

**Portraying older age in television  
advertisements: a comparative study  
between the UK and Taiwan**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is a cross-cultural comparative study on media representations of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. Three analytical approaches (content analysis, the constant comparative method and critical discourse analysis) were employed. This thesis project is interdisciplinary and follows some research trajectories developed by scholars in the realms of media communication and linguistics.

The content analytical study reported in chapter 4 revealed that older people were still under-represented as suggested in existing literature. Role salience and visibility of older characters were greater in Taiwanese TV advertisements than in UK TV advertisements. Taiwanese older characters were more likely associated with family relationships and indoor/home contexts while UK older characters were more frequently depicted at outdoor and entertainment settings.

9 character types emerged in the constant comparative study to describe media representations of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. They are "Competent", "Conservative/Traditional", "Engaged in Female-Male Relations", "Golden Ager", "Humorous", "Unwell and Declining Health", "Incompetent", "Engaged in Intergenerational Relations", and "Vulnerable". Results of the cross-cultural comparisons indicated that the Confucian tradition of filial piety was a defining factor that distinguished the portrayals of older adults in Taiwanese TV adverts from those in UK TV adverts.

The critical discourse analysis in this thesis focused on UK and Taiwanese TV adverts for over 50s life insurance products. It was found that a positive construction of ageing was commonly linked to consumer choices so as to legitimate the advertised products (targeting older people) in the two cultural contexts. However, positive ageing was arguably offset by ageist ideological presuppositions behind the product messages which conventionally highlighted medical exemption, customer eligibility issues, and free gifts both in the UK and Taiwanese data. Euphemisation of death-related topics was also commonly identified even though preparing for death and funeral expenses are considered as fundamental issues addressed in life insurance adverts.

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# **Chapter 1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The general question of this thesis is how older people and older age are represented in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. It is worthwhile to conduct such a study as ageing is an inevitable process and media messages are often regarded as one of the sources from which we learn how to age appropriately. This chapter will present several themes/topics to justify the general inquiry of this thesis, for instance, the demographic changes which have led to an ageing world, what ageism means (including the discussion of mainstream cultural construction of ageing in contemporary Western societies) and why it matters, and why advertising is targeted as the locus for studying media representations of older people and the cross-cultural comparisons. Experiences of ageing as prescribed in Confucianism are presented as a contrast to those observed in the West. The potential problematicity of cross-cultural comparisons is also illustrated, followed by a brief description of each chapter in this thesis.

## **1.2 Ageing world**

One of the main reasons to select older people as the target of enquiry is because of the increasing importance of this social group in a rapidly ageing world.

In the United Kingdom, nearly one person in three was aged over 50 in 2003 and the proportion of this age group will continue to rise up to 40% by

2031. The demographic increase of older age groups has been more dramatic as compared to that of the overall population in the UK. For instance, between 2002 and 2003, the growth rate of the 65+ age cohort was almost twice as high as that of the overall UK population (*The Office for National Statistics, The United Kingdom, 2005: 2*).

In Taiwan, the same demographic changes are taking place. In the past decade, the growth rate of the 60+ age cohort has increased by 2.2% while that of the overall Taiwanese population declined by 0.5% (*The Council for Economic Planning Development, Taiwan, 2006b*). Furthermore, the 65+ age group within the Taiwanese population is projected to increase from 7% up to 20% within about three decades from 1993 (*The Council for Economic Planning and Development, Taiwan, 2006a*).

Given the above facts and predictions, older people are certainly not a minor social group in terms of the growing demographical share. However, despite this fact, ageist treatment practised towards older people can also be observed in societies. As pointed out by Butler (1990), ageism is prevalently experienced and deemed as a social disease and hence should be tackled urgently. The primary ideological stance in this current research is to uncover ageist messages in the examined data and attempts to increase social awareness of ageism. Therefore, when it comes to the assessment of ageist representations, there is a need to draw a thorough discussion as to what ageism means and entails.

### **1.3 Ageism –definition, manifestations and challenges**

Ageism, a term coined by Butler in 1968 and later with Lewis (1973) is defined as “a process of systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this for skin colour and gender. Old people are categorised as senile, rigid in thought and manner, old-fashioned in morality and skills...Ageism allows the younger generation to see older people as different from themselves, thus they subtly cease to identify with their elders as human beings”. This definition highlights the prejudices against a group of people categorised by only the adjective ‘old’ as well as a number of attributes which are derogatory in nature. Moreover, this group of people are believed to be disenfranchised by the society or by those who are younger. This initial definition of ageism plays a role to immediately and directly highlight the injustice older people undergo in society. However, four decades since Butler and Lewis put it, views on ageism are no longer limited to those demeaning practices towards older people and the initial definition is no longer considered to be adequate since it at the same time reinforces the association between vulnerability/facility and older age. What follows is a discussion of challenges against Butler and Lewis’ definition of ageism which can also bring some different insights on the various facets of ageism.

One of the critiques comes from Kalish (1979) who noted that it is likely that those dedicated to anti-ageism on the contrary demonstrate an attitude to disassociate with those who suffer from ageism. For example, as he observed, anti-ageists tend to position themselves as outsiders via the pronoun, ‘we’ (the non-elderly) to show how much they understand older people addressed as

'you' (the elderly) are badly treated, and perceived to be poor, lonely, weak, or incompetent. Nevertheless, anti-ageists (we as outsiders and observers) have the tools to relieve 'you', meaning older people, out of the trap of ageism as long as 'you' adhere to our solutions (Kalish 1979:398). Kalish strongly considered such positioning as an outsider to combat ageism as a new form of ageism. A similar positioning, however, can be identified in Butler and Lewis' definition and is discussed more explicitly by Bytheway (1995).

As maintained by Bytheway, the use of "they" to refer older people in Butler and Lewis's definition basically implies a certain extent of exclusion as they are in a different territory from us who come to promote the awareness of ageism. In Bytheway's view (1995 and 2000), it is more important to emphasise on ageing as a continuous process rather than older age as a distinct life stage to be dealt with. This means, we shall see all of us already in the process of being older and therefore equally vulnerable to the damages resulted from ageism. Therefore, the above-mentioned position to refer to a group of people as victims of ageism is considered of no help to reduce ageism. That is why Bytheway (1995:118) alternatively defined ageism as "a process of systematically stereotyping of and discrimination against *us* when *we* are considered old". What is addressed behind the above critique is relevant to the concern of othering older people as an outgroup. From Bytheway's point of view, older people do not form an exclusive and homogeneous group for us to alienate from or disassociate with. As long as such a reading of age is held, there exists ageism.

Othering older people is considered as a form of ageism. The practice of

othering involves “representing an individual or a social group to render them distant, alien, or deviant” (Coupland and Coupland 2001: 471). Othering an outgroup results in social exclusion and marginalisation. Western dominant conceptualisation of older age seems to resonate the process of othering. For example, repression and silence tend to be the immediate responses towards realities regarding deep old age and death. Woodward’s (1991) discussion on unwatchability of elderly nude forms illustrates a repressive and denying stance of ageing, which is highly perpetuated in advertising for example for anti-ageing products (Coupland 2003 and 2007 which are reviewed in chapter 2).

Denying ageing naturally leads to the denial of death since death is the ultimate and inevitable end of the ageing process. In *The Denial of Death* (1973), Becker noted that there is a psychological paradox existing in all human individuals, that is, being driven to survive and live versus acknowledging death to be the only certain end. The consequence of such a paradox causes the terror and fear which we carry with us at all times in our lives. The threat derived from death is believed to be one of the reasons why ageism exists. As argued by Greenberd, Schimel and Martens (2004:30), there are a variety of reminders of death around us, such as news stories about murders, natural catastrophes or accidents which we believe, to a certain degree, to be avoidable by engaging in certain actions. However, when we see elderly people, their existence becomes a strong reminder of inevitable mortality and therefore, the reaction is showing negative attitudes towards them.

The fear of death is found evident in discursive repression of mortality in

daily conversations. For instance, Coupland and Copland's (1997b) study on geriatric medical consultations revealed that both doctors and patients actively employ discursive resources such as constraining topics, deflecting, minimising or reformulating in death-implicative talk to make negative experiences of late life to be less problematic. Repression of death is realised in doctors' attempts to propagandise for life, which is a rhetorical strategy to undermine arguments about naturalness, desirability and imminence of death.

Another defining quality of ageism is to systematically stereotype and discriminate older people. As suggested in Minichiello, Browne and Kendig's (2000) study eliciting Australian older people's views about ageism, the term ageism used by gerontologists is realised as "being stereotyped, being seen as old, being discriminated against or treated as old". The determination of someone to be old is closely related to the stereotypes about older people held by those who discriminate against them. According to Palmore (1999), ageism can be structured into prejudice and discrimination. Furthermore, prejudice against elders can be further divided into stereotypes (cognitive) and attitudes (affective). Hence, stereotyping older people can result in misconception and eventually manifested in attitudes and discriminatory actions.

Earlier conceptualisation of ageism tends to address negative attribution to older people. For example, in Butler and Lewis's (1973) definition, senile, rigid and old-fashioned are referred to. Palmore (1999) also suggested that negative stereotypes about older age include illness, impotency, ugliness, mental decline, mental illness, uselessness, isolation, poverty and depression. Even though the perpetuation and reproduction of these negative stereotypes is considered

ageist, they are still prevalently observed in our daily lives, for instance, in patronising communication with older people.

It has been suggested that negative stereotypes of the elderly play an essential role in the generation of patronising communicative styles (Hummert and Shaner 1994; Hummert 1994, Ryan, Hummert, Boich 1995) . Hummert and Shaner's (1994) experimental study indicated that young adults inclined to adopt more patronising speech styles (to have fewer arguments, shorter utterances and be more demeaning in emotional tone) to communicate with older interlocutors characterised with negative stereotypes of older people as compared with those representative of positive stereotypes.

Moreover, as found in Thimm, Rademacher and Kruse's (1998) research, when younger adults were required to explain technical instructions to several targets varied in terms of competence and age, they appeared to (over)accommodate their communication behaviour for those who were at older age. In this case, age (older) alone is the trigger for a discriminative and patronising communicative style to people who are equally competent.

Even though patronising messages towards older addressees could carry good intentions, they are still considered problematic because they are speech modifications generated out of certain misconceived assumptions about older people, such as incompetence and dependence (Ryan, Hummert and Boich 1995). Patronising communication in literature is referred to in various ways, for instance, elderspeak (Cohen, Faulkner 1986; Kemper 1994; Kemper, Finter-Urczyk, Ferrell, Harden, and Billington 1998), dependence-driven

interactions (Baltes, Neumann, Zank 1994; Baltes and Wahl 1996), controlling talk (Lanceley 1985) and secondary baby talk (Caporael 1981; Sachweh 1998). They occur at both institutional and non-institutional settings. Patronising speech styles as age-adapted verbal modifications, according to Ryan et al. (1995), include several linguistic and paralinguistic features, such as, the use of simplified vocabularies and less complex grammatical structures, repetitions, brief imperatives, high pitch, exaggerated intonation or enunciation, loud speech, and slow rate. Because patronising talk is produced based on the assumption that the recipients are less intelligent, competent and independent, age stereotypical behaviours can be reinforced in older persons and their self-esteem and self-evaluation may be lowered (Rodin and Langer 1980; Baltes and Wahl 1996; Kemper, Othick, Warren, Gubarchuk and Gerhing 1996)

The discussion so far has defined ageism in terms of negative features ascribed to older people. However, ageism is a complex idea. Anti-ageism is not merely to reduce derogatory stereotyping and prejudice towards older people. In more recent years, the disputes of bipolar ageism have attracted more and more academic interests. The attention has gradually shifted to the potential damage caused to older people by the promotion of an idealised positive agenda of later life.

In terms of stereotyping older people, it can be manifested in a positive light. For instance, according to Palmore (1999), there are at least eight major positive stereotypes associated with older people. They consist of kindness, wisdom, dependability, affluence, political power, freedom, eternal youth and happiness. The stereotype of eternal youth is considered particularly

problematic as the emphasis on youth (either in appearance or inner self) naturally strengthens the ideology of ageing denial. However, contemporary conceptualisation of ageing (especially in the Western world) entails this stereotype to a great extent.

A Cartesian split of mind and body is argued to be a popular conceptualisation of ageing in the Western world. It can be well illustrated by the metaphorical expression - the mask of age (Hepworth 1991 and 2004), thereby, individuals are destined to suffer the constant struggle for decaying bodies accompanied by ageing and the inconsistency between inner identity which can be in eternal youth and the outer appearance which has blocked the youth within. What the form of mask signifies (consequences of ageing) is ideologically denied and the inner youth must be claimed. Media messages, such as advertisements for anti-ageing products play an essential role in constructing ageing in this way (Coupland 2003 and 2007a). Maintaining youthfulness inevitably becomes a defining element of successful ageing in the West. Given this, realities of deep old age is only further marginalised realities.

Research with a focus on successful ageing images in marketing contexts has suggested that the promoted images of successful ageing seem to revolve around positive stereotypes, such as happiness, affluence and freedom suggested by Palmore (1999). For instance, McHugh's (2003) interpretation of images and scripts for marketing retirement communities in the United States revealed that there was an explicit intention to normalise leisure and lifestyle shopping as appropriate choices to make and hence maintaining affluent and active later life becomes the criterion for successful ageing. Retirement

communities are described as utopia for retirees to escape to and selectively target customers who are healthy, with relatively strong financial power to afford the comfortable lifestyles in the marketed retirement communities.

Ekerdt's (1986) 'busy ethic' is apparently echoed in the leisure-based model of retirement observed in McHugh's study. Busy ethic alludes to the effective use of leisure for activity, travel, exercise and self-development so as to substitute the work ethic which has been adhered to at active middle age. In this commercial context, retirement becomes a serious business involving choices regarding how to lead 'perfect' (a word highly emphasised in the campaigns) retirement and enjoy the process to discover who you are. However, the provided roles in this scenario are only limited to those consistent with what can be put as the third agers by Laslett (1996). Older people are expected to be active and independent but how those who are otherwise would be viewed? The following discussion will allude to the concerns of ageism in the notions of busy ethics and the third age as the new agenda for leading successful later life in the West.

Similar to Ekerdt's busy ethic, Laslett's (1989) the third age represents a stage of life course, characterised by fulfilment. He emphasised the pursuit of an active and socially engaged post-retirement life as the defining feature of third agers. As noted by Gilleard and Higgs (2002), there has been increasing resonance (see for instance, Chopra 1993; Rowe 1994; Sheechy 1997) to this concept, which is viewed as a new agenda for determining what is considered as an ideal lifestyle at older age. The third age, as perceived by Gilleard and Higgs (2007:26) is "the continuities of choice and the discontinuity of old age".

The emphasis on busy ethic and the third age seems to further reinforce Cole's (1992) dual vision of old age.

In Cole's historical account, since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, there has been a split of views regarding older age, that is, a good old age characterised by health, virtue, self-reliance and salvation versus a bad old age defined by sickness, sin, dependency, premature death and damnation. Positive stereotypes as contributing elements of ageless images (Andrews 1999) and successful ageing (Ekerdt 1986, Laslett 1989) are tempting tools to combat ageism because they are quick antidotes curing negative stereotyping of older age. Nevertheless, the effect is not indisputably certain as the so-called positive views of older age actually cloak the denial of decline and death to a greater extreme and imply that those who do not conform to the rules defined by the third age are losers. Certain realities of deep old age are not accepted but rather disassociated and distanced as if they were not existent. Therefore, while addressing the importance of leading an active later life as the means to reduce negative impression of older age, those who can not afford or do not follow this route are very likely stigmatised. That is why advocating busy ethic and being third agers can be ideologically ageist.

Positive ageing often gains its meaning and value in the contexts (such as magazines and advertisements for older people) where older age has to be advocated, commodified and empowered (c.f. McHugh 2003, Featherstone and Hepworth 1995). This argument gives rise to a discussion regarding the baby boomer generation, its relation to positive ageing as well as its significance in marketing. As maintained by Longino, Jr. (2005), ageing baby boomers are

believed to be a contributing factor to the prevalence of positive ageing because of their consuming power which is strong enough to enable them to be unavoidable marketing targets. However, in order to appeal to baby boomer customers, positive ageing as promoted in marketing and advertising contexts could produce an illusion of growing older without ageing. In this case, the appeals can be ageist. This topic will be turned to later with more details regarding marketing strategies to the over 50s and the plausibly ageist orientation in advertising messages in the next section. For the time being, the discussion on ageism in this section has come to a point to briefly conclude the various facets of ageism so as to make explicit what must be considered when assessing ageist messages in the findings in this thesis.

Given the above discussion, it is evident that the answer to what is considered ageist is not straightforward. Earlier anti-ageists paid attention to negative stereotyping of older age and hence appealed to attack ageism by setting agendas to free older people from images of dependence, decline and frailty. However, with the increasing acceptance of successful ageing defined in terms of energy, health, independence, affluence, agelessness and consumption, there is more and more critique regarding the threat of such cultural norms to those who do not have access to resources which enable them to choose and conform to the prescribed pictures of later life. As criticised by Katz (2001), the positive construction of aging at times does not empower older people as essentially political and social forces but simply creates communities or marketing demographics which can be imagined in line with mobility and activity. Moreover, the emerging discourse of ageing well is criticised to serve certain political purposes instead of attempting to reduce

prejudices towards older age.

For instance, according to Angus and Reeve (2006), in Australia, the government policy enhances the services promoting health in ageing and independence of older people and addresses the need of self-discipline and active control to age well. The main purpose is to moderate the social burden of older people and reduce welfare risk. The intention is to repress realities of deep old age but disguised in the name of counter-ageism through ageing well. This kind of policy at the surface level is to make older age become non-issues but the conveyed message, as put by Holstein and Minker (2003:793), entails a spirit of exceptionalism - "I made it, why can't you", which in their views is a failing strategy. They also argued that those suffering disabling conditions and even being old can therefore be considered as representative of failure in the emergence of "new gerontology" built on the concept of successful ageing exclusively defined by health, vigour and youthfulness.

The view of bipolar ageism arguably renders the assessment of ageist treatments difficult. The advised positive and negative ageism for instance by Palmore (1999) are actually contrary in nature. In this case, negative images of elders are ageist and so are positive images of them. That is why McHugh (2003:181) asked "is non-ageist thinking fathomable or socially possible?". It is of course beyond the scope of this thesis to settle this on-going dispute. Perhaps, Bytheway's (1995) claim can bring another insight, that is, the ultimate solution to eliminate ageism is to stop assuming that there is an old age out there for us to define, to alienate from or instead to identify with. However, following this vein, many anti-ageists (as well as this thesis which

target older people defined as over 50s) dedicating to reducing ageism and increasing the awareness of it by identifying its various forms also contribute to ageism. This is the paradox which has to be confronted by research claiming to fight against ageism as it is difficult to differentiate between the discourse of ageism and ageist discourse (c.f. also in Coupland and Coupland 1993 and 1999 for similar arguments).

However, there is one thing for sure that pretending certain realities of deep old age (illness, decaying and death) to be nonexistent is definitively not an appropriate resort of anti-ageism. In the assessment of findings of this thesis in relation to ageism, repression of these aspects will receive particular attention. It is also borne in mind that homogenising older people in line with either positive or negative stereotyping is considered equally problematic. It is suspected that in advertising (especially that aimed at the grey market), utilising positive ageing to construct older age shall be more commonly observed (a topic to be elaborated later in section 1.4). Instead of criticising whether positive or negative images of ageing are more ageist, the interpretation of findings in this thesis will draw more attention to scrutinise how the two poles of ageist manifestations are manipulated and naturalised to satisfy marketing purposes.

Several considerations are taken into account for the assessment of ageist messages in this research. In advertising context, it is inevitable to present problems with the provision of solutions (products) as the fundamental purpose of advertising is to sell. The problem-solution schema is therefore convenient and effective. Nevertheless, the attention in the assessment of findings is

drawn to detect to what extent the depicted problems (e.g. illness, vulnerability, despair, living problems) are normalised through age as reducing stigma in relation to older age, as argued by Braithwaite (2004), is one aspect to be considered for reducing ageism.

#### **1.4 A focus on advertising – the effects, strategies and roles in reinforcing ageism**

This section will explain why advertising (also TV advertising) is targeted in this thesis for studying media representations of older people. The accounts are structured into several aspects, such as the media effects of advertising, advertising and older people, advertising as an agent of ageism (including advertising and promotional strategies aimed at the over 50s), and advertising as an agent to perpetuate ageism. In order to rationalise advertising as an important locus for cross-cultural comparisons, a discussion regarding advertising as a reflection of culture is also provided in this section.

#### **Theoretical frameworks for studying media representations**

Advertising as one of various forms of media entails certain media effects. For example, the ways in which a social group is represented have impacts on that group's social and psychological well-being. Two theories are presented to be presented to justify the need to look into how older people are depicted and the extent to which they are represented in advertising.

#### **Cultivation theory**

Cultivation theory considers television as an important source of

socialization and is concerned with the effects of repetitive and mass-produced messages conveyed through this communication channel. This notion was proposed by Gerbner and his colleagues (Gerbner, Gross, Signorieli, & Morgan 1980; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, 1986; Gerbner 1998) to suggest a causal relationship between the time spent on watching TV and the impact on viewers' perceptions and beliefs of the world. Gerbner et al.'s (1986) research findings indicated that the more time an individual spends watching television, the more likely his/her understanding of the world reflects the dominant television content. This theory gives rise to the concern for misrepresented messages on television and how they might mislead the viewers. A case of misrepresented representations of older people and the consequence is illustrated in, for instance, Gerbner et al.'s (1980) study. Gerbner et al. (1980) found that older people were believed to be a vanishing social group to a greater extent by heavy American TV users as opposed to those who watched less. However, in reality, the demographic proportion of older people was increasing rather than decreasing. Under-representation of older people on TV, as revealed in Gerbner et al.'s (1980) study, brings about inaccurate perception about them. Misrepresented representations also include stereotypical depictions which will be discussed in greater detail in the literature review chapter (Chapter 2).

Another commonly mentioned rationale is the theory of "social identity gratifications". Harwood (1997; 1999) took into account the notion of "social identity" (Tajfel and Turner, 1979 and 1986) to understand television viewers' behaviours in relation to the gratification received from the use of TV. As claimed by Harwood (1997:204), individuals tend to seek media content which

supports their social identities and enable them to make positive social comparisons with relevant out-groups. Harwood (1999) also found that individuals showing stronger identifications with their age group had a greater inclination to seek television messages regarding this.

The above-mentioned communication theories address the potential side effects caused by media exposure which contains misguided information about a certain social group. They also explain the problems of symbolically downgrading a social group's visibility on the ground of the social group's viewing preferences and socio-psychological needs. The following discussion will turn to those studies which examine advertising effects in particular on older people's lives and further justify why misrepresented advertising messages about them could have negative impacts on them.

### **Advertising and older people**

Television is deemed as the most important medium in older people's lives. For instance, as noted by Rubin and Rubin (1982:242), for the elderly, television is consumed for up to six or more hours each day and can be considered as the most preferred mass medium. Therefore, TV advertising is therefore one of the most pervasive media. Compared to television programmes, the audiences have less control upon which advertising messages to observe whereas they can select which television programmes to watch. Therefore, advertising is intrusive to a greater extent. For consumers or viewers, advertising projects "a constant stream of inescapable commercial communications" (Firth and Muller 2003:246).

In addition to its intrusiveness, advertising has other characteristics such as repetitions and frequent exposure which could foster social learning through viewing (Bandura 1977). The previously discussed cultivation theory has already shed some light on a socialisation perspective of advertising effects. Swayne and Greco (1987) also argued that advertising provides symbolic models for older consumers to acquire socially prescribed behaviours and these models could also affect their self-images. This view on advertising refers to its function as an aid to help with adaptation to older age. Some studies (Ahammer 1973; Smith, Moschis and Moore 1982 and 1984) have indicated that people who experience role loss following retirement and adult children leaving home or bereavement tend to increasingly resort to the mass media and advertising for information or advice with respect to how to act their age or view themselves in the abovementioned life experiences. Hence, given that TV advertising serves as an important agent to help older people adapt to challenges confronted at older age, advertisers must be cautious when producing messages relevant to what older people expect to view or seek after.

### **Advertising as an agent to perpetuate ageism**

Given the role advertising plays in older people's lives, it is critically viewed to be an agent in the perpetuation of ageism. For example, Carrigan and Szmigin (2000a) have reported that the advertising industry does not fully appreciate the value of older customers and shows an explicit orientation towards the youth market. They (2000b) also noticed that while advertising industry started to show awareness of sexism, racism or any discrimination towards religion or disability as documented, for instance, in Advertising Standards Authority's British Code of Advertising and Sales Promotion, there is no reference to

decreasing advertising causing offence on the basis of age. Advertising, from Carrigan and Szmigin's (2000a) point of view, is an agent of ageism because it ignores older people altogether and presents them in line with negative stereotypes. Representing older people in this fashion runs the risk to stigmatise ageing as a problem. Therefore, from a marketing perspective, the solution to reduce ageism in advertising is to use older characters to the extent to reflect their demographic growth and also to avoid unfavourable depictions because older consumers are also an important source of profits (Greco 1987; Carrigan and Szmigin 2000a and b; Carrigan and Smigin 2003). However, if depicting older people favourably is a means to reduce ageism in advertising or marketing contexts, what representations are considered appropriate? The answers will be explored first of all based on the marketing literature addressing rules of thumb to produce advertising favouring older consumers. Following the discussion, the attention will turn to how the views or the promotion strategies presented in marketing literature have the potential to reinforce ageism.

Greco (1987), for instance, summarised some marketing rules aimed at the elderly. They include keeping the language and the appeal simple, relating new information to something familiar to capitalise older persons' long term memory and in terms of the depiction, presenting them as useful, competent, and coping.

Even though advertising has begun to address older consumers more directly in the wake of the growing grey market, the targeted segment seems to be restricted to more active and affluent older consumers. It is because

marketers are also advised to consider older consumers' self-image and reference groups when planning advertising strategies aimed at the mature market and the reference group is suggested to be middle-aged people (Greco, 1987:53). Therefore, it is natural to expect that advertising is apt to show youth orientation in the depiction of older people as marketers are advised to bear in mind that contemporary older people have a cognitive age younger than their chronological age and therefore, younger images are considered attractive appeals (Lunsford and Burnett 1992; Albin 1985). Tréguer (2002:82) in the book *50+ marketing* indicated that when using older models in advertising campaigns, it is essential to ensure that the image of eternal youth is conveyed. It does not matter if the depicted older characters are in their 50s (or look like at the age of 50s) rather than 80s but positive attribution such as health, fitness, and internal youth (young at heart) must be highlighted. A clear alienation from (older) age or ageing is observed in Tréguer's (2002) rules of thumb for drawing 50+ marketing strategies. For example, Tréguer (2002) claimed (from a marketing perspective) that directly pointing out age to consumers aged over 50s can be humiliating and discriminatory and hence, alternative age indicators are suggested, such as senior or golden age. Moreover, showing older consumers as spiteful, ridiculous and physically dependent should be avoided. Portraying the outward signs of age vividly is also inappropriate. These strategies are considered effective in marketing but arguably ageist given the discussion of ageism in relation to repression of ageing. Advertising is the embodiment of these marketing strategies. It is naturally to predict that the cultural meanings of ageing contextualised in advertising in line with the above marketing strategies reflect positive ageing defined by youthfulness, fitness, and happiness.

Hence, as commented by Sawchuk (1995:185), many prejudices that we have towards ageing are perpetuated in marketing literature and it is worth noting that youth is depicted as virtue in marketing and ageing on the contrary as a problem. Given this, even though older people are increasingly depicted in advertising (the quantity is increasing) due to the salience of being treated seriously for profit reasons, the representations in advertising (the qualities) can still be ageist even in positive light. That is why advertising (here TV advertising) is targeted in view of advertising as an agent of ageism.

This thesis is dedicated to conduct cross-cultural comparisons in the portrayals of older people and older age in UK and Taiwanese TV advertising. The following discussion will present why advertising is a good resource to uncover distinct (or similar) interpretations of ageing and older age in different cultural backgrounds.

### **Advertising reflecting culture**

Advertising (in this study, TV advertising) is targeted because it can reflect diversity in culture. Advertising reflects local cultural values because it can appear to be more persuasive (Han and Shavitt 1994; Hong, Muderrisoghi and Zinkhan 1987; Madden, Caballero and Matsukubu 1986).

The selected countries, Taiwan and the UK, are representative of collectivistic and individualistic culture respectively. In order to make advertising effective, it is assumed that a different set of ideologies or stereotypes would be resorted to when advertising depicts images of older age

in UK and Taiwanese cultural contexts. The reason is that advertising should be sensitive to local culture in order to get promotional messages through. For example, an early study by Singh and Huang (1962) has demonstrated that US print advertisements were not effective in India because American advertising appeals were not consistent with Indian local values. Moreover, as observed by Han (1994), magazine advertisements in the US employed individualistic appeals to a greater extent than did advertisements in Korea so individual benefits and preferences, personal success and independence were more highlighted. On the other hand, magazine advertisements in Korea, a collective culture, addressed collective cultural values, such as ingroup benefits, harmony and family integrity to a greater extent as opposed to advertisements in American magazines.

Given the above discussion, it is expected that examination of advertising in Taiwan and the UK can show differences in ways older people are represented as it is assumed that there are discrepancies in how ageing is experienced and older age is perceived in the two countries. The section regarding ageism in this chapter has shed some light on some observations of how ageing is experienced in the Western world. The following section will turn to the traditional values which can account for the meanings of older age and ageing in the Taiwanese society and hence perhaps can predict certain differences in the findings in this thesis.

## **1.5 Experiences of Ageing as prescribed in Confucianism**

The traditional ethical value of filial piety is often referred to in cross-cultural research on ageing and communication as the ground to predict possible attitudinal differences towards ageing and older people between the East and the West. In East Asian countries, such as China, Taiwan, Korea and Japan, Confucian tradition has prescribed behaviours and manners towards older people (Ho 1994; Sung, 2000 and 2001). Under the doctrine of filial piety, children are socialised to be obedient to their parents and teachers, to show reverence to the aged, and to listen to rather than to question their seniors (Ho 1994). On the other hand, cultural ideals also demand older people to demonstrate the nature of "Zi" (慈) (nurturance and benevolence) as the interactional norm to their off-springs (Narrell 1981:196). Research has also indicated that elderly individuals are expected to play powerful, authoritative and respected roles in East Asian societies where Confucian culture has been dominant (Yum 1988, Sung 1995, Ho 1994). Furthermore, it is also argued that the elderly are valued in Chinese culture because of their life experience and knowledge which help to link with ancestors, history and tradition (Wong 1979, cited in Williams, Ota, Giles, Pierson, Gallois, Ng, Lim, Ryan, Somera, Maher, and Harwood 1997). Under the value of filial piety, elder people's dependence is endorsed rather than stigmatised. Hence, older people in East Asian societies, such as, Japan, can be dependent upon their children but at the same time feel honoured, which is considered more positive and idealised by Westerners (Tobin, 1987).

Elder respect is another notion made explicit in Confucian tradition regarding how younger people should act when older people are present. This

notion is also relevant to the experience of ageing in East Asian countries, including Taiwan. In the teachings of Filial Piety (1989, chapter 2), there is a statement which articulates how filial piety should be extended towards non-family elders: "treat with reverence elders in your own family, so that elders in other families shall be similarly treated". Furthermore, Analects of Confucius [Lun Yu] (1996, Book 1, chapter 6, as cited in Sung 2001) also prescribe elder respect in the following passage: "at home, a young man should be dutiful towards his parents; going outside, he should be respectful towards other elders and be cautious in deeds and trustworthy in words". According to the above Confucian teachings, age appears to be an essential indicator determining the ways youngsters should interact with seniors or those older than they are. Age in Confucian teachings is obviously a factor to determine socially ratified behaviour in daily lives. The master, Confucius, also stated that (*The Analects of Confucius*, translated by Waley 1938:88): "at fifteen I set my heart upon learning. At thirty, I had planned my feed firm upon the grounded. At forty, I no longer suffered from perplexities. At fifty, I knew what were the biddings of Heaven. At sixty, I heard them with docile ear. At seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart, for what I desired no longer overstepped the boundaries of right". This statement reveals that Confucianism has provided clearly defined age-graded norms to guide people in developing their inner self and to live in harmony with the outside world when they age. These passages suggest that people are expected to constantly seek for a higher level of maturity and wisdom throughout their life course until they can finally live in harmony with nature.

## **1.6 Western cultures and experiences of ageing**

In contrast to the emphasis of age-based roles and a developmental view of ageing in the traditional Confucian values, social construction of ageing in contemporary Western cultures could appear to be rather liberal in view of the deconstruction of the life course in postmodern Western world. As observed by Featherstone and Hepworth (1989), the concept of life course brought about by industrialisation and modernisation is undergoing a process of deinstitutionalization and de-differentiation in a postmodern society in the West. Therefore, age-specific role transitions have received less attention than before. Behavioural patterns and experiences associated with each life stage (i.e. childhood, adulthood, middle age and older age) are less clearly defined and marked. Therefore, people behave in a uni-age style. For instance, children are acting more adult-like and adults are behaving more child-like than before (Meyrowitz 1984). Age-graded norms are naturally losing their significance in postmodern societies in the West.

Furthermore, as discussed in the section regarding ageism, contemporary Western societies show, as put by Thompson (1992), the "I don't feel old" phenomenon, in which individuals have to learn to manage a mind-body split (Biggs 1997) in the process of ageing. That is to say, there is an increasing conflict between the mind claimed to be eternally young and the ageing body to be neglected. In this case, age in the Western view is a source of problem rather than an indicator as to which life goals to be achieved accordingly (c.f. Confucian's accounts of his mind status in each decade of his life). The discussion so far has assumed that culture plays a role in defining ageing experiences and the cultural resources regarding ageing and older age readily

to be drawn upon in advertising in Taiwan (a East Asian country) and the UK (a Western country) vary. However, it is also worthwhile to note, because of the influence of cultural globalisation (or westernisation), that Eastern Asian countries may have come across transition in the views of ageing as globalisation reduces cultural diversity. The following discussion will turn to this topic by presenting how filial piety and elder respect are modified as a result of modernisation and western cultural influence.

### **1.7 Filial piety and elder respect - in practice**

It has been argued that traditional values in Confucianism do not exist as strongly as before in modern societies. For instance, Sung (2001) reviewed literature addressing elder respect practised in contemporary East Asia and concluded that there were discrepancies between the ideals documented in Confucian teachings and the forms in practice. The review suggested that the ways to express elder respect in East Asia now appear to be shifting because the meaning of elder respect has been changed from absolute deference (respectful submission) and reverence (feeling of deep respect tinged with awe) to courtesy and kindness (c.f. Mehta 1997). Moreover, young people would listen to parents when they talk and consider this as a way of expressing elder respect but it does not necessarily lead to obedience (c.f. Sung and Kim 2000). As to communication with elders, open communication and mutual aids between generations are the preferred form in elder consultations (c.f. Ingersoll-Dayton & Saengtienchai 1999; Mehta 1997). The above changes indicate that reciprocity and mutual respect between generations is gradually replacing patriarchal relationships and the unchallenged authority bestowed to

older people in Confucian doctrines.

