soft-sell approach overrides hard-sell approach.

### **5.1.3 Subjects' attitude toward advertising approaches and types of beauty products by subjects' education level**

When the subjects' education level is taken into consideration, a different picture is yielded. According to Table 23, first, subjects of lower education level give more favorable attitude (Mean=3.41) toward advertisements of beauty products in general than those of higher education level do (Mean=3.12). Based on the contents of the interviews, it seems that those subjects of lower education level have less demand from the advertisements; namely, they do not mind whether the advertisements are direct and clear, which is hard-sell approach, or indirect and not so clear on the surface, which is soft-sell. Thus, they tend to accept whatever the ads try to convey. On the contrary, the subjects of higher education level are less likely to accept easily

what the advertisements say. That is, they tend to have more independent thinking and have their own choice of ideology, not influenced so easily as subjects of lower education level.

When the advertising approaches are taken into consideration, in hard-sell approach, both of the two education groups give a mean of 3.41, which shows that in the use of hard-sell approach, education level is not an influential social factor. However, in soft-sell approach, the mean of the higher education group (2.83) is apparently lower than that of lower education group (3.41). This result seems to indicate that subjects of higher education level do not favor soft-sell approach, while the subjects of lower education level act the opposite. In other words, for beauty product advertisements, females of higher education level prefer rational and clear verbal descriptions to vague and fantasizing ones, being demanding in the truth value of verbal expressions through the use of oft-sell approach.. However, to the females of lower education level, it makes no difference.

When the types of ads are taken into consideration, in hard-sell approach, the means of cosmetic ads given by the two education groups are the same, with both scoring 3.16. A similar pattern is repeated in the two education groups' reactions to skin-care ads, both offering a mean 3.66. In other words, the subjects of either education group prefer skin-care ads to cosmetic ads, although the difference is not

large. On the other hand, in soft-sell approach, the higher education group's evaluation of cosmetic ads is 2.33, and that of the lower education group is 2.50. To conclude, despite the selling approaches, both of the two education groups disfavor the cosmetic ads, and favor skin-care ads. According to some of the subjects, cosmetic advertisements are too abstract for them to understand; therefore, the advertisements are not persuasive to them. However, both higher and the lower education groups give positive evaluations to skin-care advertisements, with both groups giving a mean of 3.66 to hard-sell approach, and with the higher education group scoring 3.33 and the lower education group scoring 4.33 for soft-sell approach. It is noticed that the subjects of lower education level hold a conspicuously higher evaluation toward the use of soft-sell approach for skin-care ads. It seems that the subjects of lower education level, again, are found to be much easier to be persuaded to accept what the advertisements try to sell.

#### **5.1.4 Attitudes toward advertising approaches and types of beauty products by subjects' age**

According to Table 23, both the older subjects and the younger subjects give a mildly favorable evaluation toward advertising approach in general, 3.24 and 3.28, respectively, without conspicuous age difference.

When individual advertising approaches are taken into consideration, for hard-sell approach, both age groups score 3.41. However, for soft-sell approach, the mean of the older group score 3.08, which is slightly lower than that of the younger group, 3.16. Again, no significant age difference is located.

When the two types of beauty products are taken into consideration, in hard-sell approach, the older group and the younger group both score 3.16 for cosmetic ads, and 3.66 for skin-care ads. These results indicate that both age groups prefer skin-care ads to cosmetic ads, although the difference is not large. On the other hand, in soft-sell approach, the older group's evaluation of the cosmetic ads is 2.50, and that of the younger group is 2.33, with both age groups giving negative attitudes toward using soft-sell approach to advertise cosmetic ads. However, both groups give positive evaluations to skin-care ads with soft-sell approach, 3.66 by the old and 4.00 by the young. In conclusion, the two age groups resemble each other, first, in giving positive attitudes toward hard-sell approach, despite the types of the commodities advertised; next, in giving negative attitudes toward using soft-sell approach for cosmetic ads, but positive attitudes toward advertising skin-care products with soft-sell approach. According to the subjects, women in Taiwan, old or young, tend to be attracted by skin-care ads because, culturally, Chinese women are expected and encouraged to pursue natural beauty, at which skin-care products aim, rather than to seek artificial

beauty, the primary goal of cosmetics.

## 5.2 Subjects' Attitude toward the Persuasiveness of Felicity Conditions in Advertisements

Since every piece of advertisement is with referential content, only the other three of the felicity conditions—preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition—are examined here. This section describes the subjects' attitudes toward the application of these three felicity conditions on cosmetic ads and skin-care ads, first, with the subjects as a whole, and then with subgroupings of the subjects by their educational level and age. Table 24 presents the means of these attitudes.

Table 24. Subjects' attitudes toward the persuasiveness of the felicity conditions by two types of beauty products (A=felicity conditions, B=beauty products, C=subjects)

A	C B	Whole	Education level		Age	
			High	Low	Old	Young
Preparatory	Cosmetic	2.72	3.00	2.20	2.42	3.01
	Skin-care	3.31	3.41	3.21	3.01	3.61
	Mean	3.02	3.20	2.70	2.71	3.31
Sincerity	Cosmetic	2.99	3.11	2.87	2.59	3.38
	Skin-care	3.55	3.63	3.48	3.18	3.93
	Mean	3.27	3.37	3.17	2.88	3.65
Essential	Cosmetic	2.83	3.11	2.33	2.52	3.12
	Skin-care	3.21	3.45	3.20	3.27	3.54
	Mean	3.05	3.28	2.76	2.89	3.33
MEAN		3.15	3.28	2.87	2.82	3.43

### 5.2.1 General attitudes toward felicity conditions by subjects as a whole

According to Table 24, when the subjects are taken as a whole, their general attitude toward the felicity conditions on the whole is 3.15, meaning that the subjects are not strongly persuaded to believe that the advertisements can do what they claim to be capable of doing. The reason may be that the advertisements are too exaggerative to be true. For example, the advertisements promise that once the consumer use the product, it will serve multiple functions and solve all the skin problems, and she will be as beautiful as a superstar. Obviously, this kind of advertisement is exaggerating. Thus, the subjects are not persuaded.

In terms of the persuasiveness of the individual felicity conditions, the subjects' evaluation toward preparatory condition is 3.02, that toward sincerity condition is 3.27, and that toward essential condition is 3.05. These results indicate that among the three felicity conditions, the subjects take more positive attitude toward sincerity condition than toward the other two conditions. A possible explanation is that once the advertiser shows a little sincerity, the subjects tend to feel sincere and, thus, reliable. On the other hand, preparatory condition and essential condition are not satisfied so easily as sincerity condition is. That is, the advertiser has to bring forward apparent evidence to prove that the advertisement is true, which needs great efforts. Therefore, both of the evaluations are less positive.

### 5.2.2 Attitudes toward types of beauty products advertisements by subjects as a whole

According to Table 24, in terms of the two types of beauty product ads, in cosmetic ads, sincerity condition (Mean=2.99) is preferred to preparatory condition (Mean=2.72) and essential condition (Mean=2.83). That is, all of the subjects' evaluations to these three felicity conditions are negative.

In skin-care ads, sincerity condition (Mean=3.55) is more favored than preparatory condition (Mean=3.31) and essential condition (Mean=3.21). Although the mean is above 3.00, the strength of persuasiveness is still not high (not over 4.00). Moreover, the pattern is the same as that in cosmetic ads, which shows that the types of commodities make no difference. Again, a possible explanation is that only in sincerity do the subjects believe it to be true because the social norm of sincerity is easier to reach.

The gap between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads is apparently smaller in essential condition (with a difference of 0.38) than in preparatory condition (with a discrepancy of 0.59) and in sincerity condition (with a distinction of 0.56). A possible reason is that the promise in the advertisement cannot be verified so far; thus it is not reliable and persuasive.



### **5.2.3 Attitudes toward felicity conditions and types of beauty products by subjects' education level**

According to Table 24, in terms of education level, the general attitude toward felicity conditions by the subjects of higher education level and that by the lower education subjects are 3.28 and 2.87, respectively, with a gap of 0.41. In other words, higher education subjects hold a positive attitude toward beauty product advertisements, but the lower education subjects a negative attitude. According to the subjects, it is likely that the lower education subjects have difficulty in understanding clearly the wording of the advertisements; therefore, they tend to reflect such insufficiency and insecurity of comprehension by holding a negative evaluation.

Next, when individual felicity conditions are taken into consideration, in preparatory condition, the mean offered by the higher education subjects is 3.20, and that by the lower education subjects is 2.70; in sincerity condition, it is 3.37 and 3.17, respectively; in essential condition, 3.28, and 2.76, respectively. These results indicate that it is only in evaluating sincerity condition do both of the two education groups offer positive attitudes, with the gap between the two groups being small. In evaluating the persuasiveness of the other two felicity conditions, the higher education group consistently gives positive evaluations, while the lower education group systematically offers negative attitudes. These results seem to imply that the lower

education group, lacking the ability to understand the advertisements clearly or completely, unable to judge whether the felicity conditions are met, is faced to give a negative evaluation.