Co-residence with elderly parents can be deemed as a form of filial piety. As demanded in Confucian teachings, adult children should abide by the obligation of taking care of parents at their later life stages. However, in Japan, it is found that the proportion of Japanese elders living with their children has declined about one percent per year (Hashimoto and Ikels 2005). Delayed co-residence also emerges in Japan because older people tend to move in with their adult children after a period of independence as young-olds (Naoi 1993, cited in Hashimoto and Ikels 2005). Even though the desirability of adult children to take care of elderly parents remain unchanged in Japan, surveys have indicated that those perceiving this obligation as a good custom have declined (Miura 2001, cited in Hashimoto and Ikels 2005)

The trends as discussed above are often ascribed to the increasing degree of Westernization. As claimed by Chang, Chang and Shen (1984), because Western culture values individualism and liberalism and these values do not support the development of the ideal of traditional Chinese values. This explains why children in Chinese families in the United States demonstrated less favourable attitudes towards older people than those in Taiwan (Chang, Chang and Shen 1984).

The above discussion evidenced that Confucian tradition is in the course of transformation and accommodation to the modern societies. Since the strength of Confucian doctrines is weakening, it is necessary to ask how it can be assumed as strong grounds to predict differences in the ways older people and

older age are portrayed in Taiwanese and UK advertising. This argument gives rise to the problematicity of cross-cultural comparisons, which will be briefly discussed in the next section.

### **1.8 Globalisation, localisation and the problematicity of cross-cultural comparisons**

This thesis is aimed to compare Taiwanese and UK advertising in terms of media representations of older people. Advertising is primarily produced to sell and persuade local customers to purchase services or commodities which can be provided by both local and international companies. In the case of promoting globally marketed products, advertisers come to face a decision on various degrees of localisation and standardisation (globalisation) in the course of advertising strategy planning (Mooij, 1998:296-9).

As previously stated, effective advertising needs to rely on local values to help the audience easily identify with the conveyed messages. However, an extreme extent of localisation in advertising strategies can be rare given that the force of globalisation is blurring cultural boundaries and reducing cultural diversities. Actually, East-West comparative advertising research has revealed that advertising in Eastern cultural context tends to show hybridity of values consistent with not only those rooted in the East but also those more dominant in the West or reflective of modern materialism across cultures. For example, Lin (2001) examined cultural values in U.S. and Chinese advertising appeals and identified that the youth/modernity appeal that reflects the westernization as well as the modernization is as prominently displayed in Chinese TV

advertising as in U.S. advertising. This study further supported Cheng and Schweitzer's (1996) study in which Chinese advertising was identified as a melting pot of Eastern and Western values. Zhang and Harwood (2004) later explored the changes in cultural values as reflected in Chinese television commercials and also found that even though traditional Chinese values remain in advertising, struggles against Western cultural impact can also be observed due to the force of globalisation and rapid modernisation in China in the past decades. In addition to the youth/beauty/modernity appeals that reflect the westernisation, the above three studies identified family-related values as the defining themes in Chinese advertising. This trend shows family values which Confucian tradition puts emphasis on remain to be the main ideological resource based on which advertising strategies are made effectively localised. The dynamic cultural mixture in advertising denies an absolute emphasis on localisation (appeals made only based on local values) or standardisation (globally identical advertising strategies), but rather the phenomenon termed by Featherstone and Lash (1995) as "cultural melange" and "glocalisation", thereby, a Western cultural imperialism thesis is challenged. Featherstone and Lash's (1995) arguments also remind us that we should not ignore the intensive interaction between the local and the global and should observe how either force transforms each other.

A series of studies on *Cosmopolitan* (a magazine distributed world-wide with 44 versions) by van Leeuwen and his colleagues (Machin and van Leeuwen 2003, 2004 and 2005; Machin and Thornborrow 2003) provided visual and discursive evidence to support the simultaneous push-pull effect from the local and the global in the context of media. Their findings indicated that readers

from various nations seem to share a global community connected by certain homogeneous cultural construction of reality in *Cosmopolitan* magazines and at the same time allow locally accommodated content to exist in various versions.

The implication of the concept "glocalisation" and the findings from van Leeuwen and his colleagues' studies to this current research is that even though advertising in two cultural settings is compared, the examined representations of older people and the reflected cultural constructions of older age in Taiwanese and UK advertising cannot be assumed to be fundamentally different or similar. According to Hsao, Raymond and Taylor's (1999) interview data based on 61 Taiwanese managing directors of advertising agencies in Taiwan, which is a highly modernised country, Taiwanese advertising messages tend to be dominated more by westernised cultural values rather than Chinese traditional values. The finding could be plausible as they did not content analyse Taiwanese advertising so as to show the relative proportion of western and traditional Chinese values as the supportive evidence of the above argument. However, the implication is clear: it is likely that representations of older people in Taiwanese advertising will be reflective of Western views of ageing and older age, as also learned from the case of Chinese advertising, where globalisation and localisation are intertwining.

## **1.9 An Overview of the thesis**

In addition to this introductory chapter, this thesis includes another six chapters. The foci are stated as follows.

Chapter two is the literature review of previous content analytical studies on images of older people in various forms of the media. The dimensions examined in previous studies are discussed and critically commented on so as to propose research questions to be answered in the content analysis of this thesis. Some discourse analytical studies on discursive constructions of ageing or older age in advertising texts aimed primarily at older customers are reviewed. A total of 27 research questions are developed and rationalised in this chapter.

Chapter three is the methodology chapter, divided into three parts. The first part is about the use of content analysis. The limitations of content analysis are presented so as to justify the employment of another two analytical approaches, namely, the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis and critical discourse analysis. The second and the third part of chapter three respectively focus on the elaboration of the latter two analytic methods.

Chapter four reports the findings of the content analyses of the images of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. The portrayals of older people were judged in terms of several dimensions, namely, the degree of presence, product associations, target audience of products, social relationships, physical contexts, gender and age levels (50-64 and 65+).

Chapter five extends the content analytical studies by employing a Grounded-Theory guided coding process (the constant comparative analysis) to discover types of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. Comparisons to literature on stereotypes of older people (e.g. Hummert, Garstka, Shaner and Strahm 1994) are provided in this chapter.

Chapter six presents a critical discourse analysis of advertising texts promoting over 50s life insurance products in the UK and Taiwan. The main focus of this chapter is to decode the ideological construction of older age and later life.

The cross-cultural differences identified in the three studies are reported in chapters four, five and six.

Chapter seven is the conclusion chapter in which summaries of the findings obtained in the three modes of analyses are provided and followed by an assessment of any ageism found in the data. The research designs of this thesis are also revisited and critically viewed. Other discussions in this chapter include limitations and suggestions for future research.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Content analytical studies on representations of older people**

#### **2.1.1 Introduction**

The first part of this chapter is a review of content analytical studies on media representations of older people. This research trajectory has been mainly developed in the United States by researchers in the field of communication and marketing studies for about three decades (Vasil and Wass 1993). The results are discussed in terms of a number of dimensions which have been monitored in previous studies based on data in various media forms, such as TV programmes, magazine advertisements and TV advertisements. Following the review, research questions and a critique of content analytical studies are provided (in section 2.1.7) so as to explain how previous studies will be expanded on in this thesis.

#### **2.1.2 Degree of presence**

The presence of a social group has received research attention in media studies concerning the ways it is represented because the comparative absence is deemed as "symbolic annihilation" (Gerbner and Gross 1976) of the social group and previous content analyses have suggested that underrepresentation of older people was common in various forms of media such as in television programmes (Arnoff 1974; Gerbner, et al. 1980; Rodwell, Davis, Dennison, Goldsmith & Whitehead 1992), television commercials (Hiemstra, Goodman, Middlemiss, Vosco and Ziegler 1983; Swayne and Greco 1987 ; Roy and Harwood 1997; Lee, Kim and Han 2006; Lee, Carpenter and Meyers 2007) and print advertisements (Gantz, Gartenberg and Rainbow 1980; Kvasnicka, Beymer and Perloff 1982; Ursic, Ursic and Ursic 1986; Bramlett-Solomon and Wilson 1989;

Carrigan and Szmigin 1998; Harwood and Roy 1999).

It seems that the degree of underrepresentation has declined gradually over time (Abrams, Eveland and Giles 2003). One evidence can be found in the research findings in two studies (Greco and Swayne 1987; Roy and Harwood 1997) examining representations of older people in American television commercials. While Swayne and Greco's study (1987) revealed that older characters in American television commercials consisted of only 3.2% of all depicted characters, the figure raised up to 6.9% in Roy and Harwood's (1997) research, which intended to replicate the former one. Although the visibility of older people in advertising generally has not been comparable to their demographic share in reality, it is getting more likely to expect that the difference between the presence of older people and their real demographic share is decreasing even in prime-time television ads which tend to target the general audience. In more recent studies (e.g. Lee, Kim and Han 2006; Lee, Carpetner and Meyers), the researchers concluded that the presence of older adults in American prime-time TV adverts already appeared to be comparable to that in the population.

Some researchers divided the target older age group into younger and older subgroups and found that the younger subgroup was less underrepresented. For instance, Robinson and Skill's (1995) study suggested that characters aged between 50 and 64 constituted 16.3% of all human figures in American prime-time television programmes while the 65 plus age group comprised only 2.8%. The preference of showing the young-old as opposed to the old-old age group was supported in other two studies based on a corpus of German prime-time TV programmes (Kessler, Rakoczy, and Staudinger 2004) and TV advertisements (Kessler, Schwender and Bowen 2010).

Underrepresentation of older people was less likely to occur if the examined corpus of advertisements targeted mainly older readers/viewers (e.g. Carrigan and Szmigin 1999; Williams, Ylänne, Wadleigh and Chen 2010) or the collected samples were collected mainly in the Christmas season which tends to show advertisements in family-related storylines (Simcock and Sudbury 2006).

As shown in the above review, the media in general do not always represent older characters to the extent which reflects the demographic share in the real world. However, it is argued that advertising may not reflect the demographic share of older people as the general media may show. This argument is put by taking into account certain characteristics and goals of advertising. First, advertising primarily functions to sell and hence the use of characters very likely depends upon the nature of products to be promoted (see more in section 2.1.4). If the promoted products in collected advertising samples appeal, to a greater extent, to younger customers, it is very likely that advertisers would seriously consider depicting the peers of young target customers just to get the messages through to the main addressees more effectively. Second, the degree of presence of older characters in advertising is dependent upon the general readership and viewership of the collected advertising samples. For example, the targeted viewers of TV samples collected at the prime-time and in the afternoon definitely vary. The viewers incorporate a wider age range in the evening than in the afternoon and the difference is that younger age groups may be more likely absent from the viewing of TV programmes (also the accompanying advertisements) at the day time. From the marketing perspective, advertisers would buy the prime time slot to promote products which target the general

public or youngsters. In this case, the presence of younger age groups may consequently be higher if advertisers only use older adults as older age markers (see more in section 2.1.7 for questions regarding product targets and the use of older people in advertising). The same rationale applies to explain why, as suggested in some literature (e.g. Carrigan and Szmigin 1999; Williams, Ylänné, Wadleigh and Chen 2010), older characters appeared to be overrepresented (the presence in adverts is higher than the real demographic share) in print advertisements clearly addressed to older readers. Considering the above-mentioned factors, advertising alone may not be an adequate media resource for observing the presence of various age groups as a reflection of their demographic shares. However, as the degree of presence is a fundamental question and constantly examined in previous studies, it shall be included in this current study as well. However, more attention in this study will be given to the qualitative exploration of the portrayals of older adults in UK and Taiwanese advertising.

### **2.1.3 Role prominence**

In addition to “presence”, the variable “role prominence” is another aspect that has been examined to suggest how salient the representation of older characters is in advertisements.

Results have suggested that older characters were more frequently depicted in major roles when they were targeted as the main addressees. For instance, Roberts and Zhou’s (1997) study revealed that nearly all older characters (aged over 50s) were cast in major roles in the ads of *Modern Maturity* (an American magazine for older readers). The same finding was supported by more recent

studies (e.g. Swayne and Greco 1987 based on American TV ads; Kessler et al. 2010 based on German prime time TV advertisements; and Williams, et al. 2010 examining British print advertisements). However, if the examined media content was not particularly aimed at older readers/viewers, the depicted older characters tend to play background roles (see Roy and Harwood 1997, examining American TV adverts). Robinson and Skill's (1995) study suggested that as opposed to the old-old age group (65+), the young-old (50-64) group was more frequently depicted as leading characters in prime-time TV shows.

Cross-cultural comparisons in this regard were examined in Harwood and Roy's (1999) as well as in Lee, et al.'s (2006) study. Harwood and Roy (1999) found that the proportion (98%) of older characters depicted in major roles was equal and extremely high in both American and Indian print ads featuring older people. However, compared with Korean TV advertisements (86%), American TV adverts (37%) depicted older characters in major roles to a much lesser extent. As explained by Lee et al. (2006), the relative salience of older characters in South Korean TV advertisements was due to the influence of the Confucian philosophy which values older age group more.

Given the above review, it is predicted that role salience of older adults in advertisements can be greater when the messages are aimed at older audiences/readers. Advertisements produced in East Asian cultures (with the influence of Confucian tradition, such as Taiwan) more likely ascribe greater salience to roles played by older adults as opposed to those in Western cultures (for example, the UK). Moreover, the younger the older characters appear to be, the more likely they can play important roles in advertisements. These predicted

trends will be investigated in this current study.

#### **2.1.4 Product association**

Product association is another widely discussed aspect in previous content analytical studies on media representations of older people. Ursic et al.'s (1986) study showed that elderly people were generally depicted in American print advertisements for product types which were expensive and with upscale appeal. These were, for instance, liquor, cars, banks, cameras, magazines, electronics, hotels, music, and jewellery. Harris and Feinberg (1977) argued that elderly people were depicted for only 3 kinds of product categories, namely, health aids, food and appliances in American TV adverts. Similar findings were supported in Hiemstra et al.'s study (1983). Swayne and Greco (1987) examined American TV commercials with elderly characters and suggested that older people were depicted most frequently for food, television promotion/public service announcements and retail goods. Roy and Harwood (1997) revealed that older people in American television commercials were more likely to be underrepresented for automobiles and travel services while they were less likely to be underrepresented for retail chains, financial services and food product types. Lee, et al. (2007) found that in American TV ads, older adults were most frequently depicted for food products, medication and health/beauty and cars. However, they were infrequently represented in ads for toys, beverages, computer and travel products.

Carrigan and Szmigin (1999) claimed that older characters were most frequently depicted to sell mobility aids, financial services, health products and travel services in British magazines targeting senior readerships (*Saga, Choice,*

*Active Life, and Goodtimes*). Williams, Ylänne, Wadleigh, Chen's (2010) research also supported that older characters were most frequently featured for help/support and medical/health products in *Saga Magazine*, but the association with travel and financial services was not as strong as it was reported in Carrigan and Szmigin's (1999) study.

Some studies also examined the relation between "role prominence" and "product association" in the portrayals of older people in the media. For example, Miller et al.'s (2004) longitudinal study suggested that elderly central characters in American TV adverts (1950s-1990s) were featured most frequently for food/beverage, cameras/films and financial/insurance services. Simcock and Sudbury (2006) found that 50+ characters cast in major roles were depicted to promote utilities, government policies and technology/telecommunication products in British TV advertisements.

To summarize the above findings, older characters tend to be featured for certain products (e.g. health, food/retail, finance, mobility aids) in advertisements. The associated product types seem to reflect stereotypical expectations about older people, such as having more leisure time, lower activity, more disposable money and more health problems. Older people may, accordingly, be portrayed as central roles in the advertisements for the frequently associated product types.

### **2.1.5 Associated physical settings**

Some previous studies also examined physical settings in which older people are depicted in advertising and content analysts could therefore infer what activities older people were involved in and observe whether the associated physical settings reflect certain stereotypes of older people, for example, whether older people are always depicted at home and are suggested to lead a rather isolated lifestyle or whether they are more often featured outdoor and engaged in energy-demanding activities. Research findings regarding this coding dimension are outlined below.

Swayne and Greco (1987) found almost half of American television commercials showed older people in home settings. Williams et al. (2010) also suggested that older characters were more frequently featured in home settings in print advertisements especially in older-age targeted advertising. However, other studies showed different results. For example, Ursic et al. (1986) and Roy and Harwood's studies (1997) suggested that older characters were frequently featured in business-related environments or active at work in advertisements. The same finding was also supported in Kessler, Rakoczy, and Staudinger's (2004) study based on German television series. Kessler, Schwender, and Bowen's study (2010) even claimed that older characters were depicted as being employed as often as younger characters in German prime time TV advertisements. In their cross-cultural study, Harwood and Roy (1999) argued that US print advertisements featured older characters outdoors more frequently than Indian ads. Moreover, elderly Indians were shown at work more frequently than their American counterparts.

### **2.1.6 Associated social relationships**

“Social context” is another aspect addressed in previous studies on portrayals of older characters in the media. Results have suggested that older characters are most frequently shown with younger adults in television commercials and least likely with children (Swayne and Greco 1987; Roy and Harwood’s 1997). The weak association with family relationship was also identified in Kessler et al.’s (2004) study examining images of older people in German prime-time television shows.

Both physical and social contexts were dimensions explored to infer whether older people were portrayed negatively as lonely and isolated figures or, on the contrary, as socially active and engaged. It seems previous studies have suggested a relatively positive trend.

### **2.1.7 Critical comments and research questions**

Some critical observations of the analyses reviewed so far will be provided in this section. These concern the ways in which this current study could expand previous studies and link to the research questions (RQ 1-21) proposed for the content analyses in this thesis (for the findings, see Chapter 4).

First of all, previous studies generally did not take into account within-group variations when examining portrayals of older people (but, see Robinson and Skill 1995). A systematic examination of the within-group variations may reveal, for instance, whether the younger-old and older-old age groups are portrayed differently and how. Hence, following Robinson and Skill (1995), this current study was aimed to explore the within-group variations (50-64 vs. 65+) in the

portrayals of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements.

In terms of product association, most of the previous studies (e.g. Ursic et al. 1986; Harris and Feinberg 1977; Hiemstra et al. 1983; Swayne and Greco 1987; Roy and Harwood 1997; Lee et al. 2007, Carrigan and Szmigin 1999; Williams, et al. 2010) have focused on the distribution of product types featuring older adults in advertising. Very few of them (e.g. Miller et al. 2004; Simcock and Sudbury 2006) have examined the extent to which the roles of older characters were significant in ads for various product types. Therefore, it may be worthwhile to explore the intersection between product association and role prominence. Furthermore, taking the relevance of target audience into account can inform whether the portrayals of older characters in advertising were for age-marked purposes (e.g. Williams et al. 2010). Hence, another question was proposed regarding the association between the presence of older age and the target age level of the advertised products.

In terms of analytical techniques, the content analyses reviewed so far tended to report merely frequency distributions for various dimensions without examining whether the associations between dimensions were statistically significant (see exceptions in Roy and Harwood 1997 and Lee et al. 2006; Williams, et al. 2010). Hence, the use of older characters in association with various product types, social relationships, physical contexts, target age level or role salience are investigated in the current study, using statistical approaches beyond simply frequency analysis (see more details in chapter 3.1)

Given the above review and comments, a number of research questions can

now be proposed. Following the studies reviewed in 2.1, content analysis is the research method used to explore research questions 1-21 (as elaborated below).

Research questions for content analysis of media representations of older people in UK TV advertisements include:

RQ1: To what extent are older characters represented in UK TV advertisements?

RQ2: How is the use of older characters associated with product types in UK TV advertisements?

RQ3: How is the presence of older age groups associated with target age levels of products in UK TV advertisements?

RQ4: What is the gender distribution of older characters portrayed in UK TV advertisements?

RQ5: How are older characters portrayed in terms of role prominence in UK TV advertisements?

RQ6: How is role prominence of older characters related to target age levels of advertised products in UK TV advertisements?

RQ7: What physical settings are older characters associated with in UK TV advertisements?

RQ8: What social relationships are older characters associated with in UK TV advertisements?

The following questions are for the portrayals of older adults in Taiwanese TV advertisements:

RQ9: To what extent are older characters represented in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ10: How is the use of older character associated with product types in

Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ11: How is the presence of older age groups associated with target age levels of products in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ12: What is the gender distribution of older characters portrayed in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ13: How are older characters portrayed in terms of role prominence in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ14: How is role prominence of older characters related to target age levels of advertised products in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ15: What physical settings are older characters associated with in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ16: What social relationships are older characters associated with in Taiwanese TV advertisements?

In addition, since this thesis aims at a cross-cultural comparison on media representations of older people in UK and Taiwanese data, the following questions were also proposed:

RQ17: How different is the extent to which older people are represented in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ18: How different is the use of older people associated with product types in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ19: How different are the portrayals of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements in terms of role prominence?

RQ20: How differently are older characters associated with various settings in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ21: How differently are the portrayals of older characters associated with

social relationships in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

## **2.2 Developing prototypes of older adults depicted in advertising**

In the realm of ageing and communication, researchers (see details in 2.2.1) have attempted to conceptualise how older adults are socially represented in the given society and the results have been utilised as coding frames to examine media representations of older people in advertisements, using the method of content analysis (see details in 2.2.3). One of the research purposes is to compare whether media representations are consistent with social representations of older adults (see the review in section 2.2.1). This section will cover several topics to justify why a prototype analysis (reported in chapter 5) is conducted in this thesis to develop a set of character types of older people as depicted in UK and Taiwanese advertising. Section 2.2 begins by summarising research findings regarding the stereotypes of older persons widely perceived in the American society, followed by a more important topic addressing why stereotypes of older persons are important in our lives and the impacts on interpersonal communication. Moreover, a review of two content analytical studies (Miller, Leyell and Mazachek 2004; Lee, Carpenter and Meyers 2007) with respect to stereotyping older persons in advertising is presented in section 2.2.3. The drawbacks of the research design employed in these two studies are criticised in section 2.2.4 so as to point out how this thesis can expand previous studies examining positive and negative stereotypes perpetuated in portrays of older adults in advertising.

### **2.2.1 Stereotypes of older persons – the prototypes**

Experimental studies conducted by Schmidt and Boland (1986), Hummert (1990), and Hummert, et al. (1994) have attempted to draw certain stereotype structures from people's cognitive perceptions of typical older adults in the United States. Researchers of the above three studies arrived at the results by asking participants to generate traits suggesting what older people were typically like. They subsequently had the traits sorted into clusters indicative of various types of older people. Research findings indicated that both younger and older participants understood elderly adults in terms of a mixture of positive and negative stereotypes.

Of the above three studies (Schmidt and Boland 1986; Hummert 1990; Hummert et al. 1994), Hummert et al.'s (1994) was conducted more recently and included traits generated in the previous two. Hummert et al. (1994) took into account the participants' age variation as a factor in the generated stereotype structures. Their stereotype structures accordingly were more robust and refined. The following review on stereotypes of older adults hence focuses mainly on their findings.

Hummert et al.'s (1994) study showed variations of stereotype structures perceived by three different age groups (young, middle-aged and elderly adults). The manifest differences indicated that the older the participants were, the more complex the stereotype structure appeared to be. Hence, older participants reported a larger number of category types of the elderly than did the middle-aged and younger ones. Also, the middle-aged participants reported more complex representations of the elderly than did the younger ones.

As stated earlier, stereotypes of the elderly included a mixture of positive and negative concepts. Hummert et al. (1994) found that three positive and four negative stereotypes were consensually reported by the young, middle-aged and older participants. The three positive stereotypes were "Golden Ager", "Perfect Grandparent" and "John Wayne Conservative". The four negative stereotypes included "Severely impaired", "Despondent", "Shrew/Curmudgeon" and "Recluse". "Golden Ager" included traits, such as fun-loving, adventurous, well-travelled, lively and active. "Perfect Grandparent" described older adults who were family-oriented, kind, supportive, and loving. "John Wayne Conservative" labeled those elders characterised as patriotic, old-fashioned, religious, conservative and reminiscent. The "Severely Impaired" older persons were senile, sick, feeble and incompetent. "Despondent" labeled older adults who were depressed, sad, frustrated, and neglected. "Shrew/curmudgeon" referred to the type of older adults who were bitter, ill-tempered, demanding and complaining. "Recluse" represented quiet, timid and naïve elderly people.

### **2.2.2 Stereotypes of older persons and the effects**

The above findings have informed us that positive and negative stereotypes coexist in our perceptions of older persons. However, it is more important to inquire how exactly they influence our lives and what their functions in communication are. Therefore, two models, the Communication Predicament of Ageing Model (Ryan, Giles, Bartolucci, and Henwood 1986) and the Age Stereotypes in Interactions Model (Hummert 1994) will be discussed as follows (see an elaborate review in Hummert, Garstka, Ryan and Bonnesen 2004).

## **Communication Predicament of Aging Model**

The Communication Predicament of Aging Model (abbreviated as CPA, Ryan et al. 1986) addresses how an intergenerational encounter evolves into a negative feedback cycle because of negative age stereotyping, triggered by certain age cues, such as age-related changes in facial structure and beliefs about deficient communication competence accompanying ageing. Consistent with the Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, Mulac, Bradac and Johnson 1987; Giles, Coupland and Coupland 1991), younger interlocutors may adapt their communication styles in order to meet the presumed deficits ascribed to older interlocutors. Overaccommodation to negative stereotypes is argued to be the main reason, in the CPA model, contributing to a negative feedback cycle which leads to several negative consequences, for example, constrained opportunities for communication (c.f. evaluations of patronising communication in Harwood, Ryan, Giles and Tysoski 1997; La Tourette and Meeks 2000; Ryan, Meredith and Shantz 1994), loss of personal control and self-esteem (c.f. O'Connor and Rigby 1996), and lessened psychological activity or social interaction (such as increase in dependent behaviours, c.f. Baltes and Wahl 1996). The CPA model is further developed and incorporated into another model, named as the Age Stereotypes in Interactions Model (abbreviated as ASI).

## **The Age Stereotypes in Interactions Model**

Because the CPA model only applies to communications involving negative stereotyping of older people, Hummert (1994), instead, introduced a model to account for the roles both positive and negative stereotypes of older people play in interactions. The ASI model specifies participants in a communication process as a perceiver and an older target. In the ASI model, the self-system of a

perceiver (including the age, cognitive complexity and quality of contact with older adults), characteristics of older target (physical features and communication behaviours suggesting positive and negative stereotypes) and the context of interaction jointly determine whether a communication will eventually turn out to be a positive, negative (the CPA model) or interrupt cycle. The perceiver's self system in the ASI model includes several aspects, such as age, cognitive complexity and quality of contact, all of which imply the nature of a perceiver's age stereotype schemas and the tendency to categorise an older target in line with negative or positive stereotyping. It is argued that if a perceiver's age, cognitive complexity and the quality of contact with older adults increase, negative age stereotyping is less likely related in interactions with older adults. Therefore, normal adult speech and a positive feedback cycle are more likely to occur.

The ASI model expands the CPA model in several ways. For example, it predicts that negative stereotyping in relation to age cues should occur when advanced age is suggested. The ASI model also suggests that certain communication behaviours associated with older age tend to activate negative stereotyping in a perceiver and therefore trigger age-adapted speech and lead to a negative feedback cycle. For instance, evidence has suggested that painful self-disclosures are labelled as a typical older adult phenomenon (Coupland, Coupland, Giles, Henwood, and Wiemann 1988) and older adults who disclose painful life experiences are regarded more negative, more intimate, less appropriate and more closely associated with negative stereotype traits (Bonnesen and Humemrt 2002). Other conversational behaviours which trigger negative stereotypical expectation about older adults' communication

competence include off-target verbosity (Ruscher and Hurley 2000), repetitions (Bieman-Copland and Ryan 2001) and age excuses for memory failures (Ryan, Bieman-Copland, Kwong See, Ellis, and Anas 2002).

The aspect of context in the ASI model is influential in the stereotyping process in communication but only when age is made salient in the context, such as in nursing homes where negative stereotyping of older age is easily provoked and age-adapted (considered negative) communication strategies are used (see for instance secondary baby talk in Caporael 1981 and Sachweh 1998). The ASI model does not assume that an older target can only play a passive role in the stereotyping process in interaction. Instead, it is argued that ideally an older target should reinforce a positive feedback cycle involving normal communication styles but interrupt a negative feedback cycle initiated by the other using age-adapted talk.

The above two models indicate that stereotypes of older people have great impact on verbal interactions with older adults. The relative prevalence of positive and negative stereotypes influences the ways we categorise older people in daily communications and hence determines the possibility to have positive interactions with them. Furthermore, research (employing older people as participants) has suggested that exposure to positive or negative age stereotypes caused differences in certain functions, such as memory performance (Levy 1996), handwriting (Levy 2000), and cardiovascular responses to stress (Levy, Hausdorff, Hencke and Wei 2000). The above studies commonly indicated that the primed negative stereotypes rendered detrimental effects while exposure to positive age stereotypes generated beneficial

outcomes. Therefore, we need to be aware of the various forms of stereotypes of older adults around us, including those reinforced and exposed in advertising. The second study in this thesis is therefore relevant to this aim. What follows is a review of investigations in stereotyping older people in television advertisements.

### **2.2.3 Stereotypes of older people and media representations in television advertisements**

Two content analytical studies (Miller, Leyell and Mazachek 2004; Lee, Carpenter and Meyers 2007) categorized the portrayals of older adults in TV advertisements in terms of Hummert et al.'s (1994) theory.

Miller et al.'s study (2004) revealed that older characters playing central roles in American TV advertisements were portrayed most frequently in terms of "Adventurous Golden Ager" (40.6%), followed by "Perfect Grandparent" (32.7%), "Productive Golden Ager" (30.7), John Wayne Conservative (19.8%), and all negative stereotypes (Despondent, Shrew/Curmudgeon, Mildly Impaired, 11.9%).

Lee et al. (2007) explored portrayals of 108 elderly spokespeople in TV advertisements for medical, food products, cars and financial services and claimed that they resemble mostly the stereotypes of "Golden Ager" (91%), followed by "Perfect Grandparent" (6%), "Severely Impaired" (2%) and "Shrew/Curmudgeon" (1%).

Generally speaking, the above two studies showed that media representations of older people, especially in central roles, depicted mostly positive stereotypes rather than negative stereotypes when coded according to Hummert et al.'s (1994) theory.

#### **2.2.4 A critique: prescriptive versus inductive analytical framework**

The following discussion will focus on a critique of the research design of the above two studies (Miller et al. 2004; Lee et al. 2007). The validity of the research findings was grounded on the premise that cognitive representations of older adults (that is, stereotype structures in Hummert et al.'s study) work well to predict media representations. Nevertheless, to what extent this premise was valid was actually left unmentioned in Miller et al. (2004) and Lee et al.'s (2007) studies. It is necessary to cast a doubt on the consistency between cognitive representations of older adults widely perceived by individuals and media representations. Research has pointed out that current literature on stereotypes of older adults may not be adequate to account for all portrayals of older people in advertising. For example, in Williams, Ylänne and Wadleigh's (2007) case study of a series of UK advertising campaign (for Olivio/Bertolli margarine), the depicted central elderly characters were playful and active in the pursuit of romance and sexual life. Instead of presenting elder sexuality as unwatchable (Woodward 1991) and sexless (a trait elicited in Hummert et al.'s study in 1994 to describe a typical older person), the advertising strategy employed in this case showed "reversed stereotypes" which as Kubey (1980:24) argued are evident in media representations of older adults.

Furthermore, advertisers often resort to humour to win consent from

customers because humour, as a basic technique of persuasion in advertising, helps to break down customers' suspicions (Brierley 2002:158). Furthermore, it is also an effective communication strategy in advertising to provoke interest, attention, pleasure and excitement in customers so as to foster purchasing intention (Franzen 1994, 192-3). Humour is often created out of surprise and incongruity. Therefore, counter-stereotypical portrayals can appear in humour in association with older age in advertisements because they are different from what is normally expected.

Bearing the above-mentioned arguments in mind, in using Hummert et al.'s (1994) stereotype structure as a predetermined coding framework, Miller et al. (2004) and Lee et al.'s (2007) studies might have missed counter-stereotypical representations in their analyses.

Stereotypes are beliefs as consequences of social interactions and social learning in a given society and, therefore, they could be culturally specific (see i.e. Zhang, Hummert and Garstka 2002; Liu, Ng, Loong, Gee and Weatherall 2003). It is hence not reasonable to employ existing theories developed in the United States to predict the ways older characters are stereotyped in Taiwanese or even UK TV advertising context.

The critiques discussed so far in this section reflect the inherent problems in the employment of a prescriptive analytical framework. Content analytical studies are basically deductive. They reproduce analytical schemes in previous studies and verify existing theories or hypotheses. The limitation is that information beyond the analytical framework cannot be discovered. In order to

avoid the same drawback, an alternative, preferably inductive, research design was, hence, developed to conceptualise media representations of older adults in the examined UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements (see more details as to the alternative research design in chapter 3.2 and chapter 5.1).

### **2.2.5 Research questions: conceptualisation of the portrayals of older people**

Since there has been no research generating a conceptual model (as stereotype structures) to explain how older adults are stereotyped in UK and Taiwanese TV advertising, research questions 22 and 23 are therefore considered worth exploring.

RQ22: What character types can be developed to account for media representations of older adults in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ23: How do media representations of older adults in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements differ in terms of the character types developed in RQ22?

In order to further understand the variations between cognitive representations of older adults in existing literature and the research findings of RQ 22, RQ 24 was also proposed.

RQ24: How do the character types developed in RQ 22 differ from the literature on stereotypes and ageing?

The answers to research questions 22~24 are reported in chapter 5.

## **2.3 Discourse analysis, advertising and representations of older age**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

As revealed in section 2.1, there is no shortage of research suggesting what product types are associated with portrayals of older people in advertising. The product types that frequently feature older people are, for instance, food, health/medical products or financial services. The results seem to reflect certain stereotypical expectations about older age or older persons as a social group. More recent content analytical studies have shown that if older characters are cast in important roles, they are portrayed in line with positive rather than negative stereotypes (see more details in 2.2). Furthermore, older characters easily earn their prominence and presence in older-age targeted advertisements (see for instance in, Williams, et al. 2010).

Given the above, it seems that featuring older persons in advertising, to a certain extent, is for age-marked reasons. What has not been fully explained is the question: "in what ways is older age or older adults made salient for marketing purposes?" Answering this question requires us to look into the cultural resources about ageing that viewers/readers are made to draw upon and the discursive devices through which older age is culturally constructed. Several studies (Ylänne-McEwen, 2000; Coupland, 2003 and 2007), using discourse analytical approaches, are considered informative of these aspects.

### **2.3.2 Discursive representations of older age in promotional texts**

First, a study conducted by Ylänne-McEwen (2000) will be discussed. This study looked closely at UK holiday brochures for the over 50s, using critical discourse analysis. Holiday brochures, like most advertising texts, not only sell

products (package holidays) but also define the target customers (the over 50s). Ylänne-McEwen (2000) maintained that holidays for older customers were named with a youth-oriented metaphorical reference. Under names such as "*Golden Times*", "*Golden Years*" and "*Young at Heart*", customers were defined in line with active and youthful images. The consumption of holidays as such was positioned as a lifestyle choice, or more specifically, an adventurous, romantic and enjoyable lifestyle. However, Ylänne-McEwen (2000) continued to argue that the emphasis on communalism, assurances of feeling at home and arrangements of afternoon tea in her examined materials implied dependence, presupposed insecurity, and reliance on daily rituals. In sum, hybridity of ideological stances (arguably conflicting) towards older age was identified in the marketing of holidays exclusively for the over 50s.