When the types of beauty products are taken into consideration, whatever the felicity conditions may be, the two education groups always give better evaluation to skin-care ads than to cosmetic ads. The subjects seem to think that skin-care ads are more persuasive than cosmetic ads. A possible reason from the subjects is that skin-care ads give concrete sense of the products to the consumer, and the consequence of using the skin-care products can be verified. However, cosmetic ads give abstract sense of the products, and the effects of using cosmetics cannot be verified clearly or directly. That is, whether the effects are good or not depends on individual preferences. For example, some females think that heavy make-up is good-looking, while others do not think so. As a result, the felicity conditions of skin-care ads are considered more persuasive than those of cosmetic ads.

#### **5.2.4 Attitudes toward felicity conditions and types of beauty products by subjects' age**

The older group's and the younger group's general attitudes toward felicity conditions are 2.82 and 3.43, respectively, with a difference of 0.61. It is noticed that the older group holds a negative attitude, whereas the younger group holds a positive

attitude. According to the subjects, the older group is against advertisements because they think the advertisements, which are primarily intended to earn money from the potential consumer, are exaggerative and untrue; while the younger group tends to consider advertisements as a tool to supply information, and thus tends to accept what the advertisements say and believe that they are true.

When the three individual felicity conditions are taken into consideration, the older group's and the younger group's evaluations of preparatory condition are 2.71 and 3.31, respectively; for sincerity condition, 2.88 and 3.65; for essential condition, 2.82 and 3.43. Based on these findings, a pattern similar to that mentioned in the previous paragraph is located: with the older group consistently scoring negatively lower than the younger group.

When the types of beauty products are taken into consideration, whatever the felicity conditions may be, the two age groups consistently give higher evaluations to skin-care ads than to cosmetic ads. It seems that the subjects, despite their age, think that the perspective of felicity conditions of skin-care ads are more persuasive than those of cosmetic ads. A possible explanation is that skin-care ads provide evidence for the consumer of the products because once they use the products, they themselves can verify whether the products are effective or not. On this basis, skin-care ads are more persuasive than cosmetic ads. On the other hand, the advertiser cannot promise

that after using the cosmetics, the consumer will definitely look good as the advertisements describe or be comfortable with the way they look because the ways of using cosmetics may vary according to individual differences in skills of using cosmetics and individual preferences in delivering different self-images and ideologies through using cosmetics. Therefore, they hold more positive attitudes toward skin-care ads than toward cosmetic ads.

### **5.3 Subjects' Attitude toward the Persuasiveness of CP Maxims in Advertisements**

In this section, the subjects' attitudes toward the Cooperative Principle in general and the four individual maxims are presented and analyzed, first, with the subjects as a whole, and then with subgroupings of the subjects by their educational level and age. Table 25 depicts the means of these attitudes related.

Table 25. Subjects' attitudes toward the persuasiveness of CP by two types of beauty products (A=CP, B=beauty products, C=subjects)

A \ B	C	Whole	Education		Age	
			High	Low	Old	Young
Quality Maxim	Cosmetic	2.80	2.55	3.05	3.33	2.27
	Skin-care	3.42	3.35	3.50	3.70	3.15
	Mean	3.11	2.95	3.27	3.51	2.71
Quantity Maxim	Cosmetic	3.16	2.55	3.77	3.38	2.94
	Skin-care	3.77	3.20	4.35	3.70	3.85
	Mean	3.46	2.87	4.06	3.54	3.39
Relevancy Maxim	Cosmetic	3.25	2.98	3.12	3.55	3.36
	Skin-care	3.51	3.54	3.83	3.33	3.47
	Mean	3.38	3.26	3.47	3.44	3.41
Manner Maxim	Cosmetic	3.66	3.52	3.58	3.73	3.81
	Skin-care	3.72	3.68	3.81	3.54	3.87
	Mean	3.70	3.60	3.69	3.63	3.84
MEAN		3.41	3.17	3.60	3.53	3.33

### 5.3.1 General attitudes toward CP by subjects as a whole

According to Table 25, when all subjects are taken as a whole, the mean of their general attitude toward the Cooperative Principle (CP, hereafter) is 3.41, which shows that the subjects' attitude is positive, although not very strong.

In terms of the individual maxims of CP, the mean of the subjects' attitude toward Quality Maxim is 3.11, that of Quantity Maxim is 3.46, that of Relevancy Maxim is 3.38, and that of Manner Maxim is 3.70. That is, Manner Maxim scores the highest, followed by Quantity Maxim, Relevancy Maxim, and Quality Maxim, in this order. According to the subjects, the testing advertisements are clear and the quantity

of the information contained in them is sufficient.

### **5.3.2 Attitudes toward types of beauty products advertisements by subjects as a whole**

According to Table 25, in terms of two types of beauty product ads, in cosmetic ads, Manner Maxim (Mean=3.66) is preferred to Relevancy Maxim (Mean = 3.25), Quantity Maxim (Mean=3.16), and Quality Maxim (Mean=2.80). These results reveal that the subjects take a more positive attitude toward Manner Maxim. According to the subjects, it is very likely that in order to sell cosmetics successfully, which are associated with abstract image and ideology, the advertiser needs to give clear and understandable expressions to depict the cosmetic products.

In skin-care ads, Quantity Maxim (Mean=3.77) and Manner Maxim (Mean=3.72) are more favored than Relevancy Maxim (Mean=3.51) and Quality Maxim (Mean=3.42). Skin-care ads appeal to skin condition which is concrete by nature. As a result, the clarity of the advertisements has to be held, which is achieved by Manner Maxim. Besides, the quantity of information given is sufficient and clear enough for the subjects to understand the effects of the skin-care products.

Moreover, the gaps between the evaluations of the cosmetic ads and the skin-care ads are apparently larger in Quality Maxim (with a discrepancy of 0.62) and in Quantity Maxim (with a discrepancy of 0.61) than in Relevancy Maxim (with a difference of 0.26) and in Manner Maxim (with a difference of 0.06). These results

suggest that in Quality Maxim and Quantity Maxim, the subjects' attitudes are influenced by the two types of commodities, while in Relevancy Maxim and Manner Maxim, the difference is inconspicuous. It is likely that the measurement of Relevancy Maxim and Manner Maxim are more objective by nature; that is, they can verify clearly; hence, the individual difference is not large. However, the Quality and Quantity aspects of advertisements depend more on the consumer's personal judgments, and the individual difference is large. Thus, the subjects' attitudes are influenced by the two types of commodities in Quality Maxim and Quantity Maxim, but there is no difference in the other two maxims.

### **5.3.3 Attitudes toward CP and types of beauty products by subjects' education level**

According to Table 25, in terms of the subjects' education level, the means of the higher education group's and the lower education group's general attitudes toward CP are 3.17 and 3.60, respectively, with a difference of 0.43. This result shows that from the perspective of cooperative maxims embedded in the advertisements, the lower education group is more positive toward beauty product advertisements. The reason may be that people of lower education level have more trust in advertisements, and are easier to believe what they are told; on the contrary, people of higher education level are skeptical of whatever they are told.

When the individual maxims of CP are taken into consideration, it is found that to Quality Maxim, the higher education group's evaluation is 2.95, and that of the lower education group is 3.27; to Quantity Maxim, it is 2.87 and 4.06, respectively; to Relevancy Maxim, 3.26 and 3.47, respectively; to Manner Maxim, 3.60 and 3.69, respectively. These results indicate that the subjects of lower education level consistently take positive attitudes toward all of the four CP maxims applied in the advertisements, especially Quantity Maxim; however, the subjects of higher education level take positive attitudes only toward Manner Maxim and Relevancy Maxim, but negative attitudes toward Quality Maxim and Quantity Maxim of the advertisements. It is likely that the subjects of higher education level are educated to put an emphasis on precision; hence, once they are faced with conditions unable to be evaluated clearly, they become skeptical. Also, although the lower education group systematically scores higher than the higher education group does, it is in their evaluations of Quantity Maxim of the advertisement that a conspicuous gap (with a difference of 1.09) is located. A possible reason is that people of lower education level, unlike people of higher education level, do not require so much information about the commodities they are to buy because they simply care about approximation.

When the types of the commodities are taken into consideration, whatever the maxims of CP maybe, the lower education group's attitude is systematically more



positive than the higher education group's. Moreover, the lower education group's evaluations of both types of commodities are consistently above 3.00, with skin-care ads scoring higher than cosmetic ads, especially in Quantity Maxim (4.35). Unlike the lower education group, the higher education group consistently scores below 3.00 in cosmetic ads, except when evaluating Manner Maxim, for which the higher education group's evaluation is above 3.00. In skin-care ads, the evaluations are systematically above 3.00. These results imply that the lower education group is less demanding in advertisements and takes a more positive attitude; whereas the higher education group is more demanding in advertisements, and is educated to be practical, realistic, and to have the capability of independent thinking, which make them take a negative attitude toward the advertisements, especially those which cannot be verified. In conclusion, in those advertisements, the lower education group always scores higher than the higher education group, for the persuasiveness of every CP maxim.

#### **5.3.4 Attitudes toward CP and Types of beauty products by subjects' age**

The older group's general attitudes toward CP and the younger group's are 3.53 and 3.33, respectively, with a difference of 0.20. It is noticed that both groups take a positive attitude toward CP, with the older group scoring slightly higher than the younger group. In other words, age is not an influential factor in this case.