UK print advertisements of skin care products, according to Coupland (2003 and 2007) also revealed ageist ideological presuppositions. Her critical discourse analysis suggested that the marketing of anti-ageing skin care products ideologically positioned ageing as a target (likened to illness) to be repaired, remedied and corrected through the use of battle metaphors. The "unwatchability of old age" (Woodward 1991) was reinforced as a moral imperative of body management (that is, maintaining a young-looking appearance was promoted). This imperative was addressed not only to female but also male readers (Coupland 2007). Generally speaking, signs of ageing were represented as a serious matter. In sum, discursive strategies (eg. provoking fear, relating masculine success to sexual attraction and the pathologizing of ageing) were used to sell such "age-preferential" products (see more about Thimm 1998 a and b in footnote 1). Stigmatization and problematization of ageing

underpinned the persuasive force of the promoted skin care products.

Yläanne-McEwen's (2000) and Coupland's (2003 and 2007) studies have shown us that in age exclusive/preferential advertising texts, older people or older age could be conceptualised in relation to negative stereotypical expectations. Viewers/readers are expected to draw upon their socio-cognitive resources (or known as "members' resources" termed by Fairclough 2001:9) to interpret meanings of the advertising texts. The derogatory or ageist ideological implications about older age and ageing were decoded as a consequence of the critical discourse analytical orientation to the examined discourses. In the existing literature on media representations of older people and older age, content analysis has been the dominant method. This has failed to attend to information at the level of discourse. The use of CDA as an alternative approach could arguably complement the drawbacks of the content analytical method. It could also help uncover social attitudes which are embedded, taken for granted but not explicitly expressed in the advertisements constructing or representing older age.

Hence, the third focus of this thesis aims to explore how older age is discursively represented, by using CDA. Following Yläanne-McEwen (2000) and Coupland (2003 and 2007), a corpus of "age-exclusive" advertising texts were examined. Over 50s life insurance products were targeted, as this type of life insurance is one of the various products highly promoted for the grey market (others are for instance funeral arrangements, baths for the elderly, holidays, mobility aids, etc.). Another reason to choose over 50s life insurance products was because this product type is now promoted on TV in Taiwan and the UK. This

allows the researcher to obtain TV advertising texts from both countries for the purpose of cross-cultural comparisons.

As clearly indicated in the product names, over 50s life insurance products are aimed at mature consumers. The advertising texts are anticipated to deal with how the target customers are positioned to perceive their own age and what social attitudes/stereotypes are reinforced so as to enhance the marketing power of the adverts. The above issues, arguably, inform us of the ways in which older people (if portrayed) and older age are represented (not only visually but also discursively) in this particular genre of advertising texts. Therefore, the following research questions need to be examined:

RQ 25: How is older age discursively represented in UK TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products?

RQ 26: How is older age discursively represented in Taiwanese TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products?

RQ 27: How different or similar are the discursive representations of older age in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products?

The answers for research questions 25-27 are reported in chapter 6. As to how critical discourse analysis was used and the rationales, these are elaborated in sections 3.3 and 6.1.

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

Three different approaches were adopted to investigate media representations of older people and older age in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. They are, namely, content analysis, constant comparative method, and critical discourse analysis.

### **3.1 The use of Content Analysis**

The first part of chapter three explains the use of content analysis in this thesis. The following discussions in section 3.1 include a brief description of what content analysis is as a research tool, the prescribed operational steps, the developed sampling schemes, the coding (including coder training) and the statistics applied for the final analyses. This method was mainly employed to answer research questions 1~22 (see chapter 2.1 for details).

#### **3.1.1 Content Analysis as a research tool**

Content analysis is a widely used approach in the field of mass communication research. It is often characterised as being objective, systematic and quantitative (Berelson 1952; Holsti 1969). The objectivity and systematic nature of this research technique derives from the specification of the operational process, which will be looked at later. It is described as 'quantitative' because content analytical studies are often conducted for hypothesis testing, using statistical analyses based on the generated coding results. Ultimately, a content analyst has to make valid inferences about the

examined texts (Weber 1990:9) according to the statistical results. All in all, content analysis is a research method that fits within the positivist research paradigm and conforms to a number of standards set to scrutinize the quality of scientific research. The standards include reliability, generalizability and replicability situated within a hypothetico-deductive framework (Neuendorf, 2002:10-13). Conducting content analysis involves a number of operational procedures. However, before elaborating what the procedures are, a brief account of the employment of content analysis is given.

### **3.1.2 Justification of the use of content analysis**

In this study, the use of content analysis is considered appropriate to study media representations of older adults in Taiwanese and UK TV advertisements for a number of reasons. First, this method makes the analysis of a large amount of qualitative data (visual and verbal content in the examined TV advertisements) feasible. Second, both Taiwanese and UK corpora of data can be coded and analysed under the same framework, that is, the coding protocols (to be discussed later in 3.1.5). Thus, cross-cultural comparisons are made on the same basis. Third, the contrasts and comparisons made with previous studies (see the review in chapter 2.1) are possible by replicating similar coding rules or coding dimensions.

### **3.1.3 Operational procedures**

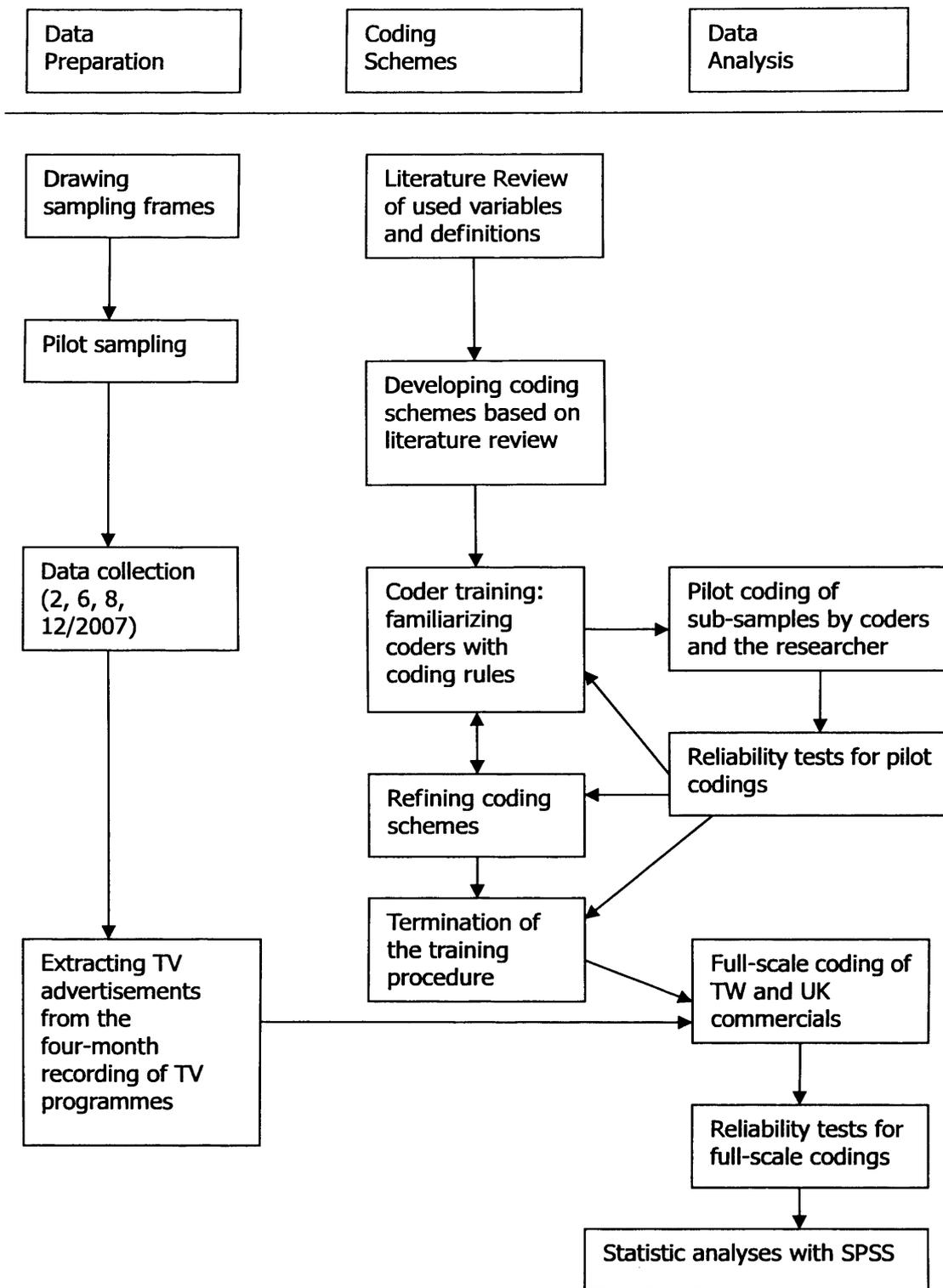
According to Neuendorf (2002:50-51), a number of steps are fundamental in a content analytical study. They include:

1. Theory and rationale: this step is to develop the hypotheses and research questions.

2. Conceptualisations: this step specifies the variables used and the definitions of variables.
3. Operationalization (measures): this step defines how each variable is measured and ensures that the levels of measurement for a variable are mutually exclusive. In this step, an *a-priori* coding scheme is created.
4. Coding schemes for human coders: a content analyst has to create code books and coding forms so that coders involved in the same content analysis have consistent standards/rules to follow.
5. Sampling: a content analyst has to specify how samples are collected.
6. Training and pilot reliability: during the process of coder training, coders have to work together and find out how much they agree on the pilot coding tasks through reliability tests.
7. Coding and final reliability tests: at least two coders who work independently are recruited in the formal coding process and intercoder reliability is measured based on two coders' judgments.
8. Tabulation and reporting: statistic figures for all research questions are reported.

Following the above steps, Figure 3-1 illustrates how the content analysis in this thesis was conducted. Each step is discussed in more depth below.

Figure 3-1 The operation of content analysis in this thesis



### **3.1.4 Sampling for content analysis**

The data (Taiwanese and UK TV advertisements) were obtained in accordance with the sampling frame stated below.

First, the target population corpus should be all TV advertisements broadcast in the year between 1/February/2007 and 31/January/2008. In order to gather television commercials which were manageable for analysis as well as representative of the one-year-long population of ads, probability sampling principles were adopted. Four target months (February, June, August and December of 2007) were randomly selected on a seasonal basis. Because the target months were randomly selected, it indicates that the research did not deliberately avoid collecting data at certain festival seasons, such as Christmas and Chinese New Year. As a result, products related to gifts or food and issues regarding family gatherings might be more intensively advertised. Media messages might be biased towards certain products. However, the skew was to a certain extent controlled by including data obtained in other seasons, too.

TV advertisements were then recorded every six days in the selected months. The time slots for the recording were determined by randomly selecting 2 hours from the morning (6 am-noon), afternoon (noon-6pm) and evening (6pm-midnight) of the recording day. The time period between midnight and early morning (12am-6am) was excluded because a pilot sampling conducted in November and December, 2006 showed that there were either no or very few TV advertisements broadcast during this time period. Furthermore, previous studies have never gathered samples from this time period.

As previously stated, the sampling frame was designed in line with the probability sampling principles, such as simple, stratified and systematic random sampling methods. Such principles are to ensure that each element in the population is equally selected and the collected samples are representative of the population. Therefore, the four months of data were collected to represent the one-year population of TV ads broadcast in the target time period and to eliminate the concerns of seasonal issues. The six day circulation of data collection was designed to evenly gather TV advertisements broadcast not only during the weekends but also on weekdays. The selection of three time slots on the recording days was to obtain samples viewed by audiences of various ages.

The TV channels from which TV advertisements were collected were terrestrial channels available nationwide. In Taiwan, these were FTV, CTV, TTV and CTS. In the UK, these were ITV, Channel 4 and Five. BBC channels were not included as they do not show TV ads. Terrestrial channels were targeted due to their relatively easy access compared to other cable TV channels. The recording of each channel was operated on a rotating basis. The determination of the rotation sequence was made randomly.

### **3.1.5 The development of coding schemes and coder training**

The development of coding schemes went hand-in-hand with the coder training process in this content analytical study. The coding dimensions in the coding protocols were developed by taking into account those employed in previous studies (see the review in chapter 2.1).

In the coder training process, discrepancies found between coders fed into the modification and refinement of the coding schemes. The revision of coding schemes and the process of coder training ceased when intercoder agreement was adequate. The measurement used to assess intercoder agreement will be clarified later in section 3.1.6.

### **Coding protocols and the examined dimensions**

Two coding protocols were developed (see the details in Appendix 1). One was for the coding of TV advertisements (labelled as coding scheme 1) and the other was for the coding of older characters (labelled as coding scheme 2).

The first coding scheme was developed in order to answer questions about the presence of older age groups, the use of older age groups in association with product types and the target age groups of the advertised products. Coding scheme 1 also defines the criteria for coders to determine which TV advertisements need to be coded. Coders were asked to code TV advertisements with at least one recognizable human figure defined as appearing for at least 3 seconds. Coding scheme 1 also includes operational definitions of the following dimensions.

For instance, the appearance of two age groups (50-64 and 65plus age groups) was observed and coded. That is to say, older people in this study are considered as aged 50 and over. There is no consistent operational definition for the identification of older adults in previous content analyses. Some studies regarded the 50+ age group as the target (Hiemstra et al. 1983; Roberts and Zhou 1997; Carrigan and Szmigin 1998) while others focused on the over 60s

(Hummert et al. 1994; Miller et al. 2004; Roy and Harwood 1997; Harris and Feinberg 1977) or the 65 plus age group (Swayne and Greco 1987). Regardless of the differences in the cutoff points (50, 60, or 65), the operational definitions used to determine older people in previous studies were generally similar. They generally include wrinkled appearance, grey hair, social contexts suggestive of older age such as being retired, using mobility aids or being with adult children or grandchildren.

In this study, any characters aged 50 and over were targeted. There is no intention to claim that older age starts at the age of 50 because chronological age associated with being "older" is unclearly defined. Being "older" is a culturally constructed concept (Degnen, 2007). It can well be an option – a category that we can opt in or out of (Jones 2006). The merit to incorporate the 50s as the target of this research is to enable the researcher to observe whether advertisers prefer relatively younger looking models when they depict older adults in advertising. It is reasonable to have this speculation because as mentioned in section 1.4, marketing literature advocates the image of eternal youth as an appeal to the grey market. It is argued that a highlight on youth in advertising may not only be reflected in the use of the young-old adults as models but also in the portrayals of fit, healthy and active older characters (such as golden ager images).

This current research further divided the 50+ age group into two subgroups: the 50-64 and 65 plus age groups so as to contrast the portrayals of the younger and older continuum of older age defined in this study. The 65+ age group is defined as old age in the Taiwanese legal system and it is referred to as

the legal age of retirement in the UK. This cut-off point is used in several previous studies to define older age (Swayne and Greco 1987; Peterson and Ross 1997; Robinson and Skill 1995). Thus, using the age of 65 to draw a line between the younger and older old age groups appears to be appropriate. With this design, within-group variations could be examined in this study (see for instance, Roberts and Zhou 1997; Robinson and Skill 1995).

Another dimension included in the first coding scheme is "Product type", a 9-scale nominal variable. It includes several subcategories, such as food/drink, health/medicine, beauty/hygiene, finance/insurance, public issues, holidays, household necessities/appliances, computer/communication/information, and others. In order to explore "product associations" further (see the justification of this topic in chapter 2.1), a dimension, called, "target age of promoted products", was developed. This is a 3-scale nominal variable, including "younger age preferential", "older age exclusive" (a term borrowed from Thimm 1998a and b, as cited in Williams et al. 2010) and "age incidental" (see note 2).

The second coding book focuses on eliciting information from portrayals of individual older characters rather than TV adverts in general. Examined dimensions are, for instance, gender (female or male), the age level (50-64 or 65+) of every recognizable older character, "role prominence" (a 3-scale nominal variable), "physical settings", and associated "social relationships".

## **Coder training**

In addition to the researcher, two other coders were invited to participate in the coding tasks. They were the researcher's friends and willing to offer help with the coding during their spare time. The main coder (the one who observed all available samples) for the Taiwanese corpus of data was a 30-year-old Taiwanese female and the researcher was the second coder who only coded randomly selected Taiwanese samples for reliability tests. On the other hand, for the UK corpus of data, the researcher was the main coder and a British second coder (a sixty-year-old female) coded a subset of UK samples for the reliability assessment. Having native speakers (either as the main or secondary coder) engaged in the formal coding process has a merit. That is to ensure the interpretation of semantic meanings or cultural connotations of the examined TV ads was appropriate, if the intercoder agreement was adequate (a point to be returned to soon). Neither of the employed coders had academic backgrounds in language and communication research and they were ignorant of the research purposes of this thesis.

The main purpose of coder training was to make coders familiar with the coding rules. Hence, both of the employed coders were required to practise how to apply the developed coding rules based on an extra set of TV advertisements. Intercoder agreement was assessed based on the coding results given by the researcher and the other two coders. The discrepancies were raised for further discussion in order to refine the operational definitions and to improve the coders' understanding of the coding rules.

The coder training process ceased when adequate levels of intercoder

agreement were achieved. In the coder training stage, Krippendorff's alpha (2004) was used to measure intercoder agreement. However, in the formal coding stage, Cohen's kappa was also adopted. More details about these two coefficients are given in the following section.

### **3.1.6 Reliability tests**

In content analysis, reliability is assessed to show the degree of correspondence between coders' judgments and coding and ensure that explicitly defined coding rules are well followed (Riffe, Lacy and Fico 2005:123). An adequate level of intercoder agreement indicates that coders' subjective judgments are minimized and monitored in the coding process.

Two coefficients were chosen to measure intercoder reliability in this research, namely, Cohen's kappa (1960) and Krippendorff's alpha (2004). Cohen's kappa is a widely used reliability coefficient in content analysis (Perrault and Leigh 1989; Zwick 1988). Krippendorff's alpha (2004) is a coefficient developed more recently and with more flexibility. It takes into account chance agreement and missing values. It is applicable to scenarios with multiple coders and handles the assessment of all types of variables (not only nominal but also ordinal, interval and ratio variables). Krippendorff's alpha is not so widely used due to the complex calculation but it is well regarded (Neuendorf 2002:151).

As claimed by Krippendorff, content analysts can rely on variables with reliability levels above  $\alpha = .80$ . However, it is also appropriate to draw tentative conclusions about variables with reliability levels between  $\alpha = .67$  and  $\alpha = .80$

(Krippendorff 2004:241). As for Cohen's kappa, it is suggested that a degree of .80 or greater is considered reliable (Popping 1988).

As to the sample size and selection for reliability tests, Wimmer and Dominick (2003) suggest that between 10% and 25% of the coded content should be adequate. It is also claimed that using 5% and 7% of the total samples is an acceptable sampling size for reliability tests (i.e. Kaid and Wadsworth 1989). Given the above statements, 10% of the overall coded samples (173 UK TV ads, 232 Taiwanese TV ads, 18 UK older characters, and 35 Taiwanese older characters) were randomly selected for intercoder agreement tests.

Krippendorff's alpha (Krippendorff 2004:222) is defined by the following equation:  $\alpha = 1 - Do/De$ , where "Do" indicates a measure of the observed disagreement and "De" stands for a measure of the expected disagreement. The formula of Cohen's kappa is  $Kappa = (Po - Pe) / (1 - Pe)$  where "Po" indicates observed agreement and "Pe" means expected agreement. Both coefficients apply to nominal data. Table 3-1 and 3-2 display the reliability coefficients for various dimensions based on the selected UK and Taiwanese coding results.

Table 3-1 Results of intercoder agreement tests based on UK codings

data	variables	Krippendorff's alpha	Cohen's kappa
UK	the presence of the 50-64 age group	0.96	0.96
UK	the presence of the 65+ age group	0.89	0.89
UK	Product types	0.97	0.97
UK	Target age levels of products	0.86	0.86
UK	Gender	1	1
UK	Age levels of older characters	0.89	0.89
UK	Role prominence	0.73	0.72
UK	Work settings	1	1
UK	Home/indoor settings	0.86	0.85
UK	Outdoor settings	1	1
UK	Entertainment contexts	1	1
UK	Public space	0.77	0.77
UK	Studio/unclear settings	1	1
UK	Intergenerational relationships	1	1
UK	friends	1	1
UK	spouse	1	1
UK	strangers	0.86	0.85
UK	Being alone	1	1
UK	Service relationships	0.77	0.77

Table 3-2 Results of intercoder agreement tests based on Taiwanese codings

data	variables	Krippendorff's alpha	Cohen's kappa
TW	the presence of the 50-64 age group	0.77	0.77
TW	the presence of the 65+ age group	0.83	0.83
TW	Product types	0.95	0.95
TW	Target age levels of products	0.96	0.96
TW	Gender	1	1
TW	Age levels of older characters	0.70	0.70
TW	Role prominence	0.77	0.77
TW	Work settings	1	1
TW	Home/indoor settings	0.94	0.94
TW	Outdoor settings	1	1
TW	Medical settings	1	1
TW	Public space	0.84	0.84
TW	Studio/unclear settings	1	1
TW	Intergenerational relationships	1	1
TW	friends	0.89	0.89
TW	spouse	1	1
TW	colleagues	1	1
TW	strangers	0.80	0.80
TW	Being alone	1	1

Alpha and Kappa coefficients could not be computed for some dimensions based on the selected matches of coding results. These include the categories of entertainment, religious, educational contexts and romantic relationships in the assessments of Taiwanese coding results and medical settings, religious settings, educational contexts, romantic relationships and colleagues in the tests of UK codings. This is because the coding matches for the above dimensions only show one value. That is to say, both coders assigned the observed content to only one category and in this case, the coefficient could not be produced. However, this also means that there was perfect agreement between the coders in terms of percentages.

### **3.1.7 Statistical approaches to the coding results**

The generated coding results were analysed with the aid of SPSS. This section explains what statistical methods were adopted and why.

The Pearson chi-square test is used to measure whether the relationship of two nominal/ categorical variables is significant. Hence, it was employed to measure the same relationship between product types and the use of older age groups, as well as how target age levels of products are associated with the use of older age groups in TV advertisements. In addition, the Pearson chi-square tests were also used to assess the relationships between the age of older characters and a number of nominal variables such as role prominence, social relationships, and physical settings. The associations between role prominence of older characters and target age levels of products were also examined, using the Pearson chi-square test. Furthermore, the Pearson chi-square tests helped to reveal whether there were associations between all examined dimensions

and the nominal variable: "culture" (Taiwan or UK, a two-scale nominal variable).

In a 2x2 contingency table, it is easier to explain the nature of a significant chi-square result by observing the cell percentages or counts. However, as for larger contingency tables, it is rather difficult. As claimed by Field (2009:698-699), observing the standardized residuals can help analysts to break down a significant Pearson chi-square test and identify which cells contribute the significant associations between two nominal variables.

A standardized residual is the difference between the observed and expected frequency divided by the square root of the expected frequency. The equation for chi-square includes the sum of standardized residuals (actually, they are squared to make positive values). Given that, as explained by Field (2009:699), standardized residuals are directly relevant to the chi-square statistics and thus they can indicate which standardized residual(s) contributes mainly to the overall significant association measured by a chi-square test. He continues to argue that the following guidelines could be followed to assess the level of significance of standardized residuals (see note 3) in a chi-square test:

- (1) the significance is at  $p < 0.05$  level if the value of the standardized residual, regarded as a z score, lies outside of  $\pm 1.96$ ;
- (2) the significance is at  $p < 0.01$  level if the value of the standardized residual lies outside of  $\pm 2.58$
- (3) the significance is at  $p < 0.001$  level if the value of the standardized residual lies outside of  $\pm 3.29$

Hence, each significant association measured by Pearson Chi-square test in this current study was further investigated using the above guidelines.

Significant chi-square tests with more than 20% of expected frequencies below 5 were particularly reported in order to note the mitigated statistical power as a consequence of this phenomenon (Field 2009:692).

Moreover, another statistical approach employed in this study was the binomial goodness-of-fit tests. A goodness-of-fit test is appropriate when the researcher seeks to compare a sample distribution with a hypothetical one (Kinnear and Gray 2004:188). Binomial goodness-of-fit tests were applied to dichotomous nominal data. Therefore, the use of binomial goodness-of-fit tests in this study was to measure whether older age groups were relatively underrepresented compared to their presence in the population and whether numbers of older characters vary significantly between genders.

The findings of this content analysis are reported in chapter 4. The following two sections will turn to the other two research approaches used in this thesis and the discussion as to how they could complement content analysis for studying media representations of older people.

### **3.2 Constant Comparative approach of qualitative analysis**

As discussed in chapter 2.2, an alternative to the method of content analysis method was suggested so that the researcher could develop a set of prototypes from the data to describe the examined media representations of older adults. Section 3.2 presents the rationale in more depth as to this alternative research design. This is the constant comparative approach of qualitative analysis, one part of a research methodology called the "Grounded Theory Method" (GT).

#### **3.2.1 The rationale of Grounded Theory**

The constant comparative method is a term which predated GT because it was introduced in Glaser's article in 1965 (Glaser 1965) and later incorporated into the Grounded Theory Method (Glaser and Strauss 1967). The constant comparative method is conducted to discover plausible categories, properties and hypotheses about problems (Glaser and Strauss 1967:104) from the examined data. It functions as the main intellectual tool in a GT study (Tesch 1990:96). In order to know more about the constant comparative approach of qualitative analysis, the rationale of Grounded Theory has to be understood.

The Grounded Theory Method was first introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as an alternative to the quantitative research paradigm, which emphasizes deductive research rationales. In a deductive research design, hypotheses or predictions of results are formed on the basis of existing theories and tested so as to confirm or refute various theoretical tenets. The Grounded Theory Method, on the other hand, is a method designed to generate new theories inductively from the original data. In short, the fundamental objective

of a grounded theory study is to “discover” new hypotheses and theories, rather than to “verify or test” them (such as in many quantitative studies) (Glaser 1965: 437).

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998:15), the ultimate outcomes of a grounded theory study should be theories comprising sets of well-developed concepts and statements referring to the relationships between the defining concepts. The quality of a theory generated with the use of GT, as Glaser (1978:4-5; 1992:15) claims, can be assessed in terms of four criteria, namely, goodness of fit, work, relevance and modifiability. Because conceptual categories and the properties for each concept are carefully induced from the data, they “fit”. A theory which is grounded from the original data “works” because it has the capacity to explain or predict the investigated behaviours or phenomena. By “relevance”, Glaser means that the generated categories and properties reflect actual processes and problems in the research setting. The characteristic of “modification” indicates the allowed openness for modifying the emergent categories and properties when conditions change or when new data present variations in the analytical process.

In sum, researchers who employ GT are those who would like to discover concepts, properties and a theory closely reflective of what is going on in the examined data. They do not test existing theoretical models by introducing a new set of data. This kind of analytical stance is consistent with the rationale stated in 2.2.3 for the development of research question 22 (what character types can be identified in the portrayals of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV ads).

### **3.2.2 Coding procedures**

Grounded Theory entails a number of operational procedures which are set to help researchers conduct systematic comparisons, develop conceptual categories about a phenomenon, draw boundaries of emerging categories, assign data segments to appropriate categories and identify defining properties of each category (Tesch 1990:96). The operational procedures were first put as "the Constant Comparative Method" by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their co-authored book "The Discovery of Grounded Theory". Generally speaking, the Constant Comparative Method could be divided into four stages, including comparing incidents (in this study, an incident is each older adult depicted in advertising) applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory and writing the theory (Glaser 1965; Glaser and Strauss 1967:105). Nevertheless, because Glaser and Strauss subsequently developed their own version of Grounded Theory (Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998), more concepts and terminology regarding coding and data sampling in Grounded Theory were rendered. Since GT was first introduced by Glaser and Strauss, the Grounded Theory Method has been evolving (see note 4). Only a brief summary of Glaser's version will be presented here so as to give a general impression about the procedures operated in a grounded theory study. However, there is no intention to suggest that Glaser's version is better than others' approaches of GT (i.e. Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998; Charmaz, 2000).

#### **Open coding**

Open coding, according to Glaser (1992: 38-48; 1978:56-6) is the initial step of a grounded theory study. It begins without preconceptions as to what

will emerge from the data. In open coding, data are broken down into comparable incidents or segments for comparisons. This process is mainly for the discovery of concepts which are labelled with appropriate codes (open codes). Conceptual patterns in the compared incidents are given names as categories (basically more abstract concepts). Various properties of a category can be identified by comparing the dissimilarities of the associated incidents or data segments.

### **Selective coding**

Selective coding, according to Glaser (Glaser 1978:61; 1992:75), is a step commenced when a core category is identified. A core category accounts for the majority of variations in the examined data. At this stage, the analyst delimits coding and collects more samples (see theoretical sampling later) pertinent only to the core category.

### **Theoretical sampling**

Glaser considers the identification of a core category or core process to be essential because, in his opinion, it guides the act of theoretical sampling (Glaser 1978:36-54; 1992:101-107; 1998:157-162), which purports to the saturation (when no more new conceptual categories can be identified and relations between categories are developed) of a grounded theory. The philosophy of theoretical sampling means that in a typical GT study, analysis and data collection occur simultaneously. As previously stated, further data collection in GT should be guided by the emerging categories (or the main category process if identified). Theoretical sampling is taken for theoretical saturation and can happen at the beginning of the coding process as long as

the analyst knows precisely what samples are right to provide new input to the emerging theory.

### **Theoretical coding**

The last coding process in a grounded theory study is called “theoretical coding” (Glaser 1978:72-82). This part of coding yields theoretical codes which conceptualise how categories emerging through constant comparisons in the open and selective coding processes are related to each other. The ultimate purpose of theoretical coding is to articulate the relational connections amongst conceptual categories in the forms of hypotheses which are integrated into a grounded theory. Glaser proposed 18 coding families (see the details in Glaser 1978:74-82) which can help a grounded analyst to identify the potential dimensions in the relations between generated codes. However, it is emphasised that such dimensions should not be expected before emergence (Glaser 1992:46).

### **Analytical units**

Conceptualising media representations of older adults in TV advertisements using GT demands breaking down of multimodal messages as they simultaneously contribute to the meaning construction. In GT, “all is data” (Glaser and Holton 2004) and as a tool guiding conceptualisation of data, GT works well with both qualitative, quantitative, textual or non-textual materials (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter 2000:75).

### **3.2.3 A modified Grounded Theory**

The above descriptions present a complete picture as to how to carry out a

Grounded Theory analysis in the most rigid way. Nevertheless, not every step was considered necessary in this current study, but only the notion of constant comparisons for the emergence of variations and the open coding procedure to generate conceptual labels (categories and the defining properties).

The whole package of GT was not needed because the main target of this current study was to discover “concepts”, rather than a “theory”. By “concepts”, the results generated to categorize or conceptualise media representations of older characters in the examined data are referred to. By “theory”, it means the relational clarification between concepts (i.e. Strauss and Corbin 1998:15). In this case, it directs us towards the identification of interrelations of the emergent character types in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. Nevertheless, such an issue was not a question to be answered in this current study. Hence, selective coding and theoretical sampling were not taken into account. That is to say, a modified version of Grounded Theory Method was utilized in this current study (for research questions 22~24).

There is an inclination in this study to avoid using the term “Grounded Theory” but instead use “constant comparative approach of qualitative analysis” as the method used to answer research question 22. Referring to GT is known as a convenient way to justify the engagement in qualitative data analyses with some form of coding and interpretation for the purpose of “building theory inductively from data” (Hood 2007:152). Despite that, since the whole package of GT was not practised, this term “GT” should be more carefully referred to so as to avoid disputes. Nevertheless, its fundamental rationale fits the research scenario of developing categories and concepts to

describe stereotyping patterns in the media representations of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements.

There will be more details as to the selected samples and the operation of open coding in chapter 5.1. Findings as to how many types of older character can be identified in UK and TV advertisements as well as the similarities and differences are reported in chapter 5.

### **3.3 The use of critical discourse analysis**

As suggested in the conclusion of section 2.3, critical discourse analysis can be a useful tool to gain insights into discursive representations of older people/older age in advertising texts promoting over 50s life insurance products in the UK and Taiwan. Section 6.3 will elaborate issues as to samples, transcription, and how the analyses were conducted.

#### **3.3.1 CDA as a complementary approach to content analysis**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was adopted as a complementary approach to content analysis for various reasons. The research design under the method of content analysis, as described in 3.1, quantifies segments such as visual properties of the TV ads in this study in accordance with a set of pre-determined coding rules. The generated outcomes are delivered numerically and statistically (see details in chapter 4). The merit of using content analysis is to clearly demonstrate the distributional patterns of the examined media content. However, only the manifest textual content is examined (Berelson 1952). As argued by Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter (2000:67), it is recognized that contextual knowledge is also required in the process of content analytical coding but it is difficult to estimate how much it influences the meaning interpretation in a content analysis. However, this can to a certain extent be dealt with, using CDA.

Through the perspective of CDA, the analyst will be able to explore certain textual properties and give special attention to how they are realized as meaningful in relation to various levels of contexts (in which the texts are produced), such as discoursal settings, cultural/social contexts and previously

generated texts (see intertextuality Fairclough 2001). This point will be elaborated on later.

### **3.3.2 Agendas of CDA**

Critical discourse analysts are known for their commitment to the social nature of discourse. They are concerned about power relations, inequality, social problems and ideologies enacted, legitimated and reproduced in spoken or written texts (van Dijk 1993:131-2). Hence, as Wodak (1995) described, CDA has an explicit political commitment and shows a strong problem orientation. Due to its concern about the relationship between language and society, CDA is usually interdisciplinary in nature.

CDA sees language use as a form of "social practice" and presumes dialectic relations between discursive events and the wider socio-cultural contexts in which they are produced (Fairclough 2001; Fairclough and Wodak 1997). Critical discourse analysts are not interested in language for its own sake but its functions in relation to social maintenance and change (Bloor and Bloor 2007:2). CDA, hence, carries an explicitly sociopolitical orientation and such an orientation leads the practitioners to address a number of issues such as, gender/sexism (e.g. Caldas-Coulthard 1993 and 1996), racism (e.g. van Dijk 1987; 1991; 1992), the discourse of politicians (e.g. Fairclough 2001; Wodak 1989) and ageism (e.g. Coupland 2001; Coupland 2007). As van Dijk (1994: 436) puts it, the ultimate scholarly aim of CDA is not only to understand the world of discourse but also to change it. Critical discourse analysts are hence committed to "empowering the powerless, giving voices to the voiceless, exposing power abuse and mobilising people to remedy social wrongs"

(Blommaert 2005:25).