When the individual maxims of CP are taken into consideration, it is found that to Quality Maxim, the older group's evaluation is 3.51, and that of the younger group is 2.71; to Quantity Maxim, it is 3.54 and 3.39, respectively; to Relevancy Maxim, 3.44 and 3.41, respectively; to Manner Maxim, 3.63 and 3.84, respectively. According to these results, it is noticed that only in Manner Maxim does the younger group score higher than the older group. In evaluating the other three maxims, it is always the older group that scores higher. According to the subjects, older people, since they are not familiar with beauty products, they are less demanding with the advertisements in the aspect of Quality, Relevancy, and Quantity. Nevertheless, the younger group, who knows well about beauty products, makes stricter demands on advertisements, challenging the advertiser for the advertisements not being satisfactory in the perspectives of the truthfulness, the number, and the clarity of the advertisements.

When the types of beauty products are taken into consideration, the older group gives better evaluation to cosmetic ads in the aspects of Quality, Quantity, and Relevancy of the advertisements. The younger group surpasses the older group only in the perspective of Manner how the beauty products are advertised. What's more, younger group's evaluation of Quality Maxim and Quantity Maxim of the advertisements are both below 3.00, which indicates that the younger group does not quite believe in cosmetic ads. These results imply that the younger group is more

familiar with the cosmetics; hence, they know well in the manners of cosmetic ads, and thus are more demanding in Quality Maxim and Quantity Maxim. As for the older subjects, they do not care too much about the content and quantity of the information provided in the advertisements; thus, they take a more positive attitude. In skin-care ads, because the nature of this kind of advertisements is more concrete and definite, the younger group gives better evaluation to Manner Maxim, Relevancy Maxim, and Quantity Maxim than the older group does. However, for Quality Maxim, it is the older subjects that take a more positive attitude because their expectation and demand for the truthfulness of the contents of the advertisements are weaker than the younger subjects'.

#### **5.4 Subjects' Attitude toward the Persuasiveness of PP Maxims in Advertisements**

In this section, the subjects' attitudes toward the Politeness Principle in general and the four individual maxims, Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim violated and Tact Maxim and Sympathy Maxim obeyed, are presented and analyzed, first, with the subjects as a whole, and then with subgroupings of the subjects by their educational level and age. Table 26 depicts the means of these attitudes related.

Table 26. Subjects' attitudes toward the persuasiveness of PP by two types of beauty products (A=PP, B=beauty products, C=subjects)

A	B	C	Whole	Education		Age	
				High	Low	Old	Young
Tact Maxim	Cosmetic		3.17	2.66	3.33	3.71	2.87
	Skin-care		3.35	3.12	3.54	3.55	3.18
	Mean		3.27	2.89	3.43	3.63	3.02
Approbation Maxim	Cosmetic		2.14	2.33	1.87	2.74	1.99
	Skin-care		2.20	2.64	1.75	2.39	2.18
	Mean		2.17	2.48	1.81	2.56	2.08
Modesty Maxim	Cosmetic		3.13	3.38	2.88	3.60	2.49
	Skin-care		3.25	3.70	2.75	3.35	3.10
	Mean		3.24	3.54	2.81	3.47	2.79
Sympathy Maxim	Cosmetic		3.08	2.88	3.27	3.66	2.49
	Skin-care		3.33	3.10	3.60	3.55	3.15
	Mean		3.21	2.99	3.43	3.60	2.82
MEAN			2.95	2.97	2.87	3.31	2.67

#### 5.4.1 General attitudes toward PP by subjects as a whole

According to Table 26, when all subjects are taken as a whole, the mean of their general attitude toward the Politeness Principle (PP, hereafter) is 2.95, which shows that the subjects take a negative attitude toward the advertisements. It seems that the subjects do not firmly believe that the advertisements offer sufficient benefits and sympathy for the potential consumer's beauty problems.

In terms of the individual maxims of PP, the mean of the subjects' attitude toward Tact Maxim is 3.27, that of Modesty Maxim is 3.24, that of Sympathy Maxim is 3.21, and that of Approbation Maxim is 2.17. These results show that the subjects

take a more negative attitude toward Approbation Maxim because for them, it is impolite for the advertisements to mention the potential consumer's flaws. As for the rest of the maxims, the subjects take mild positive attitudes. In addition, the priority of the maxims is Tact Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Sympathy Maxim, and Approbation Maxim, in this order. That is, advertisements of beauty products emphasize more on the potential consumer's benefits and the praise of the products advertised.