### **3.3.3 Mass communication, ideology and meanings of ageing**

Ideologies, according to Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 275), are “particular ways of representing and constructing society which reproduce unequal relations of power, relations of dominance and exploitations”. This definition explains why ideology is a commonly investigated topic in CDA (Kress and Hodge 1979; Fairclough 1992, 2001; Wodak 1989; van Dijk 1998). As Blommaert (2005:163) argues, ideas cannot become ideologies unless they are reproduced and manipulated by power-regulating systems or agents, such as the mass media. Hence, it is one of the research goals in this current study to understand how the examined advertising texts work ideologically.

Fairclough (2001, ch3) has raised concerns regarding the “hidden power” of media discourse. Even though there is a spatial and temporal disjunction in a mass media communicative event, interpretations of meanings, like those in face-to-face verbal interactions, require negotiation between the message sender and receiver (Simpson 1993:121-2). In order to arrive at the “mediated quasi-interaction” (Thompson 1990:28) in media communication, producers of media texts are expected to bear in mind whom to address and presume what ideal interpreters are like. They, hence, must construct certain “subject positions” (Fairclough 2001: 41) for the expected message recipients to take up. The success of this process very much depends on common-sense assumptions. They are like certain ideological resources (known as “members’ resources, “MR”, Fairclough 2001:65) that viewers/readers own and draw upon in the process of meaning interpretation. This is with respect to how advertising texts

work. As Coupland (2007:40) maintains, advertising texts are persuasive because they “tap into pre-existing ideologies and stimulate concerns and aspirations consistent with these ideologies”. Indeed, if the main purpose of advertising texts is to legitimize the conveyed messages, the producer must win consent from the viewers/readers. Ideologies then become the efficient mechanisms used by advertisers to achieve this goal (Fairclough 2001:28) and the means through which the power of mass media is practised.

As discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.3.2), over 50s life insurance products were targeted to examine how the target customers are positioned to perceive their own age and what social attitudes/stereotypes are reinforced so as to enhance the marketing power of the adverts. The main focus is also to look into how advertising texts of over 50s life insurance products work ideologically. It allows us to discover what ideologies about older age are naturalized and normalized to legitimate the promoted products. Ideological communication, as pointed out by van Dijk (1998:274-5), encapsulates manipulation, mind control and consensus drawn in the interests of those in power. Should ageist ideologies be embedded in advertising discourses of over 50s life insurance products, they could be discovered with CDA. It is also important not to assume this to happen in advance, but based on what the data reveals.

Even though critical discourse analysts share the common commitment to combat social problems and inequalities, it can appear considerably confusing when it comes to the details as to how to conduct such analysis (see more about the critique in ch7). What is to be presented below is the methodological diversity in the programme of CDA, followed by a discussion on Fairclough’s

framework which was adopted in this thesis.

### **3.3.4 Trends in CDA**

CDA should not be perceived as a research method as there is no normative way of doing it. It can only be considered as a shared perspective on how to do linguistic, semiotic or discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1993:31). CDA is reflexive in nature due to the emphasis on the exploration of micro-macro relations between texts and society (Flowerdew 1999). Even though CDA cannot be described in terms of conventional analytic procedures, there are several trends evolved in the programme of CDA (see reviews in Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Wodak 1995).

For example, van Dijk proposed a social-cognitive model of CDA, in which he addressed the need to integrate "cognition" when studying the relations between discourse structures and social structures (van Dijk 1989 and 2001). Critical linguists (Fowler, Kress, Hodge and Trew 1979; Kress and Hodge 1979), influenced by Halliday's (1978; 1994) systemic functional linguistic theory, regard choices of grammatical systems as meaningful and ideological. Furthermore, more methodological diversity emerged within CDA as special attention was given to genres, fields (van Leeuwen 1993) and visual images or multimodal semiosis in discourse analyses (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). Wodak and her colleagues (Wodak, Pelican, Nowak, Gruber, De Cillia and Mitten 1990; Wodak and Matouschek 1993) advocate a "discourse-historical method" of CDA, which highlights the importance of integrating all available background information in the interpretation of text production and comprehension. Moreover, Fairclough (1995 and 2001) theorizes his way of doing CDA in a

three-dimensional framework which will now be elaborated on.

### **3.3.5 Fairclough's framework of CDA**

Fairclough's framework, influenced by Halliday's systemic-functional linguistics (Halliday 1978; 1994), centres around multiple functions of language. As Halliday argues (1978; 1994), every text simultaneously displays ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. Likewise, every text, according to Fairclough (1995), simultaneously constitutes social identities, social relations and knowledge/beliefs about the world. In order to explore the three constitutive elements of a text, his approach to CDA consists of three interrelated dimensions, namely, "text", "discourse practice" and "sociocultural practice" (Fairclough 2001; 1995).

Text, as defined by Fairclough (2001:20), is regarded as the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event. A text can be multi-semiotic and thus visual images and sounds also deserve attention. Analyzing textual production in a communicative event is considered as the stage of "description" in Fairclough's framework of CDA. Text analysis, within CDA, basically is consistent with traditional forms of linguistic analysis, addressing aspects, such as vocabulary, the use of metaphors, grammar, cohesion devices, turn-taking, choices of modality or moods, thematic structure of a text and the use of active and passive voice (Fairclough 2001, 91-116).

"Discourse" (an abstract noun), in Fairclough's (2001:20) view, refers to the whole process of social interaction which involves production and interpretation of a text. He (2001; 1995) sees the interaction between textual properties and

social structures as an indirect one and what mediates between them is, as he labels, "discourse practice". Text is a part of discourse because textual features can only become meaningful when they are practised in social interactions (discourse). In order to analyse "discourse practice", the analyst has to identify what "members' resources" (MR) are brought in the process that texts are produced and interpreted (Fairclough 2001:118). Members' resources, according to Fairclough (2001: 9 and 20), are what people have in their heads, such as the representations people have stored in their long-term memories about languages, properties of objects in the world, expectations of sequences in a discursive event. What CDA analysts do at this stage (the stage of interpretation), according to Fairclough (2001:118), is to interpret the dialectical interplay between the formal linguistic cues and the activated MR in a text.

The third stage in Fairclough's (2001:135-9) framework of CDA turns attention to "explaining" how discourse works as a social practice. This stage shows how a discourse sustains or changes social structures cumulatively through the reproduction of certain ideologies (or MR) in the process of text production and interpretations. This stage puts emphasis on the social effects of discourses, through which power is enhanced or struggled against.

### **3.3.6 Why Fairclough's framework?**

Fairclough's model of CDA was employed for the discourse analysis of UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements promoting over 50s life insurance products (see more about the samples and transcription in chapter 6.1). There are several merits of following Fairclough's model of doing CDA.

First of all, as discussed in chapter one, the rationale of this thesis is the concern about the social impact of ageist media messages. This rationale is, to a certain extent, in line with what is focused on in the stage of explanation in Fairclough's framework of CDA, namely, to address the social effects of discourse. It draws the analyst to relate relevant sociological theories to the examined advertising texts and examine how the discursive patterns identified in the advertising texts reproduce ageist ideologies existing in the wider social context.

Second, 'the stage of interpretation' in Fairclough's model of CDA examines texts in terms of what cultural resources are drawn upon and taken for granted in the process of text production and interpretation. This stage could help the analyst to identify the reproduced social beliefs and cultural norms imposed upon readers/viewers of the examined advertising texts. These cultural resources could be utilized to infer the nature of media representations of older age/ older people in the two cultural contexts that I concentrate on.

In conclusion, media representations of older persons and older age were approached via the perspective of CDA (Fairclough's model). The analyses are reported in chapter 6 as answers to research questions 25-27 (see section 2.3).

## **Chapter 4 Content analysis of portrayals of older people in TV advertisements**

### **4.1 Introduction: Method, research questions and data**

As stated in chapter 2.1, one of the research tools used in this thesis is content analysis. It was employed to examine the various dimensions monitored in previous studies and to enable comparisons with previous studies (as reviewed in chapter 2.1). This chapter reports answers to research questions 1 to 21 regarding the portrayals of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements along a number of dimensions, such as, the degree of presence, role prominence, relations to target audience, product associations, and social and physical contexts.

As explained in chapter 3.1, samples for this current content analysis were obtained through recording TV programmes (broadcast on UK and Taiwanese terrestrial channels) for six hours (two randomly selected hours in the morning, afternoon and evening) on every six days in four randomly selected months (February, June, August and December) in 2007. Coders involved in this content analysis were asked to identify TV advertisements with human figures which appear for at least 3 seconds. The above process rendered 1731 UK and 2318 Taiwanese TV advertisements. Coders were also requested to identify characters aged 50 and over. As a result, 117 UK and 271 Taiwanese TV advertisements were deemed to feature the 50+ age group. Furthermore, 180 characters in UK TV ads and 349 in the Taiwanese data were considered to fall in that age range. The above-mentioned TV ads and older characters were the samples selected for further analyses.

There was no intention to exclude repetitions in this study as repetitions contributed to the overall impression the audience built in the long term of viewing TV ads. This operational decision was made to be consistent with previous studies (e.g. Swayne and Greco 1987; Harwood and Roy 1999). As to the distinctive qualities or themes conveyed in the examined data, these will be investigated in chapter 5, with the repetitions controlled.

Findings to research questions 1-21 will be discussed in the following sections. Section 4.2 reports the results derived from the UK data while section 4.3 focuses on the analyses of the Taiwanese data. Cross-cultural comparisons are discussed in section 4.4. Each research question is presented as the heading and is followed immediately by the answers.

## **4.2 Portrayals of older people in UK TV advertisements**

### **RQ1: To what extent are older age groups represented in UK TV advertisements?**

Of the 1731 UK TV adverts with human figures, 4.9% (N=84) featured the 50-64 age group and only 2.6% (N=45) showed the 65-plus age group. In terms of percentages, the 50-64 age group was presented to a greater extent in UK TV advertisements than the 65-plus age group. This trend corresponds to findings from Robinson and Skill's (1995) study.

However, according to the 2003-based population projections (Government Actuary's Department 2009), the 50-64 age group made up 18% of the overall UK population in 2007, while the 65-plus age group constituted

16%. In order to assess whether these two age groups were underrepresented to a statistically significant level, binominal goodness-of-fit tests were conducted. Given 0.18 and 0.16 as the expected values, significant results (both p value<0.001) were identified. They indicated that the 50-64 and 65-plus age groups were underrepresented in UK TV advertisements as opposed to their presence in the UK population.

**RQ2: How is the presence of older age groups/characters associated with product types in UK TV advertisements?**

The distributions of various product types in UK TV advertisements featuring the 50-64 and the 65-plus age groups are displayed in table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Frequency of UK TV ads by product type and age

	UK ads with the 50-64 age group		UK ads with the 65+ age group	
	No.	Within group %	No.	Within group %
Food/drink	11	13.1%	10	22.2%
Health/medicine	20	23.8%	2	4.4%
Beauty/hygiene	13	15.5%	10	22.2%
Finance/insurance	13	15.5%	3	6.7%
Public issues	5	6.0%	5	11.1%
Holidays	0	0%	1	2.2%
Household products	7	8.3%	13	28.9%
Computer/communication /information	9	10.7%	1	2.2%
Miscellaneous	6	7.1%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100%</b>

UK TV adverts featured the 50-64 age group most frequently for

health/medicine, beauty/hygiene and finance/insurance products and least frequently for holidays and household products. As to the 65+ age group, it was depicted most frequently for household, beauty/hygiene, and food/drink products and least often for holidays, computer/communication/information products. However, in order to examine whether the use of these two age groups was related to the advertised products to a statistically significant degree, Pearson Chi-square tests were used and standard residuals were observed to break down significant associations (if applicable).

In the chi-square test for the association between products and the use of the 50-64 group, two product categories were excluded. This was because, first, the "miscellaneous" category was not informative and second, there was a zero count for "holidays" (see table 4-1). Given this, a significant association between the two variables was reported ( $X^2(6) = 57.27, p < 0.001$ ). As shown in table 4-2, there were certain significant residuals which could suggest which cell in the 2x7 contingency table contributed to the significant result. That is, UK TV advertisements showed the 50-64 age group for health/medicine products (standard residual=5.7,  $0 < 0.001$ ) and public issues (see note 5) (standard residual= 3.1;  $p < 0.01$ ) significantly more than expected but for household products significantly less than expected (standard residual=-2.9,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Furthermore, a significant association between the use of the 65+ age group and various products ("miscellaneous" was excluded) in UK TV adverts was measured ( $X^2(7) = 31.85, p < 0.001$ ). Two significant residuals were identified (see table 4-3). One was positive and significant, which suggested

that UK TV advertisements featured the 65+ age group significantly more than expected for public issues (std. residual= 4.8,  $p < 0.001$ ). Another significant but negative standard residual ( $= -2.3$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) indicated that the 65+ age group was depicted for computer/communication/information and communication products significantly less than expected in UK TV adverts.

Table 4-2: Chi-square test: UK TV ads with the 50-64 group by product type

product types		Numbers of UK characters		total
		with the 50-64 group	without the 50-64 group	
food/drink	count	11	249	260
	expected count	13.7	246.3	
	std. residual	-0.7	0.2	
health/medicine	count	20	94	114
	expected count	6	108	
	std. residual	5.7	-1.3	
beauty/hygiene	count	13	271	284
	expected count	15	269	
	std. residual	-0.5	0.1	
finance/insurance	count	13	159	172
	expected count	9.1	162.9	
	std. residual	1.3	-0.3	
public issues	count	5	21	26
	expected count	0.3	24.6	
	std. residual	3.1	-0.7	
household products	count	7	375	382
	expected count	20.2	361.8	
	std. residual	-2.9	0.7	
computer/information/communication	count	9	231	240
	expected count	12.7	227.3	
	std. residual	-1.0	0.2	
total of older characters	count	78	1400	1478

$X^2(6) = 57.27$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ; "holidays" and "miscellaneous" categories excluded from the test

Table 4-3 Chi-square test: UK TV ads with the 65+ group by product type

product types		Numbers of UK characters		total
		with the 65+ group	without the 65+ group	
food/drink	count	10	250	260
	expected count	7.8	252.2	
	std. residual	0.8	-0.1	
health/medicine	count	2	112	114
	expected count	3.4	110.6	
	std. residual	-0.8	0.1	
beauty/hygiene	count	10	274	284
	expected count	8.5	275.5	
	std. residual	0.5	-0.1	
finance/insurance	count	3	169	172
	expected count	5.1	166.9	
	std. residual	-0.9	0.2	
public issues	count	5	21	26
	expected count	0.8	25.2	
	std. residual	4.8	-0.8	
holidays	count	1	24	25
	expected count	0.7	24.3	
	std. residual	0.3	25.0	
household products	count	13	369	382
	expected count	11.4	370.6	
	std. residual	0.5	382.0	
computer/information/communication	count	1	239	240
	expected count	7.2	232.8	
	std. residual	-2.3	240.0	
<b>Total</b>	count	45	1458	1503

$X^2(7) = 31.85, p < 0.001$ ; miscellaneous category was excluded.

The analyzed units so far were TV adverts (featuring older age groups) but those in the following analyses were “older characters”. In coding scheme 2 (see details in appendix 1), each older character (aged 50 and over, N=180 in the UK data) was judged in terms of the advertised products. Hence, the association between the age of each character (a 2-scale nominal variable, “50-64” or “65+”) and the advertised product types could be measured, using a Chi-square test.

Table 4-4 numbers of UK older characters by age and product type

product types		Numbers of UK characters		total
		50-64	65+	
food/drink	count	10	17	27
	within group %	8.1%	30.4%	15.0%
health/medicine	count	40	4	44
	within group %	32.3%	7.1%	24.4%
beauty/hygiene	count	22	10	32
	within group %	17.7%	17.9%	17.8%
finance/insurance	count	17	3	20
	within group %	13.7%	5.4%	11.1%
public issues	count	9	6	15
	within group %	7.3%	10.7%	8.3%
holidays	count	0	1	1
	within group %	0.0%	1.8%	0.6%
household products	count	9	14	23
	within group %	7.3%	25.0%	12.8%
computer/information/ communication	count	11	1	12
	within group %	8.9%	1.8%	6.7%
Miscellaneous	count	6	0	6
	within group %	4.8%	0.0%	3.3%
total of older characters	count	124	56	180

As shown in table 4-4, some cells in the 2x9 contingency table were with zero count. Before conducting the chi-square test, older characters featured for “holidays” and “miscellaneous” were abandoned. A significant association was found between the products advertised and the age levels of older characters in UK TV advertisements ( $\chi^2(6)=37.64$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

Table 4-5 numbers of UK older characters by age and product type

product types		Numbers of UK characters		total
		50-64	65+	
food/drink	count	10	17	27
	expected count	18.6	8.4	
	std. residual	-2.0	2.9	
health/medicine	count	40	4	44
	expected count	30.3	13.7	
	std. residual	1.8	-2.7	
beauty/hygiene	count	22	10	32
	expected count	22	10	
	std. residual	0.0	-0.1	
finance/insurance	count	17	3	20
	expected count	13.8	6.2	
	std. residual	0.9	-1.3	
public issues	count	9	6	15
	expected count	10.3	4.7	
	std. residual	-0.4	0.6	
household products	count	9	14	23
	expected count	15.8	7.2	
	std. residual	-1.7	2.5	
computer/information/ communication	count	11	1	12
	expected count	8.3	3.7	
	std. residual	1.0	-1.4	
total of older characters	count	118	55	173

$\chi^2(6)=37.64$ ;  $p<0.001$  (2 product types, "miscellaneous" and "holiday" were excluded due to the reason of zero count and 7 characters were hence excluded from the test)

According to the significant standardized residuals in table 4-5, the following findings were suggested. First of all, UK characters of the 65-plus age group were portrayed for food/drink products significantly more than expected (std. residual=2.9,  $p<0.01$ ). Second, UK characters in the 50-64 age group were featured for food/drink significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.0,  $p<0.05$ ). Third, UK characters in the 65-plus age group were featured for health/medicine products significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.7;  $p<0.01$ ). Furthermore, UK characters of the 65-plus age group were depicted for household products significantly more than expected (std. residual=2.5,  $p<0.01$ ). The above-mentioned results indicate that in terms of product

associations, within-group variations existed in the portrayals of older people in UK TV ads. The implications are discussed later.

**RQ3: How is the presence of older age groups/characters associated with target age levels of products in UK TV advertisements?**

As shown in table 4-6, no UK TV ads featured the 50-64 age group for “younger-age preferential” products. The 50-64 group was most frequently depicted for age incidental products (4% of all UK TV ads), followed by “older-age exclusive” (0.9%) products. In order to understand whether the presence of the 50-64 age group was associated with the various target age groups of products, a chi-square test was used and the association was measured to be statistically significant ( $X^2(2)=90.39, p<0.001$ ).

Even though there was a zero count in the cell for the “younger age preferential” category, it was not excluded from the chi-square test. There was a consideration that the exclusion of “younger age preferential” category did not change the significant result but would lead to a loss of interesting information regarding the use of 50-64 age group for younger-age preferential products (a point to be clarified later).

As revealed in table 4-6, three significant standard residuals were found. Their implications can be stated as follows. First, UK TV advertisements showed the 50-64 age group for younger age preferential products significantly less than expected (std. residual=-3.3,  $p<0.001$ ). Second, UK TV advertisements featured the 50-64 age group for older age exclusive products significantly more than expected (residual=8.7,  $p<0.001$ ) and, likewise, the numbers of UK

TV ads which did not do so were significantly fewer than expected (std. residual=-2, p<0.05).

Table 4-6 Chi-square test: the use of the 50-64 age group by target age level of products in UK TV ads

target age level of products		Numbers of UK TV adverts		total
		with the 50-64 age group	without the 50-64 age group	
younger age preferential	count	0	221	221
	expected count	10.7	210.3	
	std. residual	-3.3	0.7	
	% of total	0.0%	12.8%	12.8%
older age exclusive	count	15	30	45
	expected count	2.2	42.8	
	std. residual	8.7	-2	
	% of total	0.9%	1.7%	2.6%
age incidental	count	69	1396	1465
	expected count	71.1	1393.9	
	std. residual	-0.2	0.1	
	% of total	4.0%	80.6%	84.6%
total	count	84	1647	1731

$X^2(2)=90.39, p<0.001$

Table 4-7 Chi-square test: the use of the 65+ age group by target age level of products in UK TV ads

target age level of products		Numbers of UK TV adverts		total
		with the 65+ age group	without the 65+ age group	
younger age preferential	count	1	220	221
	expected count	5.7	215.3	
	% of total	0.1%	12.7%	12.8%
	std. residual	-2.0	0.3	
older age exclusive	count	17	28	45
	expected count	1.2	43.8	
	% of total	1.0%	1.6%	2.6%
	std. residual	14.6	-2.4	
age incidental	count	27	1438	1465
	expected count	38.1	1426.9	
	% of total	1.6%	83.1%	84.6%
	std. residual	-1.8	0.3	
total	count	45	1686	1731

$X^2(2)=227.27; p<0.001$

According to the percentages given in table 4-7, UK TV adverts featured the 65+ age group most frequently for age incidental products (1.6% of all UKTV ads), followed by older age exclusive ones (1%) and least frequently for younger age preferential products (0.1%).

The association between the use of the 65+ age group and target age level of products (2x3 contingency) was measured, using the Pearson Chi-square test and a significant result was reported ( $X^2(2)=227.27$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). Furthermore, significant standard residuals (see table 4-7) suggested that UK TV advertisements featured the 65+ age group for younger age preferential products significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.0,  $p<0.05$ ). Moreover, UK TV adverts presented the 65+ age group for older age exclusive products significantly more than expected (std. residual=14.6,  $p<0.001$ ). The frequencies of UK TV ads without the 65+ age group appeared to be significantly fewer than expected as they promoted age exclusive products (std. residual=-2.4;  $p<0.05$ ).

The following analyses focused on the comparisons of the portrayals of UK characters in terms of the association between the "target age group" of advertised products and the variable of "age level" (50-64 or 65+). The analyzed units were UK older characters (N=180) and the results are shown in table 4-8.

Table 4-8 Numbers of UK characters by age and target age level of products

target age level of products		Numbers of UK characters		total
		50-64	65+	
younger age preferential	count	0	1	1
	within group %	0.0%	1.8%	0.6%
older age exclusive	count	24	19	43
	within group %	19.4%	33.9%	23.9%
age incidental	count	100	36	136
	within group %	80.6%	64.3%	75.6%
total	count	124	56	180

According to the within-group percentages in table 4-8, UK characters in the 50-64 and 65+ age groups were featured most often for age incidental and older age exclusive products. Nearly none of them were depicted for younger age preferential ones.

Table 4-9 Chi-square test: UK characters by age and target age level of products

target age level of products		Numbers of UK characters		total
		50-64	65+	
older age exclusive	count	24	19	43
	expected count	29.8	13.2	
	std. residuals	-1.1	1.6	
age incidental	count	100	36	136
	expected count	94.2	41.8	
	std. residuals	0.6	-0.9	
total	count	124	55	179

$X^2(1) = 4.82$ ;  $p < 0.05$ , "younger age preferential" category excluded

A chi-square test (see table 4-9) was conducted to measure whether the age level (a 2-scale nominal variable) of UK older characters was associated with the target age level of advertised products. Due to the zero count (see table 4-8), the category, "younger age preferential" was excluded from the test and a significant result was reported ( $X^2(1) = 4.82$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). In sum, given the

above analyses, it could be argued that as opposed to characters in the 50-64 age group, those aged 65 and over were considered to be the more appropriate older age markers in UK TV advertisements.

#### **RQ4: What is the gender distribution of older characters portrayed in UK TV advertisements?**

As to the gender distribution of characters aged between 50 and 64 (N=124) in UK TV adverts, 63.7% of them were males (N=79) while only 36.3% were females (N=45). For the 65+ age cohort (N=56), 53.6% of them were males (N=30) while 46.4% of them were females (N=26).

According to the percentages, female characters of the two age groups were under-represented to a greater extent as opposed to their male counterparts. However, as measured by binominal goodness-of-fit tests, only the gender distribution in the 50-64 age group varied to a statistically significant level ( $p < 0.01$ ).

#### **RQ5: How are older characters portrayed in terms of role prominence in UK TV advertisements?**

As shown in table 4-10, UK characters aged between 50 and 64 were portrayed most frequently in secondary roles (N=78, 62.9%), followed by major roles (N=45, 36.3%) and least frequently in background roles (N=1, 0.8%). A similar distributional pattern applied to the 65+ age cohort. By observing the within-group percentages, the 50-64 age cohort was more likely to be cast in major and secondary roles and less likely in background roles as oppose to their 65+ counterparts in UK TV ads. A chi-square test was used to

measure the association between “age” and “role prominence” and a significant result was found ( $X^2(2)=8$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). However, this significant association was viewed with more caution due to the exceeding numbers (>20%) of cells with an expected count of less than 5. Despite this issue, a significant and negative standard residual (=2.3;  $p<0.05$ ) suggested that characters aged 65+ in UK TV adverts were depicted more than expected in background roles.

Table 4-10 Chi-square test: association between role prominence and age level of older characters in UK TV ads

age level of characters		role prominence			total
		major	secondary	background	
characters aged 50-64	count	45	78	1	124
	expected count	44.8	75.1	4.1	
	within group %	36.3%	62.9%	0.8%	100.0%
	std. residual	0.0	0.3	-1.5	
characters aged 65+	count	20	31	5	56
	expected count	20.2	33.9	1.9	
	% within age level	35.7%	55.4%	8.9%	100.0%
	std. residual	0.0	-0.5	2.3	
total	count	65	109	6	180
	within group %	36.1%	60.6%	3.3%	100.0%

$X^2(2)=8.00$ ,  $p<0.05$ ; 2 cells (33.3%) with expected count less than 5

The discussions so far for RQ5 seem to indicate that role salience ascribed to older characters in UK TV ads varied by age level and the 50-64 age group was favoured more in this regard. Research question 6 extended the examination of role salience further by relating it to another variable, that is, the target age level of advertised products.

**RQ6: How is role prominence of older characters related to target age levels of advertised products in UK TV advertisements?**

In order to answer research question 6, a chi-square test was used to examine the portrayals of “all” older characters (N=180) in UK TV adverts in terms of the association between the role prominence ascribed to them and the target age levels of the advertised products. The “younger age preferential” category was excluded from the test because of the zero count (see table 4-11). A significant association was found between the two variables. According to table 4-11, two significant standardized residuals were noted to explain what contributed mainly to the significant association. One possible account was that the characters aged 50+ were depicted in major roles for older age exclusive products significantly more than expected (std. residual=3.4;  $p < 0.001$ ). Another explanation was that the characters aged 50-64 were featured in secondary roles for older age exclusive products significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.3,  $p < 0.05$ ) in UK TV ads.

Table 4-11 Number of older characters (50+) by role prominence and target age level of advertised products in UK TV adverts

target age level / role prominence		Number of older characters aged 50+			total
		major	secondary	background	
younger age preferential	count	0	1	0	1
	within group %	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
age exclusive	count	29	14	0	43
	expected count	15.6	25.9	1.4	43.0
	within group %	36.3%	60.2%	3.3%	100.0%
	std. residual	3.4	-2.3	-1.2	
age incidental	count	36	94	6	136
	expected count	49.1	82.1	4.6	136.0
	% within age level	36.1%	60.4%	3.4%	100.0%
	std. residual	-1.9	1.3	0.7	
total	count	65	109	6	180
	within group %	36.1%	60.6%	3.3%	100.0%

$\chi^2(4)=24.24$ ;  $p<0.001$ ; 2 cells (33.3%) with expected count less than 5; "younger age preferential" category was excluded from the chi-square test.

In order to explore how the significant association was contributed by age, the same test was conducted again respectively for both of the two older age groups. The results indicated that the chi-square test based on the portrayals of 124 characters aged 50-64 was significant (see details in table 4-12). However, no significant result was found based on the portrayals of characters aged 65 and over. Compared to table 4-11, a similar distributional pattern was identified in table 4-12. Given the above discussion, older people in UK TV were more likely to be depicted in important roles especially for the age exclusive products and less likely cast in major roles for products targeting the general public. This trend was manifested more clearly in the 50-64 subgroup.

Table 4-12 Number of characters (50-64) by role prominence and target age level of advertised products in UK TV adverts

target age level / role prominence		Number of UK character aged 50-64			total
		major	secondary	background	
age exclusive	count	22	2	0	24
	expected count	8.7	15.1	0.2	
	within group %	91.7%	8.3%	0.0%	100.0%
	std. residual	4.5	-3.4	-0.4	
age incidental	count	23	76	1	100
	expected count	36.3	62.9	0.8	
	% within age level	23.0%	76.0%	1.0%	100.0%
	std. residual	-2.2	1.7	0.2	
total	count	45	78	1	124
	within group %	36.3%	62.9%	0.8%	100.0%

$\chi^2(2)=39.48$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; 2 cells (33.3%) with expected count less than 5.

**RQ7: What physical settings are older characters associated with in UK TV advertisements?**

According to table 4-13, characters in the 50-64 age group in UK TV adverts were most likely depicted in outdoor (N=44, 35.5%), home/indoor (N=24, 19.4%) and entertainment (N=22, 17.7%) contexts. As to characters of the 65+ age group, they were most frequently depicted in home/indoor (N=23, 41.4%), public places (N=16, 28.6%) and outdoor (N=9, 16.1%) settings. Nevertheless, different from characters of the 50-64 age group, those aged 65+ were rarely depicted in entertainment contexts. None of the characters of both age groups appeared in education, medical or religious settings in UK TV advertisements.

Table 4-13 Chi-square tests: associations between age levels and physical settings

settings	UK characters aged 50-64		UK characters aged 65+		chi-square association (each setting and age levels) (2x2)
	N	within group %	N	within group %	
home	24	19.4%	23	41.1%	$X^2(1)=9.430, p=0.002$
outdoor	44	35.5%	9	16.1%	$X^2(1)=6.998, p=0.008$
public space	14	11.3%	16	28.6%	$X^2(1)=8.295, p=0.004$
entertainment	22	17.7%	1	1.8%	$X^2(1)=8.813, p=0.003$
working	17	13.7%	7	12.5%	not significant
education	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	not significant
medical	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	not significant
religious	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	not significant
unclear	8	6.5%	4	7.1%	not significant
total	124		56		

Pearson chi-square tests were used to assess the association between the "age levels" of older people and the various physical contexts in UK TV adverts. As table 4-13 shows, the 65+ age cohort appeared in indoor/home ( $X^2(1)=9.43, p<0.01$ ) and public settings ( $X^2(1)=8.295, p<0.01$ ) significantly more than

their counterparts aged between 50 and 64. On the other hand, UK characters aged between 50 and 64 were featured significantly more in outdoor settings ( $X^2(1)=6.998$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and entertainment contexts ( $X^2(1)=8.813$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) than their counterparts of the 65+ age group. Further discussion as to the implications is given later at the end of this section.

**RQ8: What social relationships are older characters associated with in UK TV advertisements?**

Table 4-14 Chi-square tests: associations between age levels and various social relationships

relationships	UK characters aged 50-64		UK characters aged 65+		chi-square association (each relationship vs. age levels) (2x2)
	N	within group %	N	within group %	
alone	8	6.5%	20	35.7%	$X^2(1)=25.148$ , $p<0.001$
spouse	67	54.4%	9	16.1%	$X^2(1)=22.788$ , $p<0.001$
colleagues	6	4.8%	6	10.7%	not significant
friendship	14	11.3%	3	5.4%	not significant
intergenerational	21	16.9%	11	19.6%	not significant
lover	1	0.8%	1	1.8%	not significant
service	11	8.9%	6	10.7%	not significant
stranger	18	14.5%	12	21.4%	not significant
total numbers of characters in each age group	124		56		

As shown in table 4-14, more than half of the characters aged 50-64 (N=124) in UK TV adverts were judged to be with their spouses (N=67, 54%). Following that, they were frequently depicted in intergenerational relationships (N=21, 16.9%) and with strangers (N=18, 14.5%).

As to the 65+ age cohort (N=56), they were most frequently depicted alone (N=20, 35.7%), with strangers (N=12, 21.4%) and in intergenerational relationships (N=11, 19.6%).

Attention turns now to the contrasts between the two age groups. Pearson Chi-square tests were used to measure the association between various social relationships and age levels of older characters in UK TV advertisements. Two significant results were found (see table 4-14). First, the 65+ age cohort were depicted alone significantly more than those of the 50-64 age group ( $X^2(1)=25.148, p<0.001$ ). However, the 50-64 age cohort were judged to be with their spouse significantly more than their 65+ counterparts ( $X^2(1)=22.788, p<0.001$ ).

The findings discussed so far in section 4-2 are outlined in table 4-15. In conclusion, content analyses of portrayals of older people in UK TV advertisements suggested several similar trends consistent with the literature. One was the underrepresentation of older people. The 50-64 age group appeared to be favoured more in UK TV advertisements as it was given a higher degree of presence.

Table 4-15 a summary of content analyses of UK data

variables	The UK data			
	50-64	65+	age contrast	details
under-representation in ads	o	o		50-64: 4.9% in ads vs. 18% in population 65+ : 2.6% in ads vs. 16% in population
presence in ads x product type	o			<b>54-64:</b> frequency counts: most frequently depicted for health/medicine, beauty/hygiene and finance/insurance products while least frequently for holidays and household products.  <b>Chi-square test/std. Residuals:</b> significantly more for health/medicine products and public issues while significantly less for household products
presence in ads x product type		o		<b>65+:</b> most frequently depicted for household, beauty/hygiene, and food/drink products while least likely for holidays, computer/communication/information products  <b>Chi-square test/std. residuals:</b> significantly more for public issues but significantly less for computer/communication and information
age level of characters x product type			o	65+ more for food/drink 50-64 less for food/drink 65+ less for health/medicine 65+ more for household products
presence in ads x target age level of products	o	o		<b>50-64:</b> significantly less for younger age preferential products, but more for older age exclusive products  <b>65+:</b> significantly less for younger age preferential products, but more for older age exclusive products

Table 4-15 a summary of content analyses of UK data (continued)

variables	The UK data			
	50-64	65+	age contrast	details
age level of UK characters x target age level of products			o	65+ characters were more likely depicted for older age exclusive products while the 50-64 characters were not (though the residuals were not significant)
numbers of UK characters by gender	o	x		50-64: 63.7% (M) vs. 36.3% (F) 65+: 53.6% (M) vs. 46.4% (F)
role prominence x age level of characters			o	65+ characters more likely depicted in background roles
role prominence x target age levels of products	o	x		50-64: depicted more in major roles & less in secondary roles for older age exclusive products ; less in major roles for age incidental products
age level x home/indoor settings			o	65+ (within group percentage: 41.1%)> 50-64 (within group percentage:19.4%)
age level of characters x outdoor settings			o	50-64 (35.5%)> 65+ (16.1%)
age level x public space			o	65+(28.6%) > 50-64 (11.3%)
age level x entertainment context			o	50-64 (17.7%) > 65+ (1.8%)
age level x "being alone"			o	65+ (35.7%) > 50-64 (6.5%)
age level x "with spouse"			o	50-64 (54%) > 65+ (16.1%)

"o" indicates a significant result and "x" indicates an insignificant result.

Further differences in the portrayals of the two older age groups were discovered, for instance, in terms of product associations. UK TV advertisements seemed to show a stronger preference in the use of the 50-64 age group for health/medical products over the 65+ age group. One plausible interpretation was that UK TV adverts tended to use healthy and active images (e.g. dancing or cycling in the park) as appeals to attract customers of health/medical products. The depiction of the 50-64 age group, perhaps due to it being younger than the 65+ age group, was deemed to be more appropriate.

The above findings indicate that when older people are depicted in advertisements, the preferable representations are looking younger or being active and energetic. Portraying older people in this way is advocated by marketing researchers (as mentioned in chapter 1) and considered effective for promoting products (such as health-related products) in the grey market. However, when linking healthy ageing images more often to the young-old age group, attributes such as fragility and feebleness (contrary to fit and healthy) may hence be inferred as qualities more likely found in those who are at the later end of the older age range.

#### **The discussion and conclusion of section 4.2**

Similar to previous studies (Swayne and Greco 1989; Roy and Harwood 1997; Lee et al. 2007), older characters in UK TV adverts were found frequently depicted in food and household product advertising. Nevertheless, this finding was supported to a greater extent in the portrayals of the 65+ age group as opposed to the 50-64 age group in UK TV advertising.

The portrayals of the 65+ age group seemed to be more in line with traditional expectations than the 50-64 age group. For instance, the stereotypical expectation of declining activity and energy with advancing age can be found in the contrast between the two subgroups. The 65+ age cohort were more likely portrayed in home settings than the 50-64 age group. On the other hand, the 50-64 age cohort were more often depicted outdoors and in contexts of entertainment and fun. The above-mentioned findings might give an impression that the active and energetic attributes were ascribed to the 50-64 age group more than to the 65+ age group.

In UK TV adverts, it was found that the presence of older age groups, to a certain extent, functioned as age-markers as they were highly associated with older-age exclusive products. However, only the 50-64 age group can accordingly be ascribed with greater role prominence. This can be taken as another indicator of the preference for the 50-64 age group over the 65+ age group in UK TV advertisements.

### **4.3 Portrayals of older people in Taiwanese TV advertisements**

Section 4.3 reports the content analyses of 2318 Taiwanese TV adverts and 349 characters judged to be aged 50 and over. The discussion in section 4.3 gives answers to research questions 9 to 16.

#### **RQ9: To what extent are older age groups represented in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

Of the 2318 Taiwanese TV advertisements judged to include at least one human figure, 5.6% (N=129) consisted of the 50-64 age group and 7% (N=162) featured the 65+ age group. In terms of percentages, the 65+ age group was present to a greater extent than the 50-64 age group. This trend, interestingly, was not consistent with Robinson and Skill's finding (1995).

According to the Taiwanese population census (Department of Household Registration 2009), the 50-64 age group comprised 17% of the Taiwanese population in 2007 while the 65+ age group constituted 14%. Binominal goodness-of-fit tests were conducted to assess whether these two age groups were underrepresented to a statistically significant level in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

Treating 0.17 as the expected value in comparison with the proportion (6%) of TV ads featuring the 50-64 age group, a significant binomial goodness-of-fit test was reported ( $p$  value < 0.001). That is to say, the presence of the 50-64 age group in Taiwanese TV advertisements was significantly less than their presence in the Taiwanese population.

Given 0.14 as the expected value in comparison with the proportion (7%) of Taiwanese TV adverts featuring the 65+ age group, a significant difference was identified ( $p < 0.001$ ). This result indicates that the 65+ age group was under-represented to a statistically significant level in Taiwanese TV adverts.

**RQ10: How is the use of older age groups/characters associated with product types in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

As indicated in table 4-16, Taiwanese TV adverts featured the 50-64 age group most frequently for health/medicine (N=60) and food/drink (N=32) but least frequently for holidays (N=0), beauty/hygiene (N=1) and public issues (N=2).

A chi-square test was conducted to measure the association between the use of the 50-64 age group and product types. In the test, two categories, namely, "holidays" and "miscellaneous" were excluded because there was a zero count for "holidays" and "miscellaneous" was not informative.

Table 4-16 Frequency count of Taiwanese TV adverts with the 50-64 age group by product type

product types	Numbers of Taiwanese TV adverts				total count
	with 50-64		without 50-64		
	N.	% of total	N.	% of total	
food/drink	32	1.4%	610	26.3%	642
health/medicine	60	2.6%	362	15.6%	422
beauty/hygiene	1	0.0%	429	18.5%	430
finance/insurance	7	0.3%	111	4.8%	118
public issues	2	0.1%	46	2.0%	48
holidays	0	0.0%	21	0.9%	21
household products	4	0.2%	289	12.5%	293
computer/communication/information	8	0.3%	207	8.9%	215
miscellaneous	15	0.6%	114	4.9%	129
total	129	5.6%	2189	94.4%	2318

A significant relationship between the two nominal variables was reported ( $X^2(6)=100.05$ ;  $P<0.001$ ). As shown in table 4-17, Taiwanese TV adverts depicted the 50-64 age group for health/medical products significantly more than expected (std. residual=8.0,  $p<0.001$ ) but for beauty/hygiene (std. residual=-4.5,  $p<0.001$ ) and household appliances (std. residual=-2.9;  $p<0.01$ ) significantly less than expected.

Table 4-17 Chi-square test: the presence of the 50-64 group by product type in Taiwanese TV advertisements

product types		Numbers of Taiwanese TV adverts		total
		with 50-64 group	without 50-64 group	
food/drink	count	32	610	642
	expected count	33.8	608.2	
	std. residual	-0.3	0.1	
health/medicine	count	60	362	422
	expected count	22.2	399.8	
	std. residual	8.0	-1.9	
beauty/hygiene	count	1	429	430
	expected count	22.6	407.4	
	std. residual	-4.5	1.1	
finance/insurance	count	7	111	118
	expected count	6.2	111.8	
	std. residual	0.3	-0.1	
public issues	count	2	46	48
	expected count	2.5	45.5	
	std. residual	-0.3	0.1	
household products	count	4	289	293
	expected count	15.4	277.6	
	std. residual	-2.9	0.7	
computer/ information/ communication	count	8	207	215
	expected count	11.3	203.7	
	std. residual	-1.0	0.2	
total	count	114	2054	2168

$X^2(6)=100.05$ ;  $P<0.001$  ("miscellaneous" and "holidays" categories excluded)

As to the use of the 65+ age group in relation to product types, Taiwanese TV adverts featured this age group most frequently for health/medicine (N=70, 3%) and food/drink (N=35, 1.5%) but least frequently for holidays (N=1) and computer/communication/information (N=3, 0.1%) products (see more details in table 4-18).

Table 4-18 numbers of Taiwanese TV adverts with the 65+ age group by product type

product types	Numbers of Taiwanese TV adverts				total count
	with 65+		without 65+		
	N.	% of total	N.	% of total	
food/drink	35	1.5%	607	26.2%	642
health/medicine	70	3.0%	352	15.2%	422
beauty/hygiene	16	0.7%	414	17.9%	430
finance/insurance	12	0.5%	106	4.6%	118
public issues	13	0.6%	35	1.5%	48
holidays	1	0.0%	20	0.9%	21
household products	10	0.4%	283	12.2%	293
computer/communication/information	3	0.1%	212	9.1%	215
miscellaneous	2	0.1%	127	5.5%	129
<b>total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>2156</b>	<b>93.0%</b>	<b>2318</b>

The association between the presence of the 65+ age group in Taiwanese TV advertisements and various product types (excluding the "miscellaneous" category) was measured, using a Pearson Chi-square test. A significant result was identified ( $X^2(7)=112.06$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

According to several significant standard residuals in table 4-19, Taiwanese TV adverts featured the 65+ age group for "health/medicine" (std. residual=

7.1,  $p < 0.001$ ) and "public issues" (std. residual=5.1,  $p < 0.001$ ) product types significantly more than expected but for "beauty/hygiene" (std. residual=-2.8,  $p < 0.01$ ), "household appliances" (std. residual=-2.5,  $p < 0.05$ ) and "computer/communication/information" (std. residual=-3.2,  $p < 0.001$ ) product types significantly less than expected.

Table 4-19 Chi-square test: association between the presence of the 65+ age group and various product types in Taiwanese TV adverts

product types		Numbers of Taiwanese TV adverts		total
		with 65+	without 65+ group	
food/ drink	count	35	607	642
	expected count	46.9	595.1	
	std. residual	-1.7	0.5	
health/ medicine	count	70	352	422
	expected count	30.8	391.2	
	std. residual	7.1	-2.0	
beauty/ hygiene	count	16	414	430
	expected count	31.4	398.6	
	std. residual	-2.8	0.8	
finance/ insurance	count	12	106	118
	expected count	8.6	109.4	
	std. residual	1.1	-0.3	
public issues	count	13	35	48
	expected count	3.5	44.5	
	std. residual	5.1	-1.4	
holidays	count	1	20	21
	expected count	1.5	19.5	
	std. residual	-0.4	0.1	
household products	count	10	283	293
	expected count	21.4	271.6	
	std. residual	-2.5	0.7	
computer/ information/ communication	count	3	212	215
	expected count	15.7	199.3	
	std. residual	-3.2	0.9	
total	count	160	2029	2189

$\chi^2(7)=112.06$ ;  $p < 0.001$ , "miscellaneous" product category excluded

The subsequent analyses for RQ10 examined the portrayals of individual older “characters” in Taiwanese TV ads with attention given to the association between “age levels” (the 50-64 or 65+ age groups) of older characters and the advertised product types.

Table 4-20 Numbers of older characters in Taiwanese TV advertisements by age level and product type

product types		Number of Taiwanese characters		total
		50-64	65+	
food/drink	count	35	52	87
	within group %	26.3%	24.1%	24.9%
health/medicine	count	60	102	162
	within group %	45.1%	47.2%	46.4%
beauty/hygiene	count	1	16	17
	within group %	0.8%	7.4%	4.9%
finance/insurance	count	7	14	21
	within group %	5.3%	6.5%	6.0%
public issues	count	3	14	17
	within group %	2.3%	6.5%	4.9%
holidays	count	0	1	1
	within group %	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%
household products	count	4	11	15
	within group %	5.7%	9.3%	15.0%
computer/information/communication	count	8	3	11
	within group %	6.0%	1.4%	3.2%
miscellaneous	count	15	3	18
	within group %	6.9%	11.1%	18.0%
total	count	133	216	349

Table 4-20 shows the frequency distribution of older characters in Taiwanese TV advertisements by “product types” and by “age levels”. If just based on the within-group percentages, Taiwanese characters of the 50-64 age

group were more likely to be depicted to promote food/drink and computer/information/communication products than their 65+ age group counterparts. The 65+ age cohort hence outnumbered the 50-64 age group for the product categories other than the above two.

A chi-square test was used to measure the association between the "age levels" of characters and various products in Taiwanese TV ads. Because of the zero count (see table 4-20) in the cell for the "50-64 age level" and "holidays" category, "holidays" was excluded from the test. Furthermore, the "miscellaneous" category was also excluded since it was not so informative. Based on the 2x7 contingency table (see table 4-21), a significant result was identified ( $X^2(6)=17.04$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Furthermore, it was revealed that characters of the 50-64 age group in Taiwanese TV advertisements were featured for beauty/hygiene products significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.1,  $p<0.05$ ) but for "computer/information/communication" category more than expected (std. residual=2.1,  $p<0.05$ ).

The above mentioned results could probably be interpreted as follows: the main differences between the portrayals of the two age cohorts in terms of the product associations were in two product categories, beauty/hygiene (65+>50-64) and computer/information and communication products (50-64>65+).

Table 4-21 Chi-square test: association between "age levels" of older characters and "product types" in Taiwanese TV ads

product types		Numbers of older characters in Taiwanese TV ads		total
		50-64	65+	
food/drink	count	35	52	87
	expected count	31.0	56.0	
	std. residual	0.7	-0.5	
health/medicine	count	60	102	162
	expected count	57.8	104.2	
	std. residual	0.3	-0.2	
beauty/hygiene	count	1	16	17
	expected count	6.1	10.9	
	std. residual	-2.1	1.5	
finance/insurance	count	7	14	21
	expected count	7.5	13.5	
	std. residual	-0.2	0.1	
public issues	count	3	14	17
	expected count	6.1	10.9	
	std. residual	-1.2	0.9	
household products	count	4	11	15
	expected count	5.4	9.6	
	std. residual	-0.6	0.4	
computer/information/communication	count	8	3	11
	expected count	3.9	7.1	
	std. residual	2.1	-1.5	
total	count	118	212	330

$X^2(6)=17.04$ ,  $p<0.01$ ; "holidays" and "miscellaneous" categories excluded

**RQ 11: How is the presence of older age groups/characters associated with target age levels of products in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

As shown in table 4-22, Taiwanese TV advertisements featured the 50-64 age group mainly for age incidental (N=84) and older age exclusive (N=31) products. The use of the 50-64 age group was measured to be significantly

associated with the target age of products, using a Chi-square test

( $\chi^2(2)=340.21$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

Table 4-22 Chi-square test: association between the presence of the 50-64 group and target age levels of products in Taiwanese TV adverts

target age level of products		Numbers of Taiwanese TV advertisements		total of ads
		with the 50-64 group	without the 50-64 group	
younger age preferential	count	14	320	334
	expected count	15.1	319.7	
	std. residual	-1.1	0.3	0.1
	% of total	0.6%	13.8%	14.4%
older age exclusive	count	31	33	64
	expected count	16.5	36.5	
	std. residual	14.5	-3.5	
	% of total	1.3%	1.4%	2.8%
age incidental	count	84	1836	1920
	expected count	86.2	1835.5	
	std. residual	-2.2	0.5	
	% of total	3.6%	79.2%	82.8%
total of ads	count	129	2189	2318

$\chi^2(2)=340.21$ ,  $p<0.001$

According to the significant standard residuals in table 4-22, Taiwanese TV advertisements depicted the 50-64 age group for older age exclusive products significantly more than expected (std. residual=14.5,  $p<0.001$ ). Likewise, Taiwanese TV advertisements without the 50-64 age group was significantly fewer than expected when promoting older age exclusive products. Furthermore, the 50-64 group was featured significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.2,  $p<0.005$ ) for "age incidental" products, for which, however, it was most frequently used.

As to the use of the 65+ age group in relation to target age levels of products in Taiwanese TV adverts, the results are summarized in table 4-23.

Table 4-23 Chi-square test: association between the presence of the 65+ group and the target age levels of products in Taiwanese TV adverts

target age level of products		Numbers of Taiwanese TV advertisements		total of ads
		with the 65+ group	without the 65+ group	
younger age preferential	count	2	232	334
	expected count	6.4	230.8	
	std. residual	-4.4	1.2	
	% of total	0.1%	10.0%	14.4%
older age exclusive	count	46	18	64
	expected count	26.4	23.4	
	std. residual	19.6	-5.4	
	% of total	2.0%	0.8%	2.8%
age incidental	count	114	1806	1920
	expected count	115.7	1805.5	
	std. residual	-1.7	0.5	
	% of total	4.9%	77.9%	82.8%
total	count	162	2156	2318

$X^2(2)=438.77, p<0.001$

According to the percentages given in table 4-23, Taiwanese TV adverts featured the 65+ age group most frequently for age incidental products (N=114, 4.9%), followed by older age exclusive (N=46, 2%) and products preferred by younger ages (N=2, 0.1%).

A chi-square test was conducted to measure the association between the presence of the 65+ age group and the target age levels of advertised products in Taiwanese TV adverts. A significant result was reported ( $X^2(2)=438.77,$

$p < 0.001$ . According to table 4-23, three significant standard residuals were observed. What they indicated was that, first of all, Taiwanese TV adverts showed the 65+ age group for "older age exclusive" products significantly more than expected (std. residual=19.6,  $p < 0.001$ ). Second, the number of adverts which did not feature the 65+ age group was significantly fewer than expected (std. residual = -5.4,  $p < 0.001$ ) when promoting older age exclusive products. However, Taiwanese TV adverts featured the 65+ age group for "younger preferential" products significantly less than expected (std. residual= -4.4,  $p < 0.001$ ).

The above-mentioned findings indicated that the use of the two older age groups served as certain age-marked purposes because they were shown (more than expected) selling products aimed at the 'grey' market. When the promotion was to attract mainly younger consumers, they appeared significantly less frequently in Taiwanese TV advertisements. The following analysis turns to the within-older-group contrasts in this respect.

A chi-square test was conducted to measure the association between the age levels of older characters ( $N=349$ ) in Taiwanese TV adverts and the target age levels of the advertised products. A significant result was identified ( $X^2(2)=17.39$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Significant standard residuals in table 4-24 suggested that older characters of the 50-64 age group were depicted for products preferred by younger age groups significantly more than expected (std. residual=3.2,  $p < 0.01$ ) in Taiwanese TV adverts, while the 65+ age group was portrayed for that category significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.5,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 4-24 Chi-square test: association between age levels of older characters and target age levels in Taiwanese TV adverts

target age level of products		Numbers of older characters		total of characters
		50-64	65+	
younger age preferential	count	14	2	16
	expected count	6.1	9.9	
	std. residual	3.2	-2.5	
	% of total	4.0%	0.6%	
older age exclusive	count	31	58	89
	expected count	33.9	55.1	
	std. residual	-0.5	0.4	
	% of total	8.9%	16.6%	
age incidental	count	88	156	244
	expected count	93.0	151.0	
	std. residual	-0.5	0.4	
	% of total	25.2%	44.7%	69.9%
total	count	133	216	349

$X^2(2)=17.39, p<0.001$

**RQ12: What is the gender distribution of older characters portrayed in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

Of the 133 characters judged to be aged between 50 and 64 years old in Taiwanese TV advertisements, 47.4% (N=63) were females and 52.6% (N=70) were males. Of the 216 characters judged to be 65+ in Taiwanese TV adverts, 40.7% (N=88) were females and 59.3% (N=128) were males. Given the percentages, older male characters were presented to a greater degree than their female counterparts in Taiwanese TV adverts.

Binominal goodness-of-fit tests were used to measure whether the numbers of male and female older characters varied to a statistically significant level in Taiwanese TV advertisements. Results indicated an insignificant

difference in the gender distribution for the 50-64 age group but a significant difference for the 65+ age group ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**RQ13: How are older characters portrayed in terms of role prominence in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

As shown in table 4-25, overall, older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts were most frequently featured in secondary roles (56.2%) and major roles (43.3%). However, this distributional pattern did not apply to characters of the 50-64 age group as they were depicted most frequently in major roles, rather than secondary roles.

Table 4-25 Numbers of older characters by age level and role prominence in Taiwanese TV adverts

role prominence		Numbers of older characters in Taiwanese TV ads		total
		50-64	65+	
major	count	69	82	151
	within group %	51.9%	38.0%	43.3%
	std. residual	1.5	-1.2	
secondary	count	62	134	196
	within group %	46.6%	62.0%	56.2%
	std. residual	-1.5	1.2	
marginal	count	2	0	2
	within group %	1.5%	0.0%	0.6%
	std. residual	1.4	-1.1	
total		133	216	349

A Pearson chi-square test was conducted to measure the association between the age levels of older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts and role prominence. As there was a zero count in the cell for "marginal role" and "65+ age level", the "marginal role" category was excluded from the test and a significant result ( $\chi^2(1) = 7.18, p < 0.01$ ) was found (see table 4-26).

Table 4-26: Chi-square test: age levels of older characters and role prominence in Taiwanese TV adverts

role prominence		Numbers of older characters in Taiwanese TV ads		total
		50-64	65+	
major	count	69	82	151
	expected count	57.0	94.0	
	std. residual	1.6	-1.2	
secondary	count	62	134	196
	expected count	74.0	122.0	
	std. residual	-1.4	1.1	
total		131	216	349

$\chi^2(1)=7.18, p<0.01$ ; "marginal/background role" category excluded due to zero count in the cell

As suggested by the standard residuals (though not significant) in table 4-26, characters aged 50 to 64 were more likely to be portrayed in major roles and less frequently depicted in secondary roles as opposed to the 65+ counterparts. That is to say, the younger end of older age group was more likely to be ascribed with a higher degree of importance in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

**RQ14: How is role prominence of older characters related to target age levels of advertised products in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

In order to answer research question 14, a chi-square test was used to measure the association between role prominence and target age levels of advertised products based on the coding of a total of 349 older characters (aged 50+) in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

Due to the zero count found for the category of "marginal role" (see table 4-27), it was excluded from the test and a significant association between the two above-mentioned variables was found ( $X^2(2)=11.60$ ;  $p<0.01$ ).

Table 4-27 Chi-square test: association between role prominence of older characters (50+) and target age levels of products in Taiwanese TV adverts

target age level of products/ role prominence		Numbers of older characters in Taiwanese TV advertisements			total
		major	secondary	marginal	
younger age preferential	count	10	6	0	16
	% of total	2.9%	1.7%	0.0%	4.6%
	expected count	7.0	9.0		
	std. residual	1.2	-1.0		
older age exclusive	count	50	39	0	89
	% of total	14.3%	11.2%	0.0%	25.5%
	expected count	38.7	50.3		
	std. residual	1.8	-1.6		
age incidental	count	91	151	2	
	% of total	26.1%	43.3%	0.6%	69.9%
	expected count	105.3	136.7		
	std. residual	-1.4	1.2		
<b>total</b>		<b>151</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>349</b>
<b>% of total</b>		<b>43.3%</b>	<b>56.2%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	

$X^2(2)=11.60$ ;  $p<0.01$ ; "marginal role" category excluded due to zero count

According to the standard residuals (though not significant) in table 4-27, older characters (50+) were depicted in "major roles" more than expected for both "younger age preferential and older age exclusive" products in Taiwanese TV adverts. The implication of these findings will be discussed later at the end of section of 4.3.

Subsequent analyses further revealed which age cohort (50-64 or 65+) contributed more to the above result. Accordingly, Chi-square tests were used to examine whether similar distributional patterns and a significant association

would occur based on the portrayals of characters aged 50-64 and 65+ respectively.

Table 4-28 chi-square test: role prominence and age levels of products in the portrayals of characters of the 50-64 age group in Taiwanese TV adverts

target age level of products/ role prominence		Number of characters aged 50-64 in Taiwanese TV adverts		total
		major	secondary	
younger age preferential	count	10	4	14
	expected count	7.4	6.6	
	std. residual	1.0	-1.0	
older age exclusive	count	25	6	31
	expected count	16.3	14.7	
	std. residual	2.1	-2.3	
age incidental	count	34	52	86
	expected count	45.3	40.7	
	std. residual	-1.7	1.8	
total numbers of characters		69.0	62.0	

$X^2(2)=17.66$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; "marginal role" category excluded due to zero count

A significant association ( $X^2(2)=17.66$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) between role prominence and target age levels of products was found based on the portrayals of the 50-64 age cohort in Taiwanese TV advertisements. The result was reported in table 4-28. However, an insignificant result was revealed for the portrayals of characters aged 65 and over. Hence, the association between role prominence and the target age level of products was primarily derived from the portrayals of the 50-64 age cohort.

According to the standardized residuals in table 4-28, for older-age exclusive products, Taiwanese characters of the 50-64 age group were cast in

major roles significantly more than expected (std. residual=2.1,  $p < 0.05$ ), but in secondary roles significantly less than expected (std. residual=-2.3,  $p < 0.05$ ).

**RQ15: What physical settings are older characters associated with in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

According table 4-29, Taiwanese older characters (both in the 50-64 and 65+ age cohort) were mainly depicted at home or indoor settings. They were also very frequently featured at work or public space. None of them were featured to be involved in educational activities or entertainment.

According to the within-group percentages, the 50-64 age group was more frequently depicted in medical, religious, work, outdoor, and public settings than the 65+ age cohort in Taiwanese TV advertisements. On the other hand, characters of the 65+ age group were more likely to be portrayed in indoor settings.

Chi-square tests were conducted to test whether there were significant differences between the two age groups in terms of the associated physical settings. The results (see table 4-29) showed that the 50-64 age group was featured significantly more at work ( $X^2(1)=7.616$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and in religious settings ( $X^2(1)=4.439$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) than the 65+ age group. However, the 65+ age group was depicted in medial settings such as hospitals significantly more than the 50-64 age group.

Table 4-29 chi-square tests: physical settings and age levels of older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts

settings	TW characters aged 50-64		TW characters aged 65+		chi-square associations (settings/ age levels of older characters)
	N	within group %	N	within group %	
work	26	19.5%	20	9.3%	$\chi^2(1)=7.616; 0<0.01$
religion	7	5.3%	3	1.4%	$\chi^2(1)=4.439; 0<0.05$
hospital/clinic	1	0.8%	11	5.1%	$\chi^2(1)=4.671; 0<0.05$
education	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	not significant
entertainment	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	not significant
home/indoors	60	45.1%	113	52.3%	not significant
outdoors	13	9.8%	15	6.9%	not significant
public space	17	12.8%	27	12.5%	not significant
unclear/studio	12	15.0%	36	16.7%	not significant
total	133		216		

**RQ16: What social relationships are older characters associated with in Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

According to the within-group percentages in table 4-30, characters of the 50-64 age group were more frequently featured to be alone, with their colleagues or in service relationships compared with those aged 65 and over in Taiwanese TV adverts. On the other hand, characters of the 65+ age group were featured more frequently with their spouses, friends, children/grandchildren and strangers compared with characters aged between 50 and 64.

The associations between age levels (a 2-scale nominal variable) and various social relationships were assessed using Chi-square tests and only two significant results were reported (see table 4-30). They were significant associations with two categories of relationships, namely, "spouse"

( $X^2(1)=21.99$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and "being alone" ( $X^2(1)=6.632$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

Table 4-30 Chi-square tests: social relationships and age levels of older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts

relationships	TW characters aged 50-64		TW characters aged 65+		chi-square association (each relationship vs. age levels) (2x2)
	N	within group %	N	within group %	
alone	42	31.6%	42	19.4%	$x^2(1)=6.632$ ; $p=0.01$
spouse	16	12.0%	75	34.7%	$x^2(1)=21.99$ ; $p<0.001$
colleagues	6	4.5%	5	2.3%	not significant
friendship	19	14.3%	38	17.6%	not significant
intergenerational	39	29.3%	65	30.1%	not significant
lover	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	not significant
service	10	7.5%	8	3.7%	not significant
stranger	21	15.8%	35	16.2%	not significant
total numbers of characters in each age group	133		216		not significant

Content analyses of the Taiwanese data are outlined in table 4-31. A summary of Taiwanese results and comparisons to the representational patterns in the UK data is given at the end of section 4.3.

### **The discussion and conclusion of section 4.3**

Consistent with the UK data, Taiwanese TV advertisements also under-represented older age groups to a significant extent. Both UK and Taiwanese TV adverts presented the 50-64 age group more than the 65+ group. Furthermore, both UK and Taiwanese TV adverts under-represented older females to a greater degree than older males. However, this trend did not apply to the presence of females aged between 50 and 64 in Taiwanese TV adverts.

Similar to the UK data, Taiwanese TV advertisements showed the 50-64 age group significantly more than expected for health and medical products. This trend also applied to the use of the 65+ age group in Taiwanese TV advertisements. The findings indicated that both UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements tended to show older age groups to send health-related messages to the audience. Content analyses here cannot provide details to characterize the portrayals of older people for health/medical products but they will be clarified in chapter 5.

Furthermore, the 65+ age group was featured significantly less than expected for computer/information/communication products in both the UK and Taiwanese data. This result reflects a commonly held perception that older people are less willing to adapt to high-tech products (Charness and Czaja 2005). However, this trend did not apply to the use of the 50-64 group in Taiwanese TV advertisements as the age group was featured significantly more than expected for this product category.

Table 4-31 a summary of content analyses of the Taiwanese data

variables	The Taiwanese results			
	50-64	65+	age contrast	details
under-representation	o	o		50-64: 5.6% in ads vs. 17% in population 65+ : 7% in ads vs. 14% in population
presence of 50-64 age group in ads x product type	o			50-64 group: frequency distribution: most frequently featured for health/medicine and food/drink while least frequently depicted for holidays, beauty/hygiene and public issues  chi-square/std. residuals: significantly more for health/medical products but less for beauty/hygiene and household appliances
presence of 65+ age group in ads x product type		o		65+group: frequency distribution: most frequently depicted for health/medicine and food/drink  but least frequently featured for holidays and computer/communication/information products  chi-square/std. residuals: significantly more for "health/medicine" and "public issues"  but significantly less for "beauty/hygiene", "household appliances" and "computer/communication/information"
age level of characters x product type			o	50-64: less frequently depicted for beauty/hygiene; but, more for computer/information and communication

Table 4-31 a summary of content analyses of the Taiwanese data (continued)

variables	The Taiwanese results			
	50-64	65+	age contrast	details
presence of 50-64 group in Taiwanese ads x target age level of products	o			<p><b>50-64 :</b> most frequently depicted for age incidental, followed by older age exclusive and younger age preferential</p> <p><b>Chi-square, std. residuals:</b> more than expected for older age exclusive products less than expected for age incidental products</p>
presence of 65+ group in Taiwanese ads x target age level of products		o		<p><b>65+ :</b> most frequently depicted for age incidental products, followed by older age exclusive and younger age preferential products</p> <p><b>Chi-square, std. residuals:</b> more likely featured for older age exclusive products less likely for age incidental products</p>
age level of Taiwanese older characters x target age level of products			o	<p><b>50-64 cohort:</b> more likely featured for younger age preferential products</p> <p><b>65+ cohort:</b> less likely for younger age preferential products</p>
frequency of characters by gender	x	o		<b>65+:</b> fewer female characters
role prominence x age level of characters			o	<p><b>in major roles:</b> 50-64 &gt; 65+</p> <p><b>in secondary roles:</b> 50-64 &lt; 65+</p>

Table 4-31 a summary of content analyses of the Taiwanese data (continued)

variables	The Taiwanese results			
	50-64	65+	age contrast	details
role prominence of characters x target age levels of products	o	x		<p>overall (frequency): older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts were more frequently depicted in major roles when the adverts promoted "younger age preferential" as well as "older age exclusive" products</p> <p>50-64 (chi-square) the 50-64 cohort was more likely depicted in major roles if older age exclusive products were promoted.</p>
age level of characters x work settings			o	50-64 > 65+
age level of characters x religious settings			o	50-64 > 65+
age level of characters x medical settings			o	65+ > 50-64
age level of characters x "being alone"			o	50-64 > 65+
age level of characters x "with spouses"			o	65+ > 50-64

"o" indicates significant while "x" indicates insignificant results

As to the use of older age groups in association with target age levels of advertised products, both UK and Taiwanese analyses showed that the two age groups were depicted for "older age exclusive" products significantly more than expected. This is probably because older people are considered to be convenient age markers to define products for the 'grey' market.

However, while UK TV advertisements featured the two older age groups significantly less than expected for "younger age preferential" products, Taiwanese TV advertisements portrayed the 50-64 age cohort in "major roles" significantly more than expected for products aimed at younger customers/viewers. This Taiwanese result was rather surprising. One possible interpretation was that those Taiwanese characters were depicted as 'advisers' sharing their opinions and suggesting what others (youngsters) should do. In this case, the stereotypical belief which views older people as more experienced and wise was reinforced. Hence, older people were likely to be portrayed as major characters in TV adverts for products preferred by younger ages. This belief was less frequently drawn upon in the UK data.

Content analyses of the UK and Taiwanese data suggested that the role prominence ascribed to older people was significantly associated with their age levels (the 50-64 or 65+). The cohort aged 50-64 was depicted in major roles more than expected (in the Taiwanese data) while the 65+ age group was cast in background roles more than expected (in the UK data). In terms of "role salience", the 50-64 age group seemed to be more favoured in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts.

As to the physical settings in which older characters were portrayed, characters of the 50-64 age group demonstrated a higher degree of social engagement in Taiwanese TV advertisements as opposed to the cohort aged 65+. This was because they were portrayed more frequently engaged in work and religious activities. However, the 65+ age group was more frequently depicted in medical settings, which reinforced the stereotype of impaired images. UK TV advertisements, as argued previously in section 4.2, depicted the 50-64 age group to be more active and energetic as opposed to the 65+ age cohort. The reason was that the 50-64 age group in UK TV ads was involved with entertainment and outdoor activities while characters of the 65+ age group were more likely associated with home settings and indoors. Hence, one may argue that in terms of physical settings, both UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements showed more favourable images of the 50-64 age group, compared to those of the 65+ age group.

The above arguments on cross-cultural comparisons were made based on the representational patterns revealed in the UK and Taiwanese data. Even though there were many similarities identified between the two sets of data, to what extent they varied and whether the differences in terms of the various dimensions were statistically significant are questions that remain as yet unexplored. The following analyses (section 4.4), therefore, will extend the cross-cultural comparisons further by employing statistical approaches.

#### 4.4 Comparisons between UK and Taiwanese portrayals

##### RQ 17: How different is the extent to which older people are represented in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

According to the within-group percentages in table 4-32, Taiwanese TV advertisements featured the 50+ age group (11.7%) more frequently than UK TV advertisements (6.8%). Furthermore, a significant relationship between “culture” (UK/Taiwan) and “the presence of the 50+ age group” (yes/no) was measured, using a Chi-square test. The significant result ( $\chi^2(1)=27.82$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) showed that UK TV advertisements presented the 50+ age group significantly less than Taiwanese advertisements. Since both UK and Taiwanese advertising did not depict older characters to reflect their demographic share (see results in sections 4.2 and 4.3), the chi-square test here revealed that UK advertising disregarded the value of older adults for marketing purposes to a greater extent and therefore, under-represented them more than Taiwanese adverts.

Table 4-32 Chi-square test: numbers of TV ads by culture and presence of 50+ age group

the presence of the 50+ age group		UK ads	Taiwanese ads	total
yes	count	117	271	388
	within group %	6.8%	11.7%	9.6%
	std. residual	-3.8	3.3	
no	count	1613	2047	3661
	within group %	93.2%	88.3%	90.4%
	std. residual	1.2	-1.1	
total		1731	2318	4049

$\chi^2(1)=27.82$ ,  $p<0.001$

Furthermore, Chi-square tests were used to assess whether there was a significant variation in the presence of the 50-64 age group and the 65+ age group between the two data sets. The tests showed an insignificant result for the presence of the 50-64 age group but a significant one for the 65+ age group ( $X^2(1)=39.35$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). According to the standard residuals in table 4-33, UK TV advertisements showed the 65+ age group significantly less than expected (std. residual=- 4.6,  $p<0.001$ ) while Taiwanese TV advertisements did so significantly more than expected (std. residual= 4,  $p<0.001$ ). That is to say, UK TV ads under-represented older people to a greater extent than Taiwanese TV ads and the main difference was in the relative absence of the 65+ age group in UK TV ads.