#### **5.4.2 Attitudes toward types of beauty products advertisements by subjects as a whole**

According to Table 26, in terms of two types of beauty product ads, in cosmetic ads, Tact Maxim (Mean=3.17) is preferred to Modesty Maxim (Mean=3.13), Sympathy Maxim (Mean=3.08), and Approbation Maxim (Mean=2.14). These results indicate that the subjects take slightly positive attitudes toward Tact Maxim, Modesty Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim. From the subjects' point of view, those advertisements put an emphasis on the consumer's benefit, and try to and boost the effectiveness of the products advertised in order to achieve persuasiveness. As for Approbation Maxim, the subjects give it a negative attitude, which implies that they do not perceive that their skin problems are mentioned by the advertisements. Something interesting is that cosmetic advertisements never mention the potential consumer's beauty problems; however, they do provide an ideal look for the consumer to pursue through the use of the cosmetic products. According to the subjects, it is inappropriate or even rude, to

mention those beauty problems which can easily be resolved by using cosmetics because such mentioning may imply that the potential consumer did not do what can be done easily; for example, simply by applying lipstick, boredom is covered, and elegance or sensuality is divulged.

In skin-care ads, Tact Maxim (Mean=3.35) and Sympathy Maxim (Mean=3.33) are more favored than Modesty Maxim (Mean=3.25) and Approbation Maxim (Mean=3.20). The subjects think skin-care ads show more sympathy for them compared with cosmetic ads.

Moreover, the gap between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads is larger in Sympathy Maxim (with a difference of 0.27) and in Tact Maxim (with a difference of 0.18) than in Modesty Maxim (with a difference of 0.12) and in Approbation Maxim (with a difference of 0.06). This result suggests that cross maxim differences are small in PP, because in Taiwan, due to the pursuit of natural beauty, the consumer focuses more on the effectiveness of skin-care products than on that of cosmetics. As a result, the advertiser tends to sell cosmetics in a way similar to that in selling skin-care products.

#### **5.4.3 Attitudes toward PP and types of beauty products by subjects' education level**

According to Table 26, in terms of education level, the means of the higher education group's and the lower education group's general attitudes toward PP are

2.97 and 2.87, respectively, with a difference of 0.10. This result shows that from the perspective of politeness, both groups hold a negative attitude toward beauty product advertisements. It is likely that both groups are not truly convinced that the beauty products advertised can really benefit them; nor do they believe that the advertiser's sympathy and concern are true.

When the individual maxims of PP are taken into consideration, it is found that to Tact Maxim, the higher education group's evaluation is 2.89, and that of lower education group is 3.43; to Approbation Maxim, it is 2.48 and 1.81, respectively; to Modesty Maxim, 3.54 and 2.81, respectively; to Sympathy Maxim, 2.99 and 3.43, respectively. The results indicate that the subjects of lower education level take a positive attitude toward Tact Maxim and Sympathy Maxim, while the subjects of higher education level take a positive attitude toward Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim, which means that they believe the advertisements mentioning their skin flaws are exaggerative, in order to enlarge the effectiveness of the product advertised. Comparatively, the subjects of lower education level do not think that the skin defects mentioned in the advertisements are flaws at all, but the higher education group, which is more sensitive to others' criticism, is more aware of the skin problems being mentioned.

When the types of the commodities are taken into consideration, whatever the maxims of PP may be, the higher education group consistently gives higher evaluations to skin-care ads than to cosmetic ads. It seems that the higher education group thinks, from the perspective of politeness, that skin-care ads are more persuasive than cosmetic ads. A possible reason is that the effectiveness of skin-care products can be verified after the products are used, while the effectiveness of cosmetics cannot be examined accurately because it involves the consumer's subjective judgments and individual differences. Hence, cosmetic ads are less persuasive than skin-care ads. To the subjects of lower education level, their evaluations of skin-care ads are higher for Tact Maxim and Sympathy Maxim than for Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim. The result indicates that the subjects of lower education level are likely to be aware of the benefits and concern shown in the skin-care ads because their demand and expectation of everything in every aspect are always lower than the higher education group's; therefore, it is easier for them to be satisfied with the skin-care advertisements.

However, the evaluations of cosmetic ads are higher for Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim than for Tact Maxim and Sympathy Maxim, though the evaluations are both negative. These results indicate that the subjects of lower education level do not notice that the advertisements mention their skin problems and



boosting the efficacy of the products because they do not think as independently as the subjects of higher education level.

#### **5.4.4 Attitudes toward PP and types of beauty products by subjects' age**

According to Table 26, the older group's general attitude toward the application of PP in the advertisements and the younger group's are 3.31 and 2.67, respectively, with a difference of 0.64. It is noticed that the older group holds a positive attitude, whereas the younger group holds a negative attitude. According to the subjects, since the older group's familiarity with and necessity of beauty products are lower than those of the younger group, the former is not so demanding or rigid with the content in the advertisements as the younger group.