Table 4-33 Chi-square test: numbers of TV ads by culture and presence of 65+ age group

the presence of the 65+ age group		UK ads	Taiwanese ads	total
yes	count	117	271	207
	expected count	88.5	118.5	
	std. residual	-4.6	4	
no	count	1686	2156	3841
	expected count	1642.5	2199.5	
	std. residual	1.1	-0.9	
total		1731	2318	4049

$X^2(1)=39.35$ ,  $p<0.001$

**RQ 18: How different is the use of older people associated with product types in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

A chi-square test was conducted to assess the association between the use of the 50+ age group in the two sets of data and various product types. A significant result was obtained ( $X^2(8)=44.67$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). According to the standard residuals in table 4-34, UK TV advertisements featured the 50+ age group significantly less than expected for the health/medicine category (std. residual = -3.0,  $p < 0.01$ ). On the other hand, Taiwanese TV advertisements showed the 50+ age group for the same product type significantly more than expected (std. residual = 2.0,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 4-34 Chi-square test: UK and Taiwanese TV ads with the 50+ age group by product type

products/cultures	UK ads with 50+				Taiwanese ads with 50+				total
	observed	expected	standardized residuals	within group %	observed	expected	standardized residuals	within group %	
food/drink	19	25.9	-1.4	16.2%	67	60.1	0.9	24.7%	86
health/medicine	22	41.0	-3	18.8%	114	95.0	2	42.1%	136
beauty/hygiene	20	11.2	2.6	17.1%	17	25.8	-1.7	6.3%	37
finance/insurance	16	9.3	2.2	13.7%	15	21.7	-1.4	5.5%	31
public issues	6	6.3	-0.1	5.1%	15	14.7	0.1	5.5%	21
travel/holidays	1	0.6	-0.5	0.9%	1	1.4	-0.3	0.4%	2
household products	17	9.3	2.5	14.5%	14	21.7	-1.6	5.2%	31
computer/information	10	6.3	1.5	8.5%	11	14.7	-1	4.1%	21
miscellaneous	6	6.9	-0.4	5.1%	17	16.1	-0.2	6.3%	23
	117	117.0			271	271.0			388

$X^2(8)=44.67$ ,  $p<0.001$

Moreover, UK TV advertisements presented the 50+ age group significantly more than expected in the beauty/hygiene product category (std.

residual = 2.6,  $p < 0.05$ ). The same trend applied to other two product types, namely, finance/insurance (std. residual = 2.2,  $p < 0.05$ ) and household necessities (std. residual=2.5,  $p < 0.05$ ).

**RQ 19: How different are the portrayals of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements in terms of role prominence?**

The analytical units for RQ 19 were older characters in UK (N=180) and Taiwanese (N=349) TV advertisements.

Table 4-35 Chi-square test: 50+ characters in UK and Taiwanese TV ads by role prominence

role prominence		UK older characdters	Taiwanese older characters	total
major	count	65	151	216
	within group %	36.1%	43.3%	40.8%
	std. residual	-1	0.7	
secondary	count	109	196	305
	within group %	60.6%	56.2%	57.7%
	std. residual	0.5	-0.4	
marginal	count	6	2	8
	within group %	3.3%	0.6%	1.5%
	std. residual	2	-1.4	
total		180	349	529

$X^2(2)=7.87, p<0.05$

According to the within-group percentages shown in table 4-35, Taiwanese TV advertisements featured older characters (50+) in major roles more frequently than UK TV ads. On the other hand, UK TV ads portrayed older characters (50+) in secondary and background roles more frequently than did

Taiwanese TV adverts. The association between two variables, "culture" and "role prominence" was measured to be significant, using a Chi-square test ( $X^2(2)=7.87, p<0.05$ ). That is to say, older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts were more likely cast in important roles than those in UK TV ads. Therefore, in terms of role prominence, Taiwanese TV adverts portrayed older people in a more positive light, compared with UK TV ads. This finding corresponds with what has been found in Lee et al.'s (2006) comparative study in which older people in South Korean TV ads were depicted in major roles more frequently than those in American TV advertisements.

**RQ 20: How differently are older characters associated with various settings in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

As summarized in table 4-36, older characters (50+) in UK TV ads were more likely depicted in work, outdoor, entertainment and public settings than their counterparts in Taiwanese TV ads. On the other hand, older characters (50+) in Taiwanese TV ads were featured in home/indoor, medical, and religious settings more frequently than those in UK TV ads.

Table 4-36 Chi-square tests: 50+ characters in UK and Taiwanese TV ads by physical setting

settings	UK characters aged 50+				Taiwanese characters aged 50+				total	Chi-square tests
	N.	exp. N	std. Residuals	within group %	N.	exp. N	std. Residuals	within group %		
work	24	23.8	0	13.3%	46	46.2	0	13.2%	70	not significant
home	47	74.9	-3.2	26.1%	173	145.1	2.3	49.6%	220	$X^2(1)=26.903$ , $p<0.001$
outdoor	53	27.6	4.8	29.4%	28	53.4	-3.5	8.0%	81	$X^2(1)=42.023$ , $p<0.001$
medical	0	4.1	-2	0.0%	12	7.9	1.5	3.4%	12	$X^2(1)=6.333$ , $p<0.05$
entertainment	23	7.8	5.4	12.8%	0	15.2	-3.9	0.0%	23	$X^2(1)=46.621$ , $p<0.001$
religious	0	3.4	-1.8	0.0%	10	6.6	1.3	2.9%	10	$X^2(1)=5.257$ , $p<0.05$
education	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	not significant
public	30	25.2	1	16.7%	44	48.8	-0.7	12.6%	74	not significant
unclear	12	23.1	-2.3	6.7%	56	44.9	1.7	16.0%	68	$X^2(1)=9.326$ , $p<0.01$
total	180				349				529	

However, not all differences in terms of “physical settings” were measured to be significant, using Chi-square tests, but only “home/indoor” ( $X^2(1) = 26.90$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), “outdoor” ( $X^2(1) = 42.023$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), “medical” ( $X^2(1) = 6.333$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), entertainment ( $X^2(1) = 46.621$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and religious ( $X^2(1) = 5.257$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) settings. The suggested cross-cultural variations with respect to the portrayals of older people in medial and religious settings should be viewed with more caution as there were certain issues that arose in the use of the Chi-square tests. For instance, there was a cell with zero count (see table 4-36) and cells with an expected count of less than 5 were over 20%. However, the results were still retained and considered valid as Fisher’s exact tests (see

note 6) also indicated the same level of significance ( $p < 0.05$ ).

In terms of the associations of physical settings, UK TV advertisements seemed to demonstrate a more fun-loving (hence the entertainment contexts) and energetic (hence, outdoor contexts) image while Taiwanese TV advertisements tended to reinforce qualities such as decrement (more in medical settings), a lower degree of social engagement (show older characters staying at home more) but stronger spiritual needs (engaged in religious activities). Given the above-mentioned findings, Taiwanese and UK TV adverts seemed to depict older people in line with different stereotypical concepts suggested in the literature (e.g. Hummert et al. 1994). More discussions on this regard will be given in chapter 5 where cross-cultural comparisons of the ways in which older people are categorized in UK and Taiwanese TV ads are explored in more depth.

**RQ 21: How differently are the portrayals of older characters associated with social relationships in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?**

As revealed in table 4-37, UK older characters were portrayed with their spouses, lovers, colleagues, and strangers more frequently than their Taiwanese counterparts. On the other hand, Taiwanese older characters were depicted alone, with their children/grandchildren and friends more often than their UK counterparts.

Table 4-37: Chi-square tests: 50+ characters in UK and Taiwanese TV ads by relationship

relationships	UK characters aged 50+				Taiwanese characters aged 50+				total	Chi-square
	N.	exp. N	std. Residuals	within group %	N.	exp. N	std. Residuals	within group %		
inter-generation	32	46.3	-2.1	17.8%	104	89.7	1.5	29.8%	136	$X^2(1)=8.986$ ; $p<0.01$
friends	17	25.2	-1.6	9.4%	57	48.8	1.2	16.3%	74	$X^2(1)=4.683$ ; $p<0.05$
spouse	76	56.8	2.5	42.2%	91	110.2	-1.8	26.1%	167	$X^2(1)=14.333$ , $p <0.001$
lovers	2	0.7	1.6	1.1%	0	1.3	-1.1	0.0%	2	not significant
colleagues	12	7.8	1.5	6.7%	11	15.2	-1.1	3.2%	23	not significant
stranger	30	29.3	0.1	16.7%	56	56.7	-0.1	16.0%	86	not significant
alone	28	38.1	-1.6	15.6%	84	73.9	1.2	24.1%	112	$X^2(1)=5.157$ ; $p<0.05$
total	180				349				529	

Cross-cultural differences in terms of the associations with social relationships were further assessed, using Pearson Chi-square tests. Significant results were reported only for "intergenerational relationships" ( $X^2(1)=8.986$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), friendship ( $X^2(1)=4.683$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), spouses ( $X^2(1)=14.333$ ,  $p <0.001$ ) and "being alone" ( $X^2(1)=5.157$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Both UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements featured older people in social engagements to a certain degree but different patterns emerged. There is a stronger preference to depict older people in family contexts in Taiwanese TV advertisements. It is perhaps because Taiwanese society is under the influence of kinship collectivism, which, as argued by Yang (1995), makes the family the major functional constituent in the life-spheres of Chinese (Taiwanese) people. However, content analyses could not provide very clear information as to the behavioural patterns that older people demonstrated in marital or family relationships. Being portrayed

alone did not necessarily mean that the characters were lonely figures. These arguments reflected, to a degree, the limitations of content analytical approaches. However, these aspects will be explored to a greater extent in the following chapter and the answers to the above concerns will become clearer.

The analyses presented so far in section 4.4 are outlined in table 4-38, followed by a brief summary of the whole chapter.

Table 4-38 a summary of cross-cultural comparisons of portrayals of older people (50+) in Taiwanese and UK TV adverts

variables	comparisons between UK & TW data	results
presence of 50+ age group x culture	o	Presence in TW TV ads > UK TV ads UK TV ads underrepresented the 50+ age group significantly more than TW TV ads did
presence of the 50-64 age group by culture	x	
presence of the 65+ group by culture	o	UK TV adverts were less likely to show the 65+ age group than TW adverts  TW TV adverts showed the 65+ age group significantly more than UK adverts
presence of 50+ age group by product and culture	o	UK TV adverts were less likely to feature the 50+ age group for health/medical products  TW TV ads more likely featured the 50+ age group for health/medical products  beauty/hygiene; finance/insurance; household products: UK TV adverts featured the 50+age group for these three product types significantly more than TW adverts
role prominence and culture	o	Chi-square test/std. residual: UK TV ads featured older characters in background roles significantly more than TW adverts  within-group-percentages: TW characters more in major roles, UK characters more in secondary and major roles

Table 4-38 a summary of cross-cultural comparisons of portrayals of older people (50+) in Taiwanese and UK TV adverts (continued)

<b>variables</b>	<b>comparisons between UK &amp; TW data</b>	<b>results</b>
<b>home setting vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>TW &gt; UK</b>
<b>outdoor setting vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>UK&gt;TW</b>
<b>medical setting vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>TW&gt;UK</b>
<b>entertainment context vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>UK&gt;TW</b>
<b>religious setting vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>TW&gt;UK</b>
<b>intergenerational relationship vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>TW&gt;UK</b>
<b>friendship vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>TW&gt;UK</b>
<b>spouse vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>UK&gt;TW</b>
<b>"being alone" vs. culture</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>TW&gt;UK</b>

"o" indicates significant results while "x" indicates insignificant ones

In conclusion, content analyses of the portrayals of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements revealed certain common patterns, for instance, under-representations of older people (older females to a greater extent), a preference for the 50-64 age cohort for health/medical products and infrequent use of the 65+ age group for computer/ communication/ information products. Furthermore, both the portrayals of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts were very likely addressed to an older audience (older age exclusive

products). The 50-64 age cohort was ascribed more salience in UK and Taiwanese advertising and they were depicted to be more active at work, involved in entertainment, outdoor activities and religious events than the 65-plus age group.

As discussed in section 4.4, Taiwanese and UK TV advertising shared several similar representational patterns when depicting older adults despite that the shared representational patterns were manifested to different extents in the two data sets. For example, in terms of the degree of presence and role prominence, Taiwanese TV advertisements showed greater presence of older adults and more likely depicted them in central roles than UK TV adverts. Other differences between UK and Taiwanese representations of older adults were found in the associations with product types and physical settings. Taiwanese TV ads more than UK TV adverts tended to depict older people in line with certain negative stereotypical expectations. For example, older characters were more likely depicted in medical settings and health-related products in Taiwanese advertising and the associations arguably reinforced the stereotypes of decrement and frailty in relation to older age. UK TV ads highlighted fun and active lifestyles (associations with entertainment and outdoor settings more) in the portrayals of older people more than is the case with Taiwanese TV ads. In this case, the positive golden ager stereotype was resorted to in UK advertising to a greater extent.

A final note is that, as argued earlier in chapter 2.2, content analysis has its limitations, which might put restrictions on the interpretations of identified findings (as can be seen at some points in this chapter). The qualitative aspects

of the portrayals of older characters examined in this chapter will be explored further in the next chapter. More implications of the findings reported in chapters 4 and 5 will be provided in chapter 7 in relation to previous East-West cross-cultural studies on communication and ageing.

## **Chapter 5 Developing prototypes of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements**

### **5.1 The operation of the Constant Comparative Method**

#### **5.1.1 Introduction and research questions**

This chapter will address answers to the following three research questions:

RQ22: What character types can be developed to account for media representations of older adults in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements?

RQ23: How do media representations of older adults in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements differ in terms of the character types developed in RQ22?

RQ24: How do the character types emerging in this study differ from the literature on stereotypes and ageing?

As discussed in chapter 3.2, the constant comparative method of qualitative analysis (or a modified version of GT) was utilized to arrive at various character categories to explain representational patterns in the images of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. Before elaborating on the answers to research questions 22~24, the first section of this chapter will give more details as to how the analyses for the development of character types were conducted.

#### **5.1.2 The selected data**

The portrayals of a total of 185 (UK=61; TW=124) older characters featured in UK or Taiwanese TV advertisements were examined in this part of the analysis. They were older characters judged to be aged 50 and over by

coders engaged in the content analytical study in this thesis and repetitions were controlled. They were older characters identified out of 1731 UK and 2318 Taiwanese TV advertisements. As indicated in chapter 4, the presence of older characters in Taiwanese TV adverts was more frequent than that in UK TV advertisements. Hence, even though repetitions were excluded, there were over twice as many Taiwanese older characters as UK ones examined in this part of the study.

A total of 26 (UK=17; TW=9) older characters judged to be 50 and over in content analyses were not taken into account in this current analysis because they were considered not informative to answering RQ22. The following criteria were considered for the exclusion. The excluded examples were those depicted just posing in front of the camera, as someone within a group in the background, as marginal characters without performing clear behavioural patterns (e.g. trying on clothes, driving a car, happening to walk by, sitting quietly in the car, etc.), or playing fictional roles (e.g. Santa Claus, or a worshipped deity in Taiwanese folk religion).

### **5.1.3 Open coding of GT and the application**

As explained in chapter 3.2, the open coding process of GT was considered appropriate for the research scenario of RQ22. It includes the acts of constant comparative analysis, conceptualising observed portrayals and generating codes to represent emergent concepts. The application of this research step can be further justified by Gibb and Holroyd's (1996) study, which systematically categorized representations of older people in Hong Kong print media (news articles and print ads) into various themes.

Similar to Gibb and Holroyd's (1996) study, the process of open coding ceased when the research ran out of samples selected for comparisons and category generations. The practice was broken down into several steps in terms of the analytical aims and expected outcomes (see table 5-1).

Table 5-1 steps in the open coding of portrayals of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV ads

steps	aims	questions	results
<p>Step 1: compare UK older characters to UK older characters</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. conceptualise the representation of each UK older character and label the visual and verbal segments with codes</li> <li>2. compare similarities and differences in the codes generated for each older character</li> <li>3. locate the dimensions showing the similarities and differences amongst compared older characters through constant comparisons</li> <li>4. label developing types of older characters</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What codes can be generated to conceptualise the visual and verbal messages about character A?</li> <li>2. Does character B show similar or different characteristics from A? If different, what codes are generated?</li> <li>3. What are the patterns of similarities and differences among character A, B, C,...?</li> <li>4. What are the dimensions indicative of the underlying similarities and differences?</li> <li>5. Does any combination of codes happen? Are any conceptual categories created to label the combinations?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. various codes generated to conceptualise the visual and verbal segments in the images of each UK older character</li> <li>2. categories are generated to tentatively describe types of older characters</li> </ol>
<p>Step 2: compare UK older characters to emergent UK categories in step 1</p>	<p>compare more older characters to the properties of emergent categories to further verify the developing categories, sharpen the boundaries of the categories and make sure no further categories can be developed in the UK set of data</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does this UK older character show characteristics consistent with the properties of any previously developed category? Can this character be classified into certain category?</li> <li>2. If not, what are the codes generated to signify the variations from the previous categories? Can the codes be further integrated into a new category?</li> </ol>	<p>More categories and codes may be generated at this step</p>

Table 5-1 steps in the open coding of portrayals of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV ads (continued)

steps	aims	questions	results
Step3: Compare Taiwanese older characters to UK categories	to identify the degree of uniformity and variation between the Taiwanese and UK corpus of data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does this Taiwanese older character show characteristics consistent with the properties of any category grounded in the UK data? If so, which category can this Taiwanese older character be classified into?</li> <li>2. If not, what are the codes generated to describe the variations from the UK categories?</li> <li>3. Can the new developed codes be further integrated or combined into new concepts representing new types of older people in Taiwanese data?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. some Taiwanese characters as indicators of UK categories</li> <li>3. new codes and categories generated to represent types of older adults in Taiwanese TV ads</li> </ol>
Step 4: compare Taiwanese older characters to Taiwanese emergent categories and UK categories	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After new categories are grounded from the Taiwanese data, further comparisons are made with UK categories as well as emergent Taiwanese categories.</li> <li>2. Taiwanese categories are thus verified internally and defining properties of developing categories from Taiwanese data can be sharpened</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does this Taiwanese older character show characteristics similar to the properties of any previously developed Taiwanese and UK categories? If so, which one is it or which ones are they?</li> <li>2. If not, what are the codes generated to describe the new found characteristics?</li> <li>3. Can those newly developed codes be further integrated into categories to describe new types of older characters in Taiwanese TV ads?</li> </ol>	More codes and categories may be generated to conceptualise images of older characters in Taiwanese TV ads

#### **5.1.4 Merging concepts**

The preliminary analysis generated a number of themes to describe images of older people in relation to their roles, lifestyles, behaviours practised in certain social networks and demonstrated social attitudes towards older age. They were first tentatively labelled as couple images, capacity-centred images, information providers, images of lifestyles, older people in intergenerational contexts, images associated with ageist attitudes, images of older people with humour, older people with health problems, dozy older people, talkative older people, clumsy older people, seriousness, images of youthfulness, older people with youngsters in non-family contexts, reminiscing older people, older workers, older people in religious contexts, sufferers, the poor and celebrity endorsers.

Each of the tentative character types or themes contained various defining properties (labelled in open codes) and some of them appeared to be interrelated due to the shared codes. Therefore, they were further condensed into more abstract concepts by taking into account the terminology or stereotypical concepts developed in existing literature as well as the overlapped properties. Bringing existing theory at this stage does not hinder the discovery of new concepts (as this process is done) but on the contrary, it could, arguably, enhance the theoretical relevance of the generated results in this study by applying similar terms in literature (see also Glaser 1992: 45 for how to name a category, especially "sociological constructs"). It is hence not against the fundamental philosophy of GT. Furthermore, the same practice was taken in Gibb and Holroyd's (1996) study. As a consequence, the themes mentioned in the last paragraph were reduced into 9 main abstract character types.

The 9 character types are elaborated in section 5.2 (as answers to research question 22). The cultural variations in the conceptualisation of older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements are presented in section 5.3 (as answers to research question 23). As to the comparisons to literature on stereotypes of older people, they are discussed in section 5.4 (as answers to research question 24). As the discovery of a grounded theory study should be hypotheses or a theory, the findings reported in this part of the analysis will be transformed into hypothetical statements in the conclusion of this chapter.

## **5.2 Typology of older adults in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements**

The portrayals of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements were categorized in terms of 9 themes. The characteristics of the 9 character types are elaborated as follows. This part of the analysis focuses on the qualitative patterns manifested in the portrayals of older people in both UK and Taiwanese TV advertising contexts. The frequency distributions of each character type by culture (UK versus TW) can be obtained through the process of constant comparisons and coding. However, there is no intention to report them in detail in this chapter, though the frequency distribution of associated examples will be mentioned at times only when it appears to be critical to the cross-cultural variations. Frequency reports as the research outcomes should be the foci in the content analysis (chapter 4) of this thesis. Nevertheless, the frequency distributions of all character types by culture are listed in appendix 5 just for reference. Please note that the analysis here is not aimed to argue about the relative significance of the generated character types. However, this issue can be regarded as a future research question (see more about this point in chapter 7). The attention now turns to the descriptions of each character type.

### **Character type 1: Competent**

“Competent” was a character type that emerged to represent older characters depicted as capable and successful in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. The observed older characters’ capabilities were realized mainly in three dimensions, which were labelled respectively as “mentally capable”, “physically capable” and “socially successful”.

Mentally capable older characters were depicted as skilled experts, or capable

workers. They could also play roles such as information providers, advisers or issue raisers. They might well be portrayed as wise, intelligent, witty persons and making good decisions when others could not.

Physically capable older characters were defined by attributes, such as, "looking young at older age" and physically active, fit and strong.

Socially successful older characters were mostly associated with celebrity endorsers who already had a certain extent of fame and publicity. Other examples were older adults depicted as successful entrepreneurs or political elites (i.e. portrayed as candidates of a presidential election in Taiwan)

## **Character type 2: Conservative and Traditional**

"Conservative and Traditional" was generated to represent those older characters with attributes such as religiously devoted, frugal, preserving tradition, reminiscent, tough and strong-minded.

Religiously devoted older characters were depicted actively participating in religious rituals or worshipping. They were characters experienced in religious activities and fully knowledgeable about what should be practised to please the worshiped god in religious rituals. They were all featured in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

Only one example was associated with "frugal". It was a Taiwanese female older character. She was considered as frugal because of her reaction to the gift given by her son for her to maintain good health. In the advertisement, her first

reaction was to question how expensive the present was instead of showing her appreciation for the gift.

The concept "Conservative and Traditional" also applied to those older characters who were skilled at traditional handicrafts. The focus here was not the competence they showed in the advertisement but on the role they played, that is, to preserve tradition which is rarely practised. The associated examples were featured only in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

Another constitutive element of "Conservative and Traditional" is "reminiscing". This concept (reminiscing) was coded to describe a Taiwanese older character who talked to the viewers about how enthusiastically people used to greet each other in the past but not any more. The tone of his expression was soft and poignant as if he was endorsing the old-fashioned way of greeting and felt sorry for the indifference between people now.

The most dominant subgroup of "Conservative and Traditional" was the portrayals of tough, serious and strong-minded older people. All of the associated examples were older male characters featured in both UK and Taiwanese TV advertising. The above-mentioned characteristics were reflected in their working attitudes (i.e. a constant pursuit of better skills, as a strict mentor), serious facial expressions and the determination demonstrated to support children's needs.

Merging attributes, including, religiously devoted, frugal, preserving tradition, reminiscent, tough and strong-minded into a concept suggestive of the conservative stereotype of older persons is considered appropriate as supported by

literature (see for instance Hummert, Garstka, Shaner, Strahm 1994; Liu, Ng, Loong, Gee and Weatherall 2003).

### **Character type 3: Engaged in female-male relations**

“Engaged in female-male relations” was a character type which described how older characters in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements were engaged in marital or romantic relationships. Four subgroups were identified to account for dissimilarities within this character type.

The first subgroup was coded as “Intimate Couple Interactions”, which applied more to four UK older couples but only one Taiwanese couple. The intimacy in the couple interactions was suggested in actions, such as, kissing, hugging, leaning on each other or piggybacking. Overall, the images of happy marriages in UK TV advertisements were realized in the closeness of physical contact, while those in some Taiwanese TV advertisements were understood in another way (as elaborated on in the following paragraph).

Two older Taiwanese couples were deemed to have positive interactions and hence had happy marital relations. Nevertheless, the behavioural patterns suggestive of positive marital relations seemed to be rather reserved. They were depicted sitting next to each other quietly but they smiled at each other. A sense of peace, harmony and content could be detected and it was suggested that they enjoyed each other’s company. This subgroup, hence, was named as “Peaceful Companionship”.

A few older characters were depicted in marital relations with certain mild

problems, such as power struggles (i.e. a powerful/grumpy wife versus a timid husband), indifference (a wife prefers to have her pet, instead of her husband, in bed with her) or lack of passion (no kiss for more than 20 years). All of the associated examples (N=4) were ethnically Chinese or Taiwanese older persons though one was featured in a UK TV advertisement. This subtype was coded as "Problematic Couple Interactions".

Apart from the above problematic couple images which suggested asexual and impassionate marital lives, portraying older persons with sexual attractions and interests in pursuing love was identified. They were two UK older characters depicted as romantic partners, dating. They were representative of the last subgroup of older couple images, labelled as "love pursuers".

#### **Character type 4: Golden Ager**

"Golden Ager" represented a type of older people who were active in pursuing fun and maintaining good quality of later life. This character type was commonly found in both UK and Taiwanese data. However, slight differences within this character type emerged.

The first subtype of "Golden Ager" was named as "Health Conscious". It referred to a type of older person fully aware of the importance of maintaining good health. Therefore, they managed to find a means (exercise or taking vitamin supplements) for their health management. Healthy lifestyle was highly promoted in the advertisements featuring older characters of this subtype.

A few older characters were portrayed enjoying their life by travelling (hence,

coded as "Well-Travelled"), gardening (pursuing "Horticultural Leisure"), socialising with friends or deliberately looking for opportunities to make acquaintances ("Sociable"). They were also classified as "Golden Ager".

Another subgroup of "Golden Ager" was labelled as "Playful, Cheeky and Young at Heart". Older characters of this subcategory were portrayed, for instance, as dressing young (i.e. in a Hawaiian colourful shirt), enjoying jokes, showing a sense of humour (putting a lobster in the pants as a punishment), having fun (playing games with the family; treating a stair lift as a toy) and cheekily doing some mischievous tricks (i.e. stealing a piece of chicken). The cheeky and playful portrayals were also associated with humour, a point to be returned to later.

The last subgroup of "Golden Ager" categorized two UK older adults portrayed to be wealthy and affluent in TV advertisements. One was featured walking on the beach and understood as a man who purchased Spanish properties through the advertised agent. The other one was a female celebrity (Sharon Osbourne) leading a luxurious lifestyle in Hollywood.

Literature (Hummert et al. 1994) has revealed that it is appropriate to employ the term "Golden Ager" to represent a constellation of the above mentioned attributes, such as, wealthy, fun-loving, playful and health-conscious. Hence, the connections between the main concept "Golden Ager" (as a category) and the subgroups (as defining properties) in this study are justified.

### **Character type 5: Humorous**

The character type, "Humorous" emerged to conceptualise those older

characters who were laughed at in Taiwanese and UK TV advertisements. Seven subgroups were identified after comparing the humorous elements of each associated example.

The most significant subgroup was labelled as "Humour: Competence". This subtype suggested scenarios in which older characters' competence was foregrounded as the focus of humour in the advertisements. For example, their physical strength (i.e. an elderly lady raising a car easily with one hand or a mother with diabetes but highly active) or skills (i.e. grannies knitting cereals at a super-fast pace or a tea farmer killing worms with a bow and arrows) were exaggerated to create comic and amusing effects.

The second subgroup of humorous portrayals of older people was named as "Humour: Playful/Cheeky/Fun-loving". As the name suggests, the associated older characters demonstrated playful and fun-loving attitudes. They were portrayed enjoying jokes, having a sense of humour (i.e. putting a lobster in pants as a creative way of punishment), getting involved with games (i.e. playing apple bobbing; playing with a water-gun toy), and being naughty (stealing someone's food). Humour in relation to playfulness could also be realized by reading counter-stereotypical qualities. For example, two older characters were depicted atypically enjoying the use of a stair lift as if it was a toy not a mobility aid in association with the senile stereotype of older age. The portrayals implied a young-at-heart and child-like attitude.

The third subgroup was labelled as "Humour: female-male relationship". Certain characteristics in the portrayals of older couples were used for humorous

effects in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements, for instance, "losing passion and sexual interest", "power asymmetry between husband and wife" and "romantic dating". They were also qualities reflected in two subgroups of another character type "Female-Male Relations" (see "Love Pursuers" and "Problematic Couple Interactions").

The fourth subgroup was in relation to "incompetence" and hence, named as "Humour: Incompetence". Older characters classified in this subgroup were laughed at because they could not fulfil the required task (i.e. fighting against invisible plaque) or due to some kind of misunderstanding/misinterpretation of situations (i.e. a granny thinks her grandson is studying hard but he is actually indulging in a PC game).

The fifth subgroup of humour was named "Humour: Vulnerable". The associated characters appeared to be vulnerable because they were rather powerless, blameworthy, anxious, and helpless. Two associated characters (UK=1, TW=1) were portrayed as being challenged or blamed by others in the adverts. However, they could not cope with the blame and did nothing to defend themselves. The third example was a UK character depicted as a shop owner looking worried and timid as a strong and tall black customer entered in his shop. The adverts were comical and the depictions of these characters were arguably pejorative in nature.

The sixth subtype of humorous portrayals of older people was labelled as "Humour: Hilarious Actions". This type of humour was rather action-oriented. The associated older characters either demonstrated silly body movements or were

involved with hilarious actions. For example, one UK character was featured spitting in an audition, which he considered as funny but it was actually annoying. Another UK older character embraced others and kissed their foreheads to celebrate his favourite football team's victory, which made others feel abashed. Furthermore, two older UK male characters were deemed childish and silly because they competed with each other about who could finish their shopping first. They were thus in each other's way to stop the other to win. One Taiwanese older man's action of massaging his client was exaggerated to create dramatic and humorous effects in the advertisement. The other Taiwanese example was an elderly lady whose robot-like body movement, constant murmuring of the advertised noodle product's name and sudden stop in front of a pornographic poster in her grandson's room made her a laughable object in the advertisement.

The last subgroup of humorous portrayals of older people emerged to represent two examples associated with elements, such as offense and embarrassment. This subgroup was hence, labelled as "Humour: Offense and Embarrassment". Two UK characters depicted in the same TV advertisement were classified in this subtype. They were an older couple depicted at their daughter's and overhearing a voicemail left by their son-in-law. In the message left, their son-in-law called them "old duffers". Because of this accidental offense, the two older characters appeared to be very uneasy and embarrassed with their son-in-law on his return home.

### **Character type 6: Unwell and Declining in Health**

"Unwell and Declining in Health" incorporated all older characters who demonstrated certain social attitudes towards health problems they had. Three

subgroups were identified to account for the variations of this character type.

The first subgroup of "Unwell and Declining in Health" was labelled as "Images of illness: Coping Well". Older people classified into this subgroup were deemed as coping well with their health problems due to some positive attitudes and attributes they showed. For example, a UK character enjoyed using his newly installed stair lift as if it was a toy rather than simply a mobility aid. Other Taiwanese examples were depicted as strong, active and fit regardless of the health problems they had.

The second subgroup was "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence". Two Taiwanese older characters were classified in this subtype. They tried their best to do things on their own or find a means to regain health, so they would not become a burden to their children. The endeavour of maintaining independence was highlighted in the reference to their health problems in the advertisements.

The third subgroup was "Images of Illness: Vulnerable and Incompetent". This subgroup included 9 Taiwanese older characters who were involved with painful self-disclosure. The associated examples complained about their deteriorating health and some of them consequently earned sympathy from the addressee. Therefore, they were considered vulnerable and incompetent.

### **Character type 7: Incompetent**

Characters classified into the character type "Incompetent" were associated with failure in various regards. Various subgroups were identified and labelled as "Physically Incompetent", "Mentally Incompetent" and "Socially Incompetent".

Physically incompetent older persons were depicted “unable to do something well” due to various reasons. Sometimes, the reasons for not performing something well were due to older age. For example, a UK character expressed a belief in declining energy as the consequence of being older. Health problems were also the main elements of physical incompetence and they were only referred to in the Taiwanese data. In this case, this subtype was partially related to another theme, namely, “Unwell and Declining in Health”. Some characters were portrayed making a mess and they were also classified in this subtype.

“Mentally incompetent” included some characters whose talk did not make sense. In the advertisement, the content of their talk was expressed as “blah blah blah”. Furthermore, some Taiwanese characters were portrayed to be ignorant or lacked information so they could not understand things well and were misled. Therefore, they were cast in the roles of victims in the advertisements.

“Socially Incompetent” was a subtype to describe older characters depicted as poor or belonging to an economically vulnerable social group. For instance, one Taiwanese character was portrayed in need of help because he was ill, disabled and waiting for the establishment of a medial institution for the elderly. Another element of socially incompetent images was manifested in the portrayals in association with ageist manners (i.e. social discrimination or negative perceptions of older age).

### **Character type 8: Engaged in Intergenerational Relations**

“Engaged in Intergenerational Relations” was a theme generated to describe

the variety of portrayals in association with intergenerational and family contexts. The associated older characters were portrayed as family elders (either as parents or grandparents). The qualities of the intergenerational interactions or how the observed older characters acted as parents or grandparents were the focus of this character type. Four subtypes were discovered, including "Loving and Helpful Family Elders", "Authoritative Family Elders", "Independent Family Elders", and "Light-Hearted Family Elders".

"Loving and Helpful Family Elders" were depicted leading a family-centred lifestyle, as family carers, supportive parents or benevolent grandparents. Characters associated with this subtype were often grandmother figures in the advertisements, looking after the family, cooking for them, showing considerably nurturing nature and expressing how much they care for their family. This type of portrayal was more likely to be found in the Taiwanese TV advertisements. Even though there was one example derived from the UK data, the featured background was actually an Italian family context.

"Authoritative family elders" referred to those older persons depicted as an authoritative patriarch/matriarch. They made comments or judged their children's acts and these behaviours reinforced the authority and power they had over their children. Furthermore, the authoritative images were also suggested in the representations of older people as beneficiaries of filial piety. For instance, they were served and taken care of by their children. This subtype emerged particularly from the Taiwanese data.

"Independent Family Elders" were older characters who claimed their

independence by doing everything on their own or by maintaining good health so that they would not become burdens to their children. This subtype was unique to the Taiwanese data.

“Light-Hearted Family Elders” categorized the portrayal of one UK older character who was offended but laughed out loud while his son attempted to make a joke with him. He was, therefore, considered as a fun-lover, playful and light-hearted.

### **Character 9: Vulnerable**

The last character type was named as “Vulnerable” and included 14 older characters who showed negative emotions or underwent unpleasant incidents. According to the variety of constitutive elements connected to the general concept, “Vulnerable”, several dimensions of vulnerable images were identified. The subtypes were, for example, “Socially Discriminated/Rejected” (i.e. an older man who could not buy life insurance due to his older age), “Cheated/Victimized” (i.e. some older characters were misled and became victims of fraud), Suspicious/Over-Wary (an older man misunderstanding a good man as a villain and appeared to be timid), “Scared/Afraid” (an older man accidentally found a bomb and was shocked), “Painful Self-Disclosure” (a number of older characters complaining about their problems) and “Upset/Suffering/Sad” (i.e. bereaved and sad older widow, suffering from waiting, and upset about bad health).