When the individual maxims of PP are taken into consideration, it is found that to Tact Maxim, the older group's evaluation is 3.63, and that of younger group is 3.02; to Approbation Maxim, it is 2.56 and 2.08, respectively; to Modesty Maxim, 3.47 and 2.79, respectively; to Sympathy Maxim, 3.60 and 2.82, respectively. These results suggest that whatever the maxims of PP may be, the older group's evaluations are consistently higher than those of the younger group. Also, the older group gives positive evaluations to many of the maxims, except for Approbation Maxim; however, most of the younger group's evaluations are below 3.00, except for Tact Maxim, which is barely above 3.00. These patterns seem to indicate that the younger group

does not think the advertisements are exaggerative in the effectiveness of the products, and they think that the advertisements' mentioning of their skin problems actually shows the advertiser's sympathy for the potential consumer. To the older subjects, they do not notice that the advertisements are talking about their skin flaws, either. This result indicates that the advertisements are likely to offer ideal look to the consumer rather than mention the skin problems lest the consumer should be irritated.

When the types of beauty products are taken into consideration, whatever the maxims of PP may be, the younger group consistently gives higher evaluations to skin-care ads than to cosmetic ads. However, the older group behaves the opposite. Since they know little about cosmetics, usually they can not and will not question the content of the cosmetic advertisements, and they tend to give positive evaluations toward every aspect of the cosmetic advertisements. On the contrary, the younger subjects are more familiar with cosmetics, and they have strong capability of independent thinking, they are more skeptical about the cosmetic ads, and thus more incline toward rating the cosmetic advertisements negative. Skin-care ads, on the other hand, sound more convincing to the younger subjects because the effectiveness of the skin-care products can be examined. To things that can be tested, they are more likely to believe in them and to take a positive attitude toward skin-care ads.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

This chapter concludes the thesis based on the general findings of the previous chapters, and offers the limitations of this thesis and suggestions for future studies.

#### **6.1 Summary of the Major Findings**

This section depicts the findings of this thesis. Section 6.1.1 summarizes the general findings identified in quantitative analyses of the written data, and Section 6.1.2 the major findings from the interviews.

##### **6.1.1 Quantitative analyses of the written data**

###### **1. Advertising approaches**

It was hypothesized that skin-care ads prefer hard-sell approach and cosmetic ads prefer soft-sell approach. The results of investigation show

- (1) that hard-sell approach is used more frequently in skin-care advertisements than in cosmetic advertisements,
- (2) that soft-sell approach is adapted more often in cosmetic advertisements than in skin-care advertisements, and
- (3) that both cosmetic ads and skin-care ads depend more on hard-sell approach than

on soft-sell approach.

## **2. Felicity conditions**

It was hypothesized that felicity conditions would give different influences to cosmetic ads and skin-care ads. The results of investigation show that despite the types of the beauty products advertised, preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition are implemented in almost the same way, which indicates that from the advertiser's viewpoint, the three felicity conditions are equally significant in beauty product advertisements. A possible explanation is that the advertiser fulfills the three felicity conditions in the advertisements in order to achieve successful persuasion.

## **3. Cooperative Principle**

It was hypothesized that the different maxims of CP would give different influences to cosmetic ads and skin-care ads. The results of the data analyses show

(1) that the discrepancies between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads by the four maxims, obeyed or violated, are small;

(2) that despite the types of beauty products, Quality Maxim and Manner Maxim are obeyed most frequently, but it is Quantity Maxim that is violated most often. A possible explanation is that the advertiser has to provide true and clear information for the consumer; otherwise, the consumer will not understand the advertisement

and thus will not buy the product. As for the quantity of information in the advertisement, it is considered as less important.

#### **4. Politeness Principle**

It was anticipated that the different maxims and submaxims of PP would give different influences to cosmetic ads and skin-care ads. The results of data analyses demonstrate

- (1) that for each maxim of PP, the difference between the two types of ads is small.
- (2) Moreover, cosmetic ads and skin-care ads share the same patterns in applying the maxims of PP, with Tact Maxim and Modesty Maxim being used most frequently. That is, the advertiser uses the same methods to sell different beauty products.

A possible explanation may be that since women in Taiwan emphasize the use of skin-care products, and since the skin-care ads are effective basically, the advertiser may think that the same way of advertising can be applied to advertise cosmetic products analogically.

#### **5. Ideology of women**

It was expected that there are differences between cosmetic ads and skin-care ads by woman ideology. The results show

- (1) that skin-care ads focus on physical appearance, while cosmetic ads aim at social recognition which includes role, uniqueness, identity, and beauty;

- (2) that cosmetic ads focus on psychological status more frequently than skin-care ads do because the use of cosmetics can bring instant change of psychological status.