Descriptions of all the examined examples in this current study and a list of the associated examples (coded with numbers) for all character types are presented in appendices 2 and 3. The next section will point out the cross-cultural variations in

the character types discussed above. The focus will be on the “qualitative differences” fostered through the constant comparisons of all UK and Taiwanese examples. Information of frequency is only mentioned to show whether certain concepts are unique to either the UK or Taiwanese data. Some cross-cultural variations will be claimed based on very few examples (e.g. “Love Pursuers” or “Light-Hearted Family Elder”). Nevertheless, even though they apply only in one of the two targeted advertising contexts, they are considered worthy of discussion, especially when they violate stereotypical expectations of older people.

### **5.3 Cultural comparisons of character types in UK and Taiwanese TV advertising**

Through the process of constant comparisons, differences in the portrayals of older people in the UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements naturally emerged. Discussions below will mainly focus on those character types (or the subtypes) unique to or primarily derived from the UK or Taiwanese data.

First, it was found that nearly all of the applicable examples for “Engaged in Intergenerational Relations” were in the Taiwanese data. Two of the four subgroups (“Authoritative Family Elders” and “Independent Family Elder”) were unique to the Taiwanese data. This trend seemed to imply that family roles and the related norms are more likely taken as significant cultural resources to portray older characters in Taiwanese TV advertising than in UK TV advertising. The subtypes of “Engaged in Intergenerational Relations” actually provide more information as to how images of grandparents in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements varied.

For example, “Authoritative Family Elders”, as a reflection of the Confucian notion of “Xiao” (filial piety), emerged exclusively from Taiwanese TV advertisements. The associated older characters were highly respected by their off-spring and practised their power over their children by playing supervising roles or making judgments. On the contrary, intergenerational asymmetry was less likely to be found in the representations of UK older people depicted as family seniors. Furthermore, “Light-Hearted Family Elders” (playful, not serious, enjoy joking with family members) was found applicable only to the UK data. Such kind of characterisation could be viewed as a contrast to the authoritative qualities

foregrounded in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

In addition, there was relatively more emphasis on family-based responsibilities in the portrayals of Taiwanese family seniors. "Loving and Helpful Family Elders" was first generated to describe one female older character (a grandmother in an Italian family) in an UK TV advert, but was mostly supported by the Taiwanese corpus of data. This means Taiwanese TV advertisements more likely featured older characters with commitments to the family, being benevolent and playing roles as family carers, as opposed to UK TV advertisements

Based on the above discussion, the Confucian notion of "Xiao" seemed to be an important cultural resource for advertisers to draw upon when depicting intergenerational scenarios in Taiwanese TV advertisements. However, a trend to challenge this traditional notion has emerged and is evident in the subtype, named as "Independent Family Elders", unique only to Taiwanese examples. What was addressed within this characterisation included the need to be independent and the avoidance of being a burden to children. This implied that the expectation of receiving Xiao from children should not be taken for granted. However, the underlying premise of "Xiao" was still implicitly referred to. The emergence of "Independent Family Elders" from the Taiwanese corpus of data might be read as a new trend to define successful ageing in Taiwanese society. It violated the traditional perception that being able to depend upon one's children at an older age is deemed as a valued reward of raising children (according to a Chinese saying, raising children is to protect oneself from becoming older).

The second cross-cultural variation was reflected in the ways older people

were depicted as vulnerable characters in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts. UK characters categorised as "Vulnerable" were suspicious or scared by something while their Taiwanese counterparts were depicted as suffering, feeling sad, engaged in painful self-disclosure (telling others about their problems), cheated/victimised (due to lack of information) and socially discriminated. Taiwanese examples' vulnerability derived from the "problems" they had and problems associated with older age (i.e. becoming ill, suffering from bereavement and ageist discrimination). On the other hand, the UK examples were represented humorously (see "Humour- vulnerability") and the manifested vulnerability was not so age-marked. Humour might be a device used to mitigate the negativity of vulnerability by the advertisers. Hence, compared to the portrayals of vulnerability in UK TV advertising, those found in Taiwanese TV advertising appeared to be more problem-oriented and arguably could exacerbate the vulnerable stereotype of older age to a greater extent.

The third main discrepancy was identified in the portrayals of older people with health problems. Taiwanese TV advertisements featured older people in terms of the stereotype of illness and feebleness much more than did UK TV advertisements. "Unwell and Declining in Health" was first generated to describe a character in a UK TV advert but was supported almost exclusively by the Taiwanese data. According to the emerging subcategories, images of older persons associated with health problems in Taiwanese TV advertisements were ascribed a mixture of positive and negative qualities. On the one hand, some were featured demonstrating positive attitudes as they coped well with their health problems (being shown active as if they were still fit and strong or making an endeavour to maintain their status of independence). However, most of the associated

Taiwanese examples fall into the subcategories, labelled as "Images of illness: Vulnerable and incompetent". Characters of this subcategory complained about or suffered from their illness. They might be blamed or failed to accomplish something as a consequence of declining health.

According to the above findings, there was a stronger trend to stigmatise older age with the negative attributes and emotions towards health problems in Taiwanese TV advertisements. Stigmatization may suggest an attitude of alienation so the status of declining health might be perceived as a problem.

However, the normalization of the necessity to maintain good health and independence may have the same effect. A number of subcategories enhanced the above notion. They were, for example, "Images of Illness: Coping Well", "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence", "Physically Capable" and "Health-Conscious". The above concepts either derived only from or applied mainly to Taiwanese examples. Therefore, as opposed to the relative absence of addressing health-relevant issues in UK TV advertising, Taiwanese TV advertisements seemed to highlight or value strong and fit images to a greater extent.

The fourth main cross-cultural difference was reflected in the portrayals of conservative and traditional older persons. Four out of the 5 subcategories of "Conservative and Traditional" were unique to the Taiwanese data. The conservative stereotype suggested in previous literature (e.g. Hummert 1990; Hummert et al. 1994) was arguably more strongly reinforced in Taiwanese advertising than in UK advertising. The relative emphasis of Conservatism and

Tradition in the Taiwanese corpus of data seemed to correspond to Liu, Ng, Loong, Gee and Weatherall's (2003) study on stereotypes of elderly Chinese and Europeans in New Zealand. They found that a subtype named as "Old-Timer" existed only in the stereotype structures for Chinese elders but not European elders. Similar to those subtypes unique to Taiwanese TV advertisements, "Old-Timer" was defined with traits, including, conservative, nostalgic, traditional, superstitious, religious, and frugal.

Finally, in terms of the portrayals of older couples in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements, the majority of UK examples were classified in the subcategory "Intimate Couple Interactions" while the majority of Taiwanese examples were categorized in terms of "Peaceful Companionship". Even though the images of married older couples in both the UK and Taiwanese data commonly suggested idyllic togetherness, older couples in UK TV advertisements were not featured as reserved and emotionally conservative to the same extent as those in Taiwanese TV advertisements.

Furthermore, there were, though very few (N=2), older characters in UK advertisements featured as "Love Pursuers". On the contrary, Taiwanese TV advertisements did not feature older couples in terms of sexual attraction and interest in passion and love. On the other hand, Taiwanese TV advertisements tended to depict problematic female-male interactions/relations (power asymmetry between the couple or lack of sexual interest). Furthermore, problematisation of couple interactions was found only ascribed to the portrayals of older couples living in Chinese societies (the only one UK example of "Problematic Couple Interactions" was a Chinese older man based in Hong Kong). All in all, the

asexual or sexless stereotype (Hummert et al. 1994) was more vividly reproduced in Taiwanese TV advertisements than in UK TV advertisements.

The cross-cultural differences presented so far will be summarised in a number of hypothetical statements in section 5.4. Comparisons between literature on stereotypes of older age and the character types developed in this current study are discussed in the following section. The purpose is to address the inappropriateness of using social representations to predict media representations of older people (as argued in chapter 2, section 2). The comparisons could also point out what was newly discovered in this study as opposed to previous literature.

## **5.4 Discussion and Conclusion**

### **5.4.1 Comparisons to literature on stereotypes of the elderly**

In order to answer research question 24 (how do the character types that emerged in this study differ from the literature on stereotypes and ageing?), Hummert et al.'s (1994) theory on stereotypes of the elderly was taken as the target to be compared with. Even though there were other possible targets for comparison (such as Schmidt and Boland 1986; Hummert 1990; Hummert et al. 1994), Hummert et al.'s (1994) theory was chosen for the following reasons. Their theory was developed more recently and the traits generated in previous studies (Schmidt and Boland 1986; Hummert 1990) were taken into consideration in their analyses. The stereotype structures in Hummert et al.'s (1994) study were more refined and elaborate because the age ranges of the participants included not only younger but also middle-aged and elderly participants. Moreover, Hummert et al.'s theory has been frequently utilized as an analytical framework in the literature exploring the degree to which media and social representations coincide (see Miller et al. 2004; Lee et al. 2007). Furthermore, their theory was also an object of comparison in the study examining cross-cultural differences in stereotypes of the elderly (Zhang and Hummert 2002). All in all, the theoretical significance of Hummert et al.'s theory is justified as one of the most representative study on stereotypes of the elderly in existing literature.

Hummert et al.'s (1994) positive stereotypes were all reflected in the character types discovered in the current study. For instance, character types, such as "Competent", "Golden Ager", "Light-hearted Family Elders" and "Independent Family Elders" were similar to Hummert et al.'s "Golden Ager" stereotype, which contains attributes such as active, healthy, sociable, health-conscious,

well-travelled, independent, fun-loving, capable and wealthy.

Furthermore, the character type "Conservative/Traditional" that emerged primarily from the Taiwanese corpus of data seemed to correspond to Hummert et al.'s (1994) "John Wayne Conservative" and "Small Town Neighbour" (a stereotype perceived by the elderly participants) stereotypes. These two stereotypes were defined by attributes such as frugal, old-fashioned, conservative, tough, reminiscing, determined, and religious. Even though these two stereotypes were developed in a Western society (the United States), they were however, according to the findings in this current study, more closely reflective of media representations of older people in the Taiwanese TV advertising context rather than UK TV advertising.

Hummert et al.'s (1994) "Perfect Grandparent" stereotype was consistent with "Loving and Helpful Family Elders", a subtype primarily derived from Taiwanese TV advertisements. The traits shared by these two concepts ("Perfect Grandparents" and "Loving and Helpful Family Elders", included loving, family-oriented, supportive and kind. However, compared to the traits associated with "Perfect Grandparent", additional characteristics were discovered in this study to describe portrayals of older persons in intergenerational relations. They were for instance "Authoritative Family Elders" and "Light-Hearted Family Elders" which were beyond what traditional images of benevolent grandparents can suggest. Furthermore, some characters portrayed as hilarious and offended parents or grandparents (see "Humour-Hilarious Actions" and "Humour-Offense and Embarrassment") could not be fully categorized in Hummert et al.'s "Perfect Grandparent" stereotype.

Negative stereotypes, such as "Vulnerable", "Despondent", "Severely Impaired" and "Mildly Impaired" developed by Hummert et al. (1994) incorporated attributes of character types, such as "Vulnerable", "Unwell and Declining in Health" (only the subcategory "Images of Illness: Vulnerable and Incompetent") and "Incompetent". No character type in this study resembled Hummert et al.'s "Recluse" (quiet, timid and naïve) and "Shrew/Curmudgeon" stereotypes (greedy, snobbish, demanding, ill-tempered and humourless).

Hummert et al.'s (1994) stereotype structures did not shed light on how older couples were perceived and what aspects about older persons were considered humorous. However, two traits "sexless" and "humourless", related, to an extent, to the above two issues, were included in Hummert et al.'s stereotype clusters. Some character types discovered in this study reflected opposite qualities from the above two traits. They were, for instance, "Humour-Playful/Cheeky/Fun-Loving" and "Love Pursuers". Consistent with Williams, et al.'s (2007) findings, portrayals of older adults in association with playful attitudes, romance and sexual attractions were possible in advertising and not reflected in Hummert et al.'s (1994) study.

Furthermore, "Images of Illness: Coping Well" and "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence" (two subcategories of "Unwell and Declining in Health") offered an alternative angle to view older people with health problems. In Hummert et al.'s theory, "sick" was connected with negative attributes, for instance, hopeless, sad, depressed, incoherent, senile, feeble and dependent. This discovery of "coping and independent" attitudes in relation to "illness" in the discovered character types of this study exemplified how "Golden Ager" (active, independent,

lively and health-conscious) and "Impaired" stereotypes (sick) can be juxtaposed and blended together to form a new "type" of older characters in advertising. This finding also implied a limit as to the positive-negative dichotomy in conceptualising representations of older people either on the cognitive level or in the media in existing literature. We could also come to a conclusion that Hummert et al.'s (1994) stereotype theory cannot be an adequate framework used to predict and describe the stereotypes constructed or cultivated in the advertising. However, it is also worthwhile to note that this finding is derived from advertising data and hence has to be interpreted by considering that advertising often constructs problems to be settled by the promoted products or services. Therefore, along with the images of decaying health (problems but negative stereotypes), healthy and active images as well as regaining/maintaining independence (positive stereotypes) are commodified as the aspired consequences. This partially explains the juxtaposition of "Golden Ager" and "Impaired" stereotypes as a repetitive theme in the portrayals of older characters in advertising.

#### **5.4.2 Conclusions**

In conclusion, the media representations of older people in British and Taiwanese TV advertisements could be categorized in 9 general character types emerged through constant comparison of 185 older characters (UK =61, TW=124).

Differences in the representations of older persons in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements in terms of the 9 character types (including the subcategories) are transformed into the following hypothetical statements which can be verified in future research (a point to be discussed more in chapter 7).

1. Taiwanese TV advertisements are more likely to feature older persons by drawing on cultural resources in relation to intergenerational relations/interactions than do UK TV advertisements.
2. Taiwanese TV advertisements show more family-oriented responsibilities and nurturing characteristics in the portrayals of older people in intergenerational roles than do UK TV advertisements.
3. Taiwanese TV advertisements emphasize power and authority in the portrayals of older persons in family contexts more than do UK TV advertisements.
4. The Confucian notion of "Xiao" is still an important cultural factor to determine cross-cultural variations in UK and Taiwanese media representations of older persons. However, a challenge to this notion begins to emerge in Taiwanese TV advertisements.
5. Taiwanese TV advertisements depict more "age-marked" vulnerability in the portrayals of older persons than do UK TV advertisements and are less likely to employ mitigating devices (e.g. humour) to weaken the negativity of Vulnerability.
6. Taiwanese TV advertisements show more stigmatization of health problems in the portrayals of older people than do UK TV advertisements.
7. Taiwanese TV advertisements feature more conservative and traditional older persons than do UK TV advertisements.
8. Older couple images in Taiwanese TV advertisements are more conservative in content than those in UK TV advertisements.
9. Romantic elements are more likely to be found in representations of older couples in UK TV advertisements than in Taiwanese TV advertisements.
10. Problematic couple relations are featured more in Taiwanese TV advertisements than in UK TV advertisements.

Finally, discussions regarding differences between the character types discovered in this study and Hummert et al.'s (1994) experimental research on stereotypes of the elderly are outlined below.

1. All positive stereotypes in Hummert et al.'s (1994) study were reflected in character types, such as, "Golden Ager", "Competent", "Conservative/Traditional" and "Engaged in Intergenerational Relations".
2. Hummert et al.'s (1994) "John Wayne Conservative" and "Small Town Neighbour" applied better to the ways older characters were represented in Taiwanese TV advertising, even though the concepts were developed in a Western society.
3. Hummert et al.'s (1994) "Perfect Grandparent" category was not an adequate concept to account for the varieties of intergenerational relations/interactions depicted in UK and TV advertisements, especially the subtypes such as "Authoritative Family Elders", "Embarrassing Family Elders" and "Disrespected Family Elders".
4. Some character types discovered in this study, such as, "Humour-Playful/Cheeky/Fun-Loving" and "Love Pursuers" violated the stereotypical expectations of "humourless" and "sexless" suggested in Hummert et al.'s theory.
5. "Images of Illness: Coping Well" and "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence" differed from Hummert et al.'s Impaired (Mildly/Severely Impaired) stereotypes (including the trait "sick") and showed a limit as to the positive-negative dichotomy in conceptualising representations of older people either on the cognitive level or in the media.

The following chapter will examine a separate set of data (TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products) from those in chapters 4 and 5. A critical discourse analytical approach was adopted to expand the inquiry into media representations of older people or older age.

## **chapter 6 Discursive representations of older age in the marketing of over 50s life insurance products**

### **6.1 Introduction**

#### **6.1.1 Research questions**

The analytical focus in chapter 6 is the ideological reading of advertising texts promoting over 50s life insurance products in the UK and Taiwan. The over 50s life insurance products are focused on because it is expected that the advertising texts would address several topics of interest in this study. For instance, age-related norms or values might be referred to in the examined advertising texts so as to define who the target consumers are and what they are like. These two aspects are relevant to the main subject of this thesis, that is, how older adults and older age are portrayed in advertising. More importantly, examining advertising texts for over 50s life insurance products allows the researcher to explore how death-related topics (culturally regarded as taboos) are discursively represented.

The research questions asked in this chapter are research questions 25-27 (see the rationale in chapter 2.3).

RQ 25: How is older age discursively represented in UK TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products?

RQ 26: How is older age discursively represented in Taiwanese TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products?

RQ 27: How different or similar are the discursive representations of older age in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products?

### **6.1.2 Fairclough's model and the organisation of chapter 6**

As discussed in chapter 3.3, the main research approach for these research questions is critical discourse analysis. Fairclough's perspective of CDA is considered applicable.

According to Fairclough (see more in chapter 3.3), critical discourse analysis in practice includes three dimensions: description, interpretation and explanation. Accordingly, sections 6.2 and 6.3 are aimed at the descriptions of linguistic features (the dimension of description) in relation to the ideological constructions of older age, building of product (ideological resources drawn upon to establish product images) and consumer images (subject positions offered to consumers, the nature of the constructed consumption community) in advertising texts for over 50s life insurance products. The above aspects, according to Fairclough (2001:165-174), are crucial for examining the ideological work of advertisements and related to the second dimension of CDA (the dimension of interpretation). Furthermore, the revealed information allows the researcher to infer the qualities of older age and older persons represented in the examined advertising texts.

The analysis for research question 25 is based on the UK corpus of data and presented in section 6.2. The findings derived from Taiwanese examples for RQ26 are elaborated in section 6.3 with special attention given to the comparisons to those from the UK corpus of data (as answers to RQ 27). In the concluding section (6.4), the identified discursive representations of older age and older people in advertising texts for over 50s life insurance products are re-examined in terms of how they reflect some sociological theories about

ageing or whether they reproduce certain cultural values of ageing. This part of the discussion is given in line with the third dimension of CDA, the stage of explanation, proposed by Fairclough.

### **6.1.3 Samples**

There were 7 UK and 4 Taiwanese examples selected as the data for research questions 25~27. They were convenience samples obtained through the means explained below.

The researcher attempted to collect samples (TV advertisements promoting over 50s life insurance in UK and Taiwan) dated until the end of 2007. As this type of product was very recently introduced into the Taiwanese market in late 2006 (Qui 2007), four Taiwanese samples broadcast in 2007 were obtained. They were collected from the four-month-long corpus of Taiwanese TV advertisements recorded in 2007 for the content analysis in this thesis (see details in chapter 3.1). They were produced to promote over 50s life insurance products provided by two companies, called "*Alico*" and "*CIGNA*", both originating from the United States. These two companies are the only two companies recently engaged in TV promotion of over 50s life insurance products in Taiwan.

The marketing of over 50s life insurance products in the United Kingdom has a longer history of TV promotion than it does in Taiwan. Therefore, the researcher deliberately sought a corpus of samples ranging across a longer time period (from 1999 to 2007). An extra set of UK examples employed for the CDA of over 50s life insurance adverts enabled the researcher to observe the

shift in ideological foci between earlier and more recent UK examples (while this cannot be done based on the Taiwanese set of examples). For example, earlier UK examples (dated back to 1999) contextualise discourses of ageing with active and counter-stereotypical portrayals of older adults. However, in more recent UK examples, the foci instead turn to address the responsibility to confront death in age-normalised discourse, which is more directly associated with the core function of life insurance products. Including earlier UK examples (those broadcast in 1999) allowed the researcher to explore certain advertising strategies which could also be found in some Taiwanese examples produced in more recent years to introduce over 50s life insurance products in the Taiwanese market. These advertising strategies commonly position target customers to have an active older age. Furthermore, a longitudinal study based on the UK set of data also enabled the observation of the changes in discursive representations of death-related topics as indicators of the shift in ideological stance towards ageing.

A total of 7 examples were selected for this part of analysis and they were obtained through a media company, called *Xtreme Information* (<http://www.xtremeinformation.com/>), which records TV advertisements broadcast on UK main TV channels regionally and nationwide. The seven UK examples were produced by several life insurance companies, called "*Sun Life*"; "*Cornhill Direct*"; "*Liverpool Victoria*"; "*American Life*"; and "*AXA Sun Life*". Nine other UK TV advertisements were collected but not included in the analysis because these adverts showed similar discursive conventions and strategies to build product and customer images as elaborated in the following sections.

#### **6.1.4 Transcriptions**

The examined data were television commercials with multimodal messages. The spoken, written and visual content were transcribed into three separate sections (as the verbal content, visual content and the caption) in the transcripts. By doing so, the interplay of the three modes of messages could be presented for further interpretation.

There are two types of spoken languages in the Taiwanese examples and they are Southern Min and Mandarin Chinese. They were transcribed with "Hanyu Pinyin" system and TLPA (Taiwan Language Phonetic Alphabet) system respectively. Different fonts were used to stand for the two languages in the transcripts of Taiwanese examples. Southern Min was presented with a bold and italic 10-size font while Mandarin Chinese was presented with a normal 10-size font. The visual content of the Taiwanese examples was described in English in the transcripts. Some words in the caption were transcribed with a bold 12-size font because they were words highlighted in the advertisements. English translations of the four Taiwanese examples were also provided.

Complete transcripts of all UK and Taiwanese examples are attached in Appendix 4. Extracts are referred to only when necessary for the following analysis.

## **6.2 Discursive representations of older age in UK TV advertisements for over 50s life insurance products**

### **6.2.1 Positioning target customers –discourses of active ageing**

In the examined advertising texts, customers are usually defined with reference to a chronological age range, clearly stated as “between 50 and 80” (ex. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 & 9) or “between 50 and 75” (ex. 5, 6 & 8) in spoken or written language. The covered age range includes those in their 50s who arguably just consider themselves as middle-aged, active at work, and full of life. In addition, the target customers also include those who are well into their old age and who might well view their age differently from those in their 50s. Having said that, how advertisers construct consumer images and consumer identity in order to appeal to customers with varied expectations towards their lives has become an intriguing topic for exploration. In the first three examples, the complex nature of ageing experiences is presented. Ageing experiences, as represented in the first three UK examples, are not closely connected with the chronological ages of the protagonists. Instead, in the conveyed advertising messages, advertisers intend to persuade target customers that how to age is not culturally prescribed but rather up to individuals to determine. In other words, age is irrelevant to the kind of later life which an individual chooses to lead and advertising texts for over 50s life insurance plans construct the consumption of the promoted life insurance plans as the key to the above conceptualisation of ageing. The discussion of the following three examples will elaborate this argument.

The first example to look at is a UK TV advertisement presented by John Craven, a British journalist and broadcaster, aged nearly 60 at the time of the

broadcast in 1999. The promoted product is *Sun Life's over 50 Plan*. In the advertisement, John Craven is featured walking his dog in the countryside with mild sunlight in the background. The advertisement begins with John Craven talking about what he perceives his age to be like:

(Extract from example 1, Sun Life Over 50 Plan, 1999)

1 they say you're only as old as you feel

2 so in that case

3 I'm just a youngster

...

5 in fact life has never felt better

6 if you like me are over 50

7 then you've reached the age when you need to start thinking about the future

...

9 If you'd like to leave something behind for your loved ones

10 There is an easy solution

11 It's called the Sun Life over 50 plan

...

22 staying young at heart is easy when you are taking care of the future

23 with the Sun Life over 50 plan

The first three lines in example 1 present an ideological frame that invites the viewers to perceive age in terms of one's psychological age – how one feels- which is preferably young ("I'm just a youngster", line 3). This is a self-appraisal given by the depicted celebrity, John Craven, whose self-identification is over 50 ("if you like me are over 50", line 6). There is a selection made between old and young in the first three lines. The saying that "you're only as old as you feel" (line 1) is probably more likely addressed to those whose appearance shows signs of ageing which probably has the potential to block them from claiming being young. Hence, the ground based on which one can still retain a 'youngster' identity becomes the inner-self which

can be young forever. This advertising text apparently resorts to the Cartesian split of mind and body which is a popular conceptualisation of ageing in the Western world. As discussed in chapter 1, this notion renders ageing as a process which individuals are destined to struggle against.

The depicted celebrity model, John Craven, chooses to perceive himself as a youngster (line 3) even though his age can be deemed as older and old enough to think about the legacy (“leave something behind for your loved ones”, line 9). The advertiser of this example, by depicting John Craven as identification for the target customers, showed that a “youngster” (line 3) identity can be retained regardless of advanced age. In order not to feel as old as your (the target addressees’) age (over 50s), keeping ‘young at heart’ becomes essential as implied in the first three lines. Therefore, “staying young at heart” (line 9) is highlighted in the end of the advert to echo the first theme articulated in this advertising text.

In the meantime, staying young at heart is also used to legitimate the promoted life insurance plan as it is directly linked to the responsibility an individual aged 50 and over should bear in mind (“taking care of the future” in line 22). For those who do not consume the life insurance plan, they therefore do not have the access into a consumer community where the members share a youngster identity. As opposed to being perceived as a youngster (line 3), they are probably categorised (as opposed to “youngster”, line 3 or “young”, line 22) as being older. In the end, the consumption of a life insurance plan, for the target customers, is not only a matter of responsibility but also a matter of maintaining a youngster identity (because of feeling young). The promoted life

insurance plan is no longer something prepared for the future (euphemistic expression of death, a topic to be turned to later) but also relevant to who the target customers can choose to become (a youngster or not) in the course of ageing. Ways of ageing constructed as personal choices for marketing over 50s life insurance plans can also be observed in the following two UK examples in which the represented protagonists prefer to lead a later life which is active and counter-stereotypical.

Examples 2 and 3 are TV ads marketing *Cornhill Direct Senior Security Plan* and were broadcast in 1999. Example 2 features an older male who is fond of motor biking. Example 3 portrays an older female who is content with her current status of life and considers what kind of later life she wants to lead. The following analyses articulate the nature of the constructed consumer community as well as identify the characteristics of the potential members of the community.

The ideological frame highlighted in the beginning of example 2 conveys a traditional expectation of what being old should be like. The relevant extract is shown below:

(Extract from example 2, *Cornhill Direct Senior Security Plan*, 1999)

There is a close-up of a grey-haired man's face throughout the advert. He is sometimes featured looking into the camera while speaking.

1 slow down she says

2 you are not getting any younger

3 you've worked hard all your life now you should relax

4 she thinks I am over doing it (slight laugh)

5 what happens to me if you go she says

6 don't worry I say  
7 it's all taken care of  
8 there are a few good things about getting older  
9 Cornhill senior security plan is one of them (1.0)  
10 It's life insurance put together for the over fifties (1.0)  
11 It *covers* me for the rest of my life for as little as 8 pounds a month  
12 And can give my family a cash lump sum when they need it most  
13 Didn't even need a medical to qualify  
14 the senior security plan means I don't have to worry about the future  
15 so I can start to relax  
16 but slow down? (smile)  
(The male protagonist is featured riding his motorbike off fast)

Basically, what is presented through the third person's voice in lines 1 to 5 is a social attitude towards retirement. The unidentified third voice may come from the protagonist's wife. The protagonist as a retiree is realised in the words "you've worked hard all your life now you should relax" in line 3. Older age is also labelled lexically ("not getting any younger", line 2; "getting older," line 8) in the text and visually (the protagonist's grey hair and wrinkled face) in the advert. Decoding the image of retirement informs the social meaning of older age in example 2. Retirement seems to be defined in relation to idleness, a sense of relaxation and disengagement. This is because the protagonist is (stereotypically) expected to lead a life at a slow and easy pace (thus "slow down", line 1; "you should relax", line 3; [not] "over doing it", line 4). The imperative tone in the above appeals in lines 1 and 3 implies that they are believed to be age-appropriate behaviours. However, they may not be endorsed (suggested in the rising tone following the imperative "slow down" in line 16 and the smiling facial expression given as the response to this request made by his wife) as age-relevant norms by the male protagonist whose way of ageing

represents the one which the target customers are convinced to be able to access with the aid of this life insurance plan. The way of ageing, as promoted in example 2, is realised visually when the protagonist is depicted riding his motorbike off fast in the last few seconds of the advert.

In contrast to slowing down as a value deemed appropriate by others, the protagonist apparently resorts to his own will when he comes to decide his own style of ageing. The chosen one is active, adventurous and risky in nature. An active middle-age image as embodied in the depiction of the protagonist is offered for the target addressees of this advert. The values voiced through the third person in lines 1-5 are prepared for the construction of a counter-stereotypical later life, which characterises the target customers imagined by the advertiser in this example. That is, members of the consumer community built in example 2 are those who would rather overlook certain age-appropriate behaviours prescribed in the given society, just like the protagonist.

The promoted ageing experiences in example 2, however, are not represented to be exempt from problems. Risks accompanying the protagonist's fast and active later life are suggested to be relevant to death ("what happens to me if you go", line 5) and worries your loved ones would have ("don't worry", line 6). Advertising often shows a problem-solution schema to promote products and services and in this advert, a consumer solution (a life insurance plan) is also offered so that active ageing can be made possible. In line 14, the promoted life insurance plan ("the senior security plan") is presented as a condition to remove (the protagonist's) worries or concerns

("I don't have to worry about the future", line 14) and also enables the protagonist to relax ("so I can start to relax", line 15) presumably because the risks derived from his chosen way of ageing are settled. Hence, he does not have to slow down (see line 16).

To decode the conveyed messages in this problem-solution schema is that consuming a life insurance plan is to seek for a certain kind of cover or assurance for a better future (e.g. to be able to relax, not to worry, no need to slow down and to age according to one's choice). Therefore, as implied in line 11 ("it covers me for the rest of my life"), the life insurance plan is presented as a cover mainly for the protagonist (also for the target customers) because he (not his family) is positioned grammatically as the object of the verb "cover" with the agent, "it", meaning the insurance plan. Like example 1, the advertiser in example 2 also directs the target customers to view the life insurance product as a means relevant to whom they would like to become when getting older or as an aid thereby they can demonstrate their own styles of ageing. The promoted life insurance plan in example 3 works in a similar way.

Example 3 also begins with a direct reference to a third person's voice (the presenter's daughter) about how older age is perceived. It ends with a choice between conforming to the traditional role of grandmother or a rather different view of later life embodied in the visual representation of the female protagonist engaging in tango dancing with a young and handsome male partner.

(Extract from example 3, Cornhill Direct Senior Security plan, 1999)

A close-up of a female protagonist's face is presented throughout the advert. The woman looks into the camera occasionally while speaking. She looks rather young-old with blonde short hair. She wears a pair of glasses but later takes them off.

1 mum, she says (.) It must be great when you get to your age

2 you haven't got a care in the world

3 you're healthy (.) you can do whatever you want

4 I suppose she is right

5 for the first time in years I can take it easy

6 especially now I know the future is taken care of with Cornhill Senior Security Plan

7 It's life insurance for the over fifties

8 Covers are made for the rest of my life for just eight pounds a month

9 I can get my family a lump sum when they need it most

10 I didn't even need a medical to qualify

(1.0)

11 so (1.0) how will I spend my (.) twilight years?

12 looking after my grandchildren? (.) baking cakes? (.) knitting (.)

13 all the things that grannies are supposed to do

(Tango music is on in the background with the female presenter dancing with a sexy, young and good-looking male partner)

This example begins with a discourse of age since the reference to age (in line 1) appears in the first line of this advertising text, which means the advertiser intended to construct a certain age identity for the target customers to possess and highlighted it as the main focus of this advert. The "age" mentioned in line 1 is vaguely specified as "older age" until the promoted product's target age range ("the over fifties", in line 7), the protagonist's being a grandmother (lines 12-13) and "twilight years" (line 11) are revealed. Through the views voiced by the protagonist's daughter, it is clear that the advertiser attempted to ascribe positive ageing to the target customers before defining them in terms of the chronological age ("the over fifties", in line 7). As discussed in chapter 1 (see a discussion in the section titled as "advertising as

an agent to perpetuate ageism in chapter 1), the marketing literature does not recommend the advertising strategy to directly characterise older customers in terms of their chronological age when promoting products in the grey market. It is because older customers, as believed by marketing researchers, do not often identify with their own age but rather prefer to be regarded much younger. Therefore, resorting to fit, healthy and active attributes is the rule of thumb when depicting older characters in adverts aimed at the grey market.

The above-mentioned marketing concern is often reflected in the highlight of positive ageing in adverts for over 50s life insurance plans. For instance, older age is conceptualised to be positive because it is represented as the peak of a lifetime ("in fact, life has never felt better", line 5, example 1) and with the visual construction of a casual atmosphere (walking a dog in the countryside with mild sunlight in the background) which probably suggests relaxation. In example 2, getting older is suggested to render benefits ("there are a few good things about getting older", line 8, UK example 2). As to example 3, positive evaluation of older age is even greater and more explicit as older age is, as clearly articulated in the first theme of this advert, a life stage which is care free ("you haven't got a care in the world", line 2). In addition, the traditional negative stereotypical impression of declining health is dismissed ("you're healthy" line 3). Positive ageing in example 3 is closely linked to the offer of a counter-stereotypical lifestyle as an option for the target consumers who are assumed to endorse the ageing experiences determined by individuals rather than stereotypical (or age-based) expectations. The advertiser in example 3 plays on the stereotype of the "perfect grandparent" (Hummert et al. 1994) which is presumably taken for granted as a typical role played by older females.

The female protagonist is portrayed to violate the perfect grandparent stereotype since she does not choose to act as a typical and traditional grandmother who looks after grandchildren, bakes cakes, and knits (line 12) but instead, she pursues a different way of ageing, which is full of fun and activity (she is portrayed dancing with a young man with smiling facial expressions). 'Twilight years' as an age reference here surely is ironic as what is implied in the female protagonist's lifestyle and active older age does not suggest any sign of approaching the end of her life or show any declining and decaying features.

Older age in example 3 is not represented as a constraint but rather as a factor liberating people from age-bounded roles. For instance, in lines 1 to 3, older age is characterised with a sense of freedom ("not a care in the world", line 2; "do whatever you want", line 3) and relief ("take it easy", line 5). An ideological implication triggered in the statement "for the first time in years I can take it easy" (line 5) is that reaching old age sets the female protagonist free from anything she was bound to do at a younger age. Hence, to a certain extent, older age is portrayed as a transition into the status of not having a prescribed role and as liberating. It seems that the so-called age-bound roles only apply to younger people and as they become older, the determination of what kinds of roles to play in later life relies on personal choices rather than age-graded expectations (suggested in lines 11 to 13). This view seems to be in line with the ageing experiences represented in the first two examples. That is, in the three examples discussed so far, chronological age does not play a fundamental role in determining what an individual would turn out to be in the ageing process or at the later life stage. Ageing experiences have the

complexity which should not be predicted merely based on age.