## **6. Linguistic devices**

It was anticipated that different linguistic devices are used to advertise the two different types of beauty products. The results of the data analyses indicate

- (1) that in referential contents, there is little difference between the two types of advertisements. Scope and time are encoded most frequently in beauty products advertisements because the former is about effectiveness, and the latter is about efficiency, which are the keys to establish the persuasiveness of the beauty products;
- (2) that hedgers are used more frequently in cosmetic ads, whereas boosters are used more frequently in skin-care ads; and
- (3) that most beauty product advertisements use very few hedgers and boosters. The advertisements are more inclined to use cores rather than modifiers to promote the products.

### **6.1.2 Qualitative analyses of the interviews**

#### **1. Advertising approaches**

According to the subjects,

- (1) in general, hard-sell approach is preferred to soft-sell approach;

- (2) hard-sell approach is persuasive both in cosmetic ads and skin-care ads, while soft-sell approach is favorable only in skin-care ads;
- (3) as for the influence of the subjects' social backgrounds, education level and age are not influential factors in hard-sell approach, but not in soft-sell approach;
- (4) it is the lower education group and the younger subjects that favor soft-sell approach, especially in skin-care ads.

To the consumer, it seems that the commercial appeal of skin-care is concrete by nature and thus easy to comprehend, and that soft-sell approach even gives the consumer an extra image when they read the advertisements. Therefore, in skin-care ads, soft-sell approach overrides hard-sell approach.

## **2. Felicity conditions**

According to the subjects,

- (1) sincerity condition is evaluated higher than preparatory condition and essential condition regardless of the subjects' education level and age,
- (2) for the types of beauty products, cosmetic ads consistently score lower than skin-care ads in all of the three felicity conditions despite the subjects' education level and age as well.

### **3. Cooperative Principle**

According to the subjects,

(1) the hierarchy of the persuasiveness of the four maxims is Manner Maxim, followed by Quantity Maxim, Relevancy Maxim, and Quality Maxim, in this order;

(2) When the subjects' social backgrounds are taken into consideration, it is the higher education group and the younger subjects that are less favorable for the four maxims. The reason may be that the subjects of higher education level are always educated to put an emphasis on precision; hence, once they are faced with conditions unable to be evaluated clearly, they become skeptical. As for the age, the younger group is more familiar with the cosmetics; hence, they know well in the skills of cosmetic ads, and thus are more demanding.

### **4. Politeness Principle**

According to the subjects,

(1) Tact Maxim receives better evaluation than Modesty Maxim, Sympathy Maxim, and Approbation Maxim, in this order;

(2) when the subjects' social backgrounds are taken into consideration, the higher education group yields less favorable evaluation than the lower education group does because the higher education group thinks the advertisements are



exaggerative, while the lower education group thinks the advertisements bring benefits; and

(3) as for age difference, the younger subjects give less favorable evaluation than old subjects for the four maxims because the younger subjects know the beauty products better than the older subjects, and thus become more demanding.

## **6.2 Concluding Remarks**

Based on the analyses and discussion of Chapter Four and Chapter Five, it is found that the consumer's perception of persuasiveness does not match with the advertiser's. To be specific, the consumer doesn't think that those target advertisements are persuasive, which indicates that the advertisements fail to satisfy the consumer's demand. Therefore, the advertiser should remedy this problem by taking into consideration the potential consumer's attitudes toward the approaches of advertising, the pragmatic strategies applied, and the linguistic devices used. After all, in business transaction, it is the consumer, not the advertiser, that is the powerful party; and it is a social rule that the advertiser (i.e. the powerless one) complies to the powerful one (i.e. the consumer), not the other way around.

## **6.3 Limitations of This Study and Suggestions for Future Researches**

This study aims to explore the sociopragmatic strategies and the linguistic devices employed in the beauty product advertisements in women's fashion

magazines. However,

- (1) due to the limitation of time, only two hundred pieces of advertisements were analyzed. For a better generalization and prediction, the quantity of data should be enlarged.
- (2) Next, in this thesis, the data sources for quantitative analyses derive from two women's fashion magazines only. In future studies, data from TV commercials, online advertisements, and descriptions of the effectiveness printed on the products should also be included.
- (3) Also, advertisements of other beauty products should also be examined to see if the same patterns of advertising are repeated.
- (4) Moreover, in this thesis, the quantity of the interviewees is small. In order to secure accurate explanations to the patterns found, the number of interviewees should be increased in future studies.
- (5) In this study, only persuasiveness of the advertisements was examined in the interviews. In future studies, the consumer's acceptance of the products targeted and willingness to purchase the products should also be examined.
- (6) Because the interviewees refused to be recorded, the relationship between persuasiveness of the advertisements and whether the interviewees buy the beauty product is unknown. In future studies, it should be examined as well.

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