Like example 1 and example 2, positive ageing is prepared to market the life insurance plan in example 3. After elaborating the details of the promoted life insurance plan in lines 6-10 (the target age range, cost, basic utility and conditions), the immediate transition into the counter-stereotypical lifestyle through the conjunction "so" (line 11) arguably gives an impression that the product is the condition or basis thereby the presented way of ageing (active and fun) is made possible. Therefore, the conjunction "so" in line 11 can, though rather ambiguously, suggest a kind of coherence or relation between the preceding (lines 7-10) and the subsequent (lines 11-13) themes in the advert. By decoding the relation, the target customers, again, are invited to view an over 50s life insurance plan more than a financial product but a means relevant to the pursuit of their own ways of ageing.

In brief, the first three advertising texts for over 50s life insurance plans present ways of ageing which are not determined by individuals' chronological age but rather their own choices. Age-bound roles or behaviours are encouraged to be violated. Over 50s life insurance plans are represented as means to facilitate active older age. Therefore, it is argued that advertisers of the above UK examples used these strategies because they anticipated that their target customers do not "feel old" and do not like to be considered as old as their chronological age. Furthermore, they would like to present a new cohort of older customers different from preceding generations of older people in terms of blurring age-related boundaries and behavioural norms to which the previous generations have been expected to conform.

## 6.2.2 Conceptualisation of death

Advertising texts promoting life insurance provide suitable samples to explore how references to death or funeral expenses are handled. It is a topic which deserves research attention (see Coupland and Coupland 1997b) because the discursive strategies used to represent death in these adverts are reflective of social attitudes towards it. How to view mortality is considered to be an important aspect in the process of ageing. Hence, in order to observe how death is conceptualised, particular attention is drawn to how directly topics relevant to death are referred to and the metaphorical framing of what death means to people reaching older age.

First of all, the three examples discussed above tend to adopt rather euphemistic discursive strategies to express issues relevant to death. Since the first three examples highlight active older age (example 2 and 3) or position the target customers in terms of a cognitively young status (example 1), treating the inevitable consequence of ageing, death, as a taboo-like topic seems to be expected. This attitude is reflected in the discursive representations of death-relevant issues.

For instance, death is often referred to as "the future" in the first three examples:

- 6 if you like me are over 50
  - 7 then you've reached the age when you need to start thinking about the future ...
  - 9 If you'd like to leave something behind for your loved ones
- (Extract from example 1)

- 22 staying young at heart is easy when you are taking care of the future  
23 with the Sun Life over 50 plan  
(Extract from example 1)
  
- 14 the senior security plan means I don't have to worry about the future  
15 so I can start to relax  
(Extract from example 2)
  
- 5 for the first time in years I can take it easy  
6 especially now I know the future is taken care of with Cornhill Senior Security Plan  
(Extract from example 3)

What exactly "the future" signifies is left to be inferred by the audience on the basis of their pragmatic knowledge about what life insurance plans basically sell (i.e. paying a lump sum upon the policy holder's death) and the stereotypical association between old age and impending death.

In example 1, what "the future" means can be inferred in the textual context, for instance, by assuming the pragmatic coherence between "leave something behind for our loved ones" (line 9) and "the future" (line 7). In line 22, there is a juxtaposition of the element of youthfulness or being cognitively young ("staying young is easy", line 22) and the act of confronting death ("when you are taking care of the future", line 22). The (presumably) offensive effect caused by referring to death is mitigated by foregrounding "staying young" in the same sentence. Nevertheless, youthfulness is foregrounded in the main clause as the consequence of overcoming the fear of death, which is euphemised as "the future".

In example 2, the lexical reference to death is not only euphemised with

the phrase "the future" but also stigmatised. This is because "the future" is positioned as an object of the verb "worry about" (line 14). Hence, ideologically there is a negative connotation conveyed.

Other indirect references to death-relevant topics can be found in examples 2 and 3:

→ 11 it covers me for the rest of my life for as little as eight pounds a month  
12 and can give my family a cash lump sum when they need it most  
(Extract from example 2)

→ 8 covers are made for the rest of my life for just eight pounds a month  
9 I can get my family a lump sum when they need it most  
(Extract from example 3)

What draws the attention is the phrase "when they need it most", line 12 in example 2 and in line 9 in example 3. Pragmatically, the target audience is expected to be able to infer that it is the time when the protagonist dies. This is because life insurance plans mainly function as a financial protection for those left behind. However, when the time of death is discursively represented in this way, there is a high degree of ambiguity which indicates an intention to avoid direct reference to death. Hence, the observed euphemistic strategies used in the above three examples imply that death is considered to be a taboo-like topic and should be discursively repressed.

In contrast to the first three examples, more recent examples demonstrate relatively bold strategies to represent death. Examples 4 and 5 draw metaphorical frames to inform us how death is socially constructed.

Example 4 is a TV advertisement marketing a fifty plus plan provided by *Liverpool Victoria* and was broadcast in 2005. An elderly man is featured in his garden, talking about later life in relation to gardening.

(Extract from example 4, Liverpool Victoria the fifty plus plan, 2005)

1 ohhh

2 tidying up the garden can seem to be hard work

3 but it's great to know it's all done

4 it's a bit like that in life

5 as we get older

6 it's more important to be ready for whatever tomorrow may bring

7 now (.) with the fifty plus plan from Liverpool Victoria

8 the peace of mind that has been prepared could be yours

9 you can give your loved ones a guaranteed cash lump sum to help out with things

10 like funeral expenses and non-paid bills when you're no longer around

...

18 it doesn't take long tying up those loose ends

19 for real peace of mind (voiceover)

20 call Liverpool Victoria today

Example 4 begins with a discourse of gardening (lines 1-3), followed by a discourse of age (lines 4-6). As suggested in line 4 ("it's a bit like that in life"), a "garden which needs tidying up" is likened to "later life" (as suggested in "as we get older" line 5). The constructed ideological frame implies a subtle negative connotation about the nature of later life and the image of death.

The metaphor of tidying up a garden and the phrase "loose ends" in line 18 indirectly suggests that later life entails complexity. Hence, like a garden which needs tidying up, there are things in later life which need to be dealt with. The problematic nature of later life can also be realised in the uncertainty suggested

in the phrase “whatever tomorrow may bring” (line 6). That is suggestive of the impending and inevitable death in the local advertising context. Advanced age (“as we get older”, line 5) accounts for why death should be a concern and makes facing and dealing with death (“be ready” line 6) as an age-appropriate norm.

As suggested in the discourse of gardening, “tidying up the garden” is regarded as “hard work” (line 2). Given this, confronting death, similarly, is deemed to be not easy. However, in order to enhance the ideological force and the imperative power of the norm, positive evaluative expressions are intensively imposed upon the target viewers (“great” to know it’s all done, line 3; “important” to be ready, line 6) in addition to the promised advantage, “peace of mind” (line 8 and 19).

Even though “peace of mind” is not directly stated in the first three examples, the foregrounded characteristics, such as leisure, relaxation, idyllic status of life, freedom and no worries, to an extent, imply the same idea. These traits are presented as a consequence of the promoted life insurance plans. However, the constructed images of ageing in the first three UK examples could be considered as “pseudo-positive” as realities of deep old age, such as impending death and the inevitable result of ageing tend to be excluded in the conveyed messages.

In contrast, example 4 openly invites the target viewers to infer the “real” nature of peace of mind by taking into account how to bravely confront issues relevant to death, instead of taking up an attitude of denial. If so, the implied

ideological stance leads to a comparatively active orientation towards death in example 4. Hence, there is no need to avoid a more explicit reference to “funeral expenses” (line 10) and the verbal process of dying (“you’re no longer around”, line 10).

A more positive orientation towards death-related topics can be found in example 5. Example 5 is a TV advertisement promoting over 50s guaranteed plan provided by *American Life* and was broadcast in 2005. It features Lynda Bellingham (in her late 50s when the ad was recorded), a British actress, packing up presents in a homely dining room. A metaphor of gift giving is constructed in example 5, based on which the social meaning of death can be decoded.

(Extract from example 5 American Life over 50s guaranteed plan 2005)

- 1 birthdays anniversaries
- 2 it always seems to be someone’s special day
- 3 when you get to our age
- 4 it’s important to think about giving something more to your loved ones
- 5 the guaranteed 50 plus plan from American Life helps you plan for the future
- 6 and ensures that your affairs will be looked after when you’re gone
- 7 it’s a simple and affordable type of life insurance that
- 8 pays out a cash lump sum when you die to leave for your family to
- 9 help pay towards funeral expenses
- ...
- 20 act now and get the best gift of all (.) peace of mind

In order to interpret the cultural meaning of death as suggested in example 5, there is a need to identify the analogy between the theme of gift giving (lines 1-2) and the discourse of age (lines 3-4). Example 5 begins with the theme about gift preparation for special days (lines 1-2). The adverb

“always” (in line 2) implies routine and commonness of occasions to give out presents. Birthdays and anniversaries are those occasions which people celebrate and look forward to. Hence, they carry pleasant connotations. Furthermore, they are days representing milestones in life and are considered meaningful for people who are associated and involved with them. Bearing these interpretations in mind is important as they are crucial for us to infer how death is conceptualised in example 5.

In order to unfold the metaphorical meaning of death, there is a need to identify the ideological coherence between the theme of gift-giving and the following age-specific norm. The key is the act of “giving something” to “someone” on “certain occasions”. Giving something more to your loved ones (line 4) literally can be specified as giving “a cash lump sum to your family” (line 8). What is left to be inferred is the occasion when this “cash lump sum” is given to the family. “Death” hence comes into the picture since the meaning interpretation must be made in the context of marketing over 50s life insurance plans to older customers. Therefore, the day one dies can resemble those “special days” (line 2) when people give gifts to celebrate.

As argued above, those special days (birthdays or anniversaries) exemplified to give out gifts share the nature of commonness and routine. Moreover, they are days to be celebrated and for people to deliver a sense of joy and happiness. Bearing this quality in mind, the day one dies which is likened to those special days in this example can be interpreted as a day sharing the same nature of those special days. In this case, there is less shadow of fear to be detected by representing death in this way. Instead of

perceiving it as a taboo, this conceptualisation renders death more approachable. Furthermore, time of death is seen as an analogy to other lifespan milestones (e.g. "birthdays, anniversaries", line 1) which should be looked forward to and considered meaningful. Given this metaphorical analogy, an attitude of anticipation or at least planning without fear is implied towards the very end of life.

In terms of the lexical representation, a more direct reference to death can be found. As in example 5, "peace of mind" is raised as the reward ("gift", line 20). It seems to imply that apprehensions are inherent in older age but they can be removed as a consequence of a proactive attitude towards mortality. When denying death is no longer the ideological focus, the lexical representation of death becomes more direct, such as in the phrase "when you die" (line 8). Even though "the future" (line 5) is also used in this example to indicate the time of death, there is no need to infer the meaning by drawing upon the pragmatic knowledge about the commodity being sold. This is because what "the future" means is immediately clarified in a slightly euphemistic reference to death ("you're gone", line 6).

The next example (example 6) to be discussed also orients the target customers to directly confront death rather than to deny it. Example 6 is a TV advertisement broadcast in 2007, promoting the fifty plus plan again from *Liverpool Victoria*. It features Cilla Black, an English singer, in an exhibition room with pictures showing events, celebrities or fashion of the 1960s.

(Extract from example 6 Liverpool Victoria the fifty plus plan, 2007)

6 but nothing stays the same

7 sadly we all lose someone close to us

8 we can't prepare for the grief

9 but there is a way you can ease the money worries of those left behind

10 the fifty plus plan from LV can provide a guaranteed cash lump sum

11 to help towards things like funeral expense and unpaid bills

The discursive strategy used to introduce the subject of death to the target audience is to position them in the role of the bereaved ("we" all lose someone close to "us", line 7 and "we" can't prepare for the grief, line 8) as well as the protagonist positioned to be dead ("you" can ease the money worries of those left behind, line 9). Furthermore, there is no intention of avoiding the normal but negative emotional reactions towards death, such as "grief" (line 8) and "worries" (line 9). Given the discursive strategies used to raise issues relevant to death in example 6, the ideological stance taken to conceptualise death seems to suggest that death is accepted as it is. Hence, a lesser degree of mitigation is adopted in the attempt to position the audience to confront the very topic of death.

However, arguably, positive elements are to a certain extent introduced to lighten up the gloominess caused by the reference to death in example 6. Before elaborating on this argument, attention is turned to the strategy used in example 6 to define the target age group of the promoted life insurance product. Example 6 engages the target audience in the experience of reminiscing and puts them in a position to negotiate the constructed older age identity with the presented verbal and visual messages in the following extract.

### 6.2.3 Reminiscence and a sense of loss

(Extract from example, 6 Liverpool Victoria the fifty plus plan, 2007)

1 I love the sixties

(Cilla Black walks in an exhibition room demonstrating pictures of the 60s)

2 swinging London changing London (male voiceover)

(A picture shows three young women dressed in bright mini dresses typical of the 60s in front of a brightly coloured London double-decker bus)

3 John, Paul, George, Ringo

(male voiceover, girls screaming in the background)

(A picture shows policemen holding back a crowd of young girls suffering from mass hysteria on catching sight of their idols – the Beatles)

4 it was such a special time (Cilla Black says)

(Cilla Black is looking around the pictures symbolizing images of the 60s, for example, Carnaby Street, the “mods and rocker”, fashion styles, etc.)

5 that’s one small step for man (Neil Armstrong’s voice)

(A picture shows Neil Armstrong, the first man walking on the moon)

6 but nothing stays the same

(Cilla Black is featured standing in front of a picture of herself in the 60s and looking at it nostalgically)

7 Sadly we all lose someone close to us

8 We can’t prepare for the grief

9 but there is a way you can ease the money worries of those left behind

10 The fifty plus plan from LV can provide a guaranteed cash lump sum

11 to help toward things like funeral expenses and unpaid bills

In the above extract from example 6, a temporal space of the 60s is created in contrast to the present time. There are visual messages juxtaposing the young and the old (a young Cilla Black in the picture versus an older Cilla Black). The theme of reminiscence is realised in the nostalgic comments towards the past (“I love the sixties”, line 1; “it was such a special time,” line 4). Older age identity is thus constructed through this temporal framing strategy (Coupland, Coupland and Giles 1991). It is a commonly observed discursive strategy used by older people to mark their age in intergenerational talk.

Instead of referring directly to a categorising adjective, such as "older" (see examples 2 and 4), a specific period in lifespan, for example, "twilight years" (see example 3) or the stereotypical roles of old age (as in the retirees in example 2 or the grandmother in example 3), the target viewers of example 6 are, under the ideological frame of reminiscence, positioned to negotiate the constructed age identity by identifying with the presented temporal space (the sixties). Likewise, the presenter, Cilla Black, as a popular singer in the sixties, contributes partially to the reminiscence of the 60s that target customers are suggested to have.

Now, a special attention is given to the nature of the presented temporal space in example 6 and the plausible ideological function of the ways it is represented. The pictures of the sixties show the viewers the most salient cultural phenomena of that decade. The catchwords "swinging London" (line 2) summarises the dynamic fashion trends (mini-skirts, shopping areas like Carnaby Street, and Twiggy, the 'Queen of mod') which evolved in the UK or more specifically, London (see Donnelly 2005 for "swinging London"). From the target viewers' point of view, the decade of the 60s is represented as the peak of their youthful lives. The visual messages demonstrated in the exhibition room aim to relate the audience to the stereotypical cultural image of Britain in the 60s and perhaps also the symbol of youth culture in general as well. Furthermore, the revolutionary musical achievement of the Beatles (see "John, Paul, George, Ringo" in line 3, the hysterical fans in the picture, the screaming in the background) shows the significant cultural impact the UK had upon the young worldwide at that time. The famous quote ("that's one small step for men", line 5) by Neil Armstrong signifies an important milestone in the

development of high-technology in that decade. All in all, those presented to the target audience are the positive and glorious aspects of the sixties. Images full of youthfulness are foregrounded as well since there are young women dressed in mini skirts, young girls chasing the Beatles, and the portrait of young Cilla Black in her 20s.

This advert only presents the positive aspects of the 1960s. However, as a matter of fact, the decade of the 1960s did not just comprise positive historical trends as presented in example 6 but many problematic cultural phenomena, such as a perceived increase in drug abuse, rapid changes in moral attitudes, the Cold War, political disputes between the Right and the Left, and counter-cultural revolution by the young at that time (Hewison 1986; Marwick 1998; Green 1999; Donnelly 2005). From a critical discourse analytical point of view, the selection of what messages are included or excluded in a text can be considered ideological. Presenting historical events and famous celebrities emerging in the 1960s, as previously stated, functions to define the target customers of the life insurance plan in an oblique way. However, it is also suspected that the cheerful and light-hearted atmosphere produced in the emphasis on the positive sides of the 60s (lines 1-5), arguably, is to mitigate the impression of darkness and gloominess generated by the immediate transition into death-related issues ("sadly we all lose someone close to us", line 7; "We can't prepare for the grief [caused by death]", line 8 ) and a sense of loss ("but, nothing stays the same", line 6) in the following lines.

However, the mitigation does not work lexically (e.g. through constructing a metaphorical framing which views death as something with positive

attributions, such as, in example 5) but through the use of a 'feel good' strategy which relies on the target customers' nostalgic emotional reactions towards the 1960s (presumably positive) to be effective. In example 6, the exhibited historical events occurring in the 1960s are presented to draw the target customers' attention to the peak of their youth as well as the memories regarding their creativity and vitality. They are highlighted in the first move of the communication with the target customers in this advert. As compared with other UK examples discussed so far, this advert positions the target customers more directly in death-related roles, such as the bereaved ("sadly we all lose someone close to us", line 7) and the one being dead ("you can ease the money worries of those left behind", line 9), these subject positions are revealed rather later in this advert and therefore, death-related topics are perhaps not meant to be the priority of this advert. One reason to explain why the advertiser of example 6 chose to foreground the positive aspects of the 1960s and relatively background death-related topics can be that the potential offense caused by associating the target customers to death was taken into account. This is especially true when considering that some previous UK examples had demonstrated discursive conventions which to various degrees view death-related topics as a taboo or with complexity.

Viewing advertising over 50s life insurance plans as a discourse type, we can observe that mortality is not a topic which can be comfortably dealt with. Therefore, discursively euphemistic conventions or mitigating strategies (cloaking death with positive attributes can be one mitigating strategy) need to be employed to make the imperatives associated with preparing for and confronting death more easily identified with and accepted by the target

customers.

#### **6.2.4 Patronising discourse in the product information of over 50s life insurance plans**

The following analysis focuses on the discursive strategies used to unpick the product messages in the previously examined advertising texts as well as the ideological presuppositions which are taken for granted in the process of decoding product messages. UK advertising texts for over 50s life insurance plans conventionally address product characteristics which assume the target customers to have certain needs reinforcing negative stereotypical perceptions about older people. The conventionally addressed product characteristics include, for instance, the exemption of medical tests, the guarantee of acceptance or the assurance of no hard sale and disturbing sales call (see the following extracts).

- 18 you are guaranteed to be accepted without a medical (ex.1 Sun Life)
- 13 didn't even need a medical to qualify (ex.2 Cornhill Direct)
- 10 I didn't even need a medical to qualify (ex. 3 Cornhill Direct)
- 11 from just 8 pounds a month with no medical or health questions (ex.4 LV)
- 12 you are guaranteed to be accepted (ex. 4, LV)
- 13 and no salesperson will call (ex.4 LV)
- 11 you are guaranteed to be accepted (ex. 5, American Life)
- 13 There is no medical and no hard sell (ex. 5 American Life)
- 13 and with LV there is no medical or health questions (ex.6 LV)
- 14 so you're guaranteed to be accepted (ex.6 LV)

Through the emphasis on no medical test, potential customers are presumed to have concerns about their health condition and the requirement of

a medical is hence considered as an issue. When acceptance needs to be guaranteed, the target customers are placed in an inferior position as opposed to the life insurance providers. Potential customers are placed in a passive position in sentences referring to the issue of eligibility ("you are guaranteed to be accepted" in examples 1, 4, 5, and 6) and this grammatical feature ascribes a status of lesser power to customers. The emphasis on no medical can only draw attention to the stereotypical association between older age and declining health. The target customers are patronised because they are assumed to have a reason to avoid the scenario involving medical examination.

The assurance that "no salesman calls" (Example 4) or "no hard sell" (example 5) can be legitimated only if the stereotypical image of "Recluse" is taken into account in the process of the advertising texts. According to Schmidt and Boland (1986) as well as Hummert et al. (1994), this is a commonly perceived stereotype of older people. Attributes such as being suspicious of strangers, being quiet and timid define the stereotype of a "recluse". A patronising manner can be identified because the target customers are presumed to fall in this stereotype and perhaps are perceived as vulnerable as well. This explains why intrusion, such as hard selling and phone calls, is not welcome.

The above-mentioned ideological positioning of older customers appears in all UK advertising texts examined so far. There is one aspect of life insurance products which is also commonly addressed, that is, low cost and affordability (as shown in the extracts below).

- 12 for just six pounds a month (example 1, Sun Life 1999)
- 11 for as little as 8 pounds a month (example 2, Cornhill Direct 1999)
- 3 for just 8 pounds a month (example 3, Cornhill Direct 1999)
- 11 from just 8 pounds a month (example 4, Liverpool Victoria 2005)
- 12 cover costs from just 23 pence a day (example 5, American Life 2005)
- 12 it costs from eight pounds a month (example 6, Liverpool Victoria 2007)

As observed in the above extract, the information about the cost is highly detailed. The cost of the promoted life insurance plan is presented in terms of the cheapest (e.g. "for just", "for as little as", "from just") and always specified in pounds or pence as monthly or daily costs.

In addition, affordability is enhanced by using adverbs like "just" (example 1 and 3, 4) or "as little as" (example 2) preceding the details of the cost. Adjectives, such as "easy", "simple" and "affordable" are used for the same function:

- 10 this is an easy solution (Example 1, Sun Life 1999)
- 7 it's a simple and affordable type of life insurance (example 5, American Life 2005)

Addressing low cost is definitely a commonly employed advertising strategy in various marketing sections and therefore, it is not regarded as a unique feature of over 50s life insurance plans. However, it only raises concerns in the context of promoting over 50s life insurance plans because of the following reasons. First, it has already been discussed that advertisers share a patronising attitude in the emphasis of medical exemption or no intrusion in all UK examples and direct the target customers to view themselves in line with negative stereotypes of older age when interpreting these product messages.

We assume that advertisers of over 50s life insurance plans imagined the target customers consistently in line with negative stereotypical expectations of them when producing product messages in the adverts. Therefore, we cannot help wondering whether in the emphasis of low cost and affordability, another set of negative stereotyping of older people (e.g. limited financial power or poverty) was drawn upon by the advert producers. Emphasising low cost and assuming it as incentives for the target customers to buy over 50s life insurance plans can sound ironic especially in the examples (see especially in examples 2 and 3) where the protagonists (also the target customers) are represented to be affluent enough to afford the promoted golden ager lifestyles. Moreover, the offer of free gifts (parker pens, DVD players, cameras, alarm clocks or vouchers, etc.) appears in several UK examples (see the extracts below). In addition to the attributes of affordable and cheap, over 50s life insurance products are indeed presented as good bargains. However, this strategy can also sound patronising as the imagined customers are assumed to need these gifts and therefore can be successfully attracted to buy the life insurance products. They can hardly be associated with an adequate level of affluence and wealth.

21 you could also choose a free gift to welcome you as a policy holder  
(example 1, Sun Life)

14 there is a free gift when your plan starts (example 4, Liverpool Victoria)

18 choose from one of these welcome gifts (example 5, American Life)

15 there's a free gift (example 6, Liverpool Victoria)

In the above examples, the patronising discourses can be identified only through inferring what ideological assumptions about older age are taken for

granted. The example discussed next (example 7), however, does not adopt the same communicative strategy. Rather, it confirms the inferences made above about negative stereotypical reinforcement of older people.

Example 7 is a TV advertisement recorded in 2002 selling the guaranteed over 50 plan from AXA Sun Life. It features a man fishing by a canal and having a conversation with someone who is unseen by the audience.

Example 7: Sun Life the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan (2002)

M: the man featured in the advert fishing by a canal

V: the man whom the finishing man is talking to but invisible to the viewers

(A man is fishing by a canal on an overcast autumn day. He turns around to talk to a man who is unseen by the audience. He is featured looking straight into the camera which is behind him.)

1 M: I've been thinking

2 V: yes

3 M: after I've gone

4 V: yes

5 M: I'd like to leave the wife some cash

6 V: yes

7 M: to tide her over

8 V: yes

(The man turns back around again and he is shown from the front)

9 M: so I need (.) life insurance don't I?

10 V: yes

(The man now looks sideways into the camera)

11 M: but (.) I'm in the fifties

12 V: yes

(The camera zooms into his face from the front)

13 M: I'm not a rich man (in a serious tone)

14 V: yes

(The camera zooms right out from above him showing him alone on the canal bank except for a cyclist passing by behind him)

15 M: I've not been in the best of health

16 V: yes

(The camera slowly zooms in again on him from the front angle)

17 M: but I don't want to see a doctor

18 V: yes

(The man draws out a large fishing net from the water with a big hole at the bottom)

19 M: ok one last question

20 V: yes

(The man shows a slightly sarcastic facial expression)

21 M: do you think I'm gonna catch anything?

22 V: er (.) no

(The camera shot is now taken to show the canal right into the distance with the man, a solitary figure in the corner of the frame)

23 Female voiceover: if you're aged 50 to 80 and want life insurance you can afford

24 we guarantee to say yes

25 call us now on 0800 50 55 50 to find out more about this whole life plan

26 and how you could choose one of these free gifts

(A display of a kettle, carriage clock and a radio clock)

27 call 0800 50 55 50

28 for details of the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan from AXA Sun Life

29 and we'll say (.) Yes

(At the end of the advertisement, the older man uses his fishing rod instead of the fishing net with a big hole. However, he does not catch a fish but only a shoe.)

The first ten lines do not look so age-marked but from lines 11-18, the questions and answers gradually build up a similar representation of the target consumers to those realised through ideological implicatures in the previous UK examples. Special attention is drawn directly to the concerns of weakening health ("I've not been in the best of health", line 15) and inadequate financial power ("I'm not a rich man", line 13) that is linked to age ("the fifties", line 11). Age is stigmatised as if it is related to the problems. "I don't want to see a doctor" (line 17) suggests that using a medical as a criterion to determine the qualification for a potential customer may be face-threatening.

"Yes" is repeated frequently in example 7. The repetition of yes, in a way, works as a prelude of the guaranteed acceptance revealed at the end of the advertisement ("We guarantee to say yes", line 24; "we'll say yes", line 29). The repeated "yes" should not be just literally taken as the responses given by the invisible person with whom the presenter converses. On the other hand, the repeated "yes" could work ideologically by triggering a constant consent and agreement from the target audience. This intention can be detected if the camera angles are taken into account. The male presenter actually looks into the camera and the replies of "yes" are actually given out from the camera's position, namely, the viewer's position. The presenter addresses suggestively the viewers of the ad, rather than the person who is heard but not seen. By taking into account the socio-semiotic function of the visual messages, the repeated 'yes' can be read as if it is the viewer's voice. If so, the age-biased prejudices are imposed upon the viewers unconsciously by positioning them to concur with the conveyed messages.

The above discussion so far has regarded the discursive representations of older age in UK TV adverts promoting life insurance to the grey market. To what extent the above results are supported in those produced in Taiwan is the focus in the following analysis.

### **6.3 Analysis of Taiwanese examples and cross-cultural comparisons**

Some of the above-mentioned communicative/promotional strategies can also be observed in the Taiwanese examples. Therefore, the interpretations of Taiwanese examples will be delivered as comparisons to the UK analyses so as to avoid too many repetitions of similar arguments. Answers to research questions 26 and 27 are referred to in this section.

#### **6.3.1 Patronising communicative conventions in the building of product images**

There are certain discursive features conventionally observed in UK and Taiwanese examples in the building of product images. At times, the ideological implicatures of these features are suggestive of negative stereotypical perceptions about older age. Arguably, a patronising stance is adopted in the reference to topics, such as affordability, cost efficiency, medical exception, and customer eligibility. They are aspects to be elaborated below.

Affordability and cost efficiency are aspects highly emphasised in the Taiwanese examples. Specification of daily or monthly expenses can also be found (see the following extracts, especially as indicated by the arrows). Evaluative appraisals are sometimes adjacent to the details of cost (i.e. "siong o lok e si", "what is the most acclaimed is that", line 12, example 8) to reinforce the impression of low cost and easy affordability.

12 *siong o lok e si*

→ 13 *cit kang m bian ngoo cap kho tloh e ling po*

(example 8 Alico Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation:

12 What is the most acclaimed is that

13 it costs less than 50 dollars a day

(example 8 Alico Yi-Ding-Bao)

→

mei tian bu dao 50 yuan

(in the caption, example 8, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation:

less than 50 dollars a day

(in the caption, example 8, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

→

22 mei tian bu dao yi bai yuan

23 jiu ke yi yong you zhong shen bao zhang

(example 9 CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

22 with less than one hundred dollars a day

23 life-long cover can be possessed

→

mei tian **98** yuan

(in the caption, example 9, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

98 dollars per day

(in the caption, example 9, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

→

14 shi-ying: mui kang m bian goo cap kho

(Example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation:

14 Shi-ying: less than fifty dollars per day

(Example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

- zui di bu dao **50** yuan  
(in the caption, example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation:

The minimum is less than 50 dollars

(in the caption, example 10, Alico, Yi-ding-Bao)

- 13 Liao-jun: mei tian bu dao san shi qi yuan  
14 Liao-jun: jiu you zhong shen bao zhang la  
(extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

13: Liao-jun: with less than 37 dollars a day

14: Liao-jun: then there is a life-long cover

(extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

Furthermore, medical exemption is also commonly addressed in relation to the customer's acceptance for the policy in Taiwanese examples (see the following extracts). An association between older age and declining health is embedded in the emphasis of this aspect.

- 8 *m bian giam chat sin the*  
→ 9 *ma be bun li tit kue sia mih penn*  
(example 8, Alico Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation

8 there is no medical

9 and no health questions either

(example 8, Alico Yi-Ding-Bao)

- 13 bu young ti jian
- 14 bu wun jian kang zhung kuan
- 15 jue bu ju bao
- (Example 9, CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

- 13 no medical
- 14 no health questions
- 15 never refuse your application
- (Example 9, CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

- 3 Shi-ying: *link am cai ngia cuan kok te it tng? =*
- 4 Ladies in the park: = shen ti hao huai dou ke yi bao de
- (Extract from example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation:

- 3 shi-ying: do you know the first insurance policy in this country? =
- 4 Ladies in the park: = guarantees acceptance regardless of good or bad health
- (Extract from example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

- 10 Liao-jun: bu yong shen ti jian cha
- 11 Liao-jun: *a ma be kah li mng tang mng sai*
- 12 M2: *oh pi siau lian e be po hiam koh kha kan tan*
- (Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

- 10 Liao-jun: no medical
- 11 Liao-jun: no questions about this and that
- (Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

Like in the UK examples discussed in part one of this chapter, customer eligibility is also highlighted in the examined Taiwanese data. However, it seems

that in contrast to the UK examples, this aspect is made more salient in the Taiwanese examples. Most of the UK examples (e.g. examples 1-6) begin with the construction of ideological frames so as to conceptualise what older age means or to impose age-appropriate norms in order to legitimate the promoted life insurance plans. However, legitimation of why the utilities of life insurance products are useful and meaningful for older customers does not seem to be the focus in the Taiwanese examples. There is little information relating the social construction of old age to the consumption of products (except for the stigmatisation of old age in example 9 – see below). Instead, there is an abundance of messages reinforcing the promise of customer eligibility.

For example in example 8, the theme of guaranteed accessibility to the product is revealed in the first scene where the product name “yi ding bao” is shown. It indicates the salience in terms of the framing strategy. The product name semantically signifies “guaranteed acceptance”. Including the reference to the product name, “yi ding bao”, the theme of assured eligibility is repeated five times in the caption and in the verbal content of example 8, and three times in example 10.

mei quo ren shou  
quan guo shou chuang  
→ **yi ding bao** chang qing shou xian  
(in the caption, parallel to lines 1-2, example 8, Alico)

English translation

Alico

The first over 50s life insurance in Taiwan  
yi ding bao evergreen life insurance plan  
(in the caption, parallel to lines 1-2, example 8, Alico)

- 3 *cit thong tian ue*
- 4 *i ting po*
- 5 *cin kan tan o*
- 6 mei guo ren shou yi ding bao
- 7 *it ting ho li po*  
(Example 8 Alico Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation  
3 With a phone call  
4 acceptance is guaranteed  
5 really simple and easy  
6 American life insurance Yi Ding Bao  
7 guarantees to let you take up the policy  
(Example 8 Alico Yi-Ding-Bao)

- *yi ding bao* chang qing shou xian  
(in the caption, parallel to line 19, example 8, Alico)

English translation  
Yi-Ding-Bao Evergreen Life Insurance Plan  
(in the caption, parallel to line 19, example 8, Alico)

- 6 Shi-ying and ladies in the park: yi ding bao (the product name)  
(Example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

- 10 Male3: yi ding bao (the product name)  
(Example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

- 16 Shi-Ying: *cit thong tian ue*
- 17 Shi-Ying: *it ting po*

(Example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

English translation

16 Shi-ying: with a phone call

17 Shi-ying: acceptance is guaranteed

(Example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

Example 9 also begins with the theme of guaranteed acceptance along with problematisation of older age (see more discussions in 6-2-4). The product name, "bao zheng bao" in examples 9 and 11, also has a semantic meaning suggestive of promised acceptance. When it is referred to, the theme of assured eligibility is reinforced. Including the product name (bao zheng bao), this theme is repeated in the verbal content and in the caption five times in example 9, and six times in example 11.

8 ren he wu shi dao qi shi wu sui de ren

→ 9 kang jian ren shou bao zheng bao

10 shei dou huan ying

(Example 9 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

8 anyone aged between 50 and 75

9 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao

10 welcomes all

(Example 9 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

→ bao zheng cheng bao

(in the caption parallel to lines 9-10, example 9, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

guarantee to underwrite

(in the caption parallel to lines 9-10, example 9, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

→ 15 jue b ju bao  
(also in the parallel caption, example 9, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

15 never refuse your application

(also in the parallel caption, example 9, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

→ 28 kan jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao (the product name)  
(Example 9, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

28 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao (the product name)

(Example 9, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

→ bao zheng bao  
zhong shen shou xian zhuan an  
(in the caption, parallel to lines 31-32, example 9 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

Bao Zheng Bao Life Insurance Plan

Life-long insurance policy

(in the caption, parallel to lines 31-32, example 9 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

→ bao zheng bao  
(in the caption all through the ad, example 11, CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

→ 4 all older characters: kang jian ren shou bao zheng bao  
(Example 11 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

4 all older characters: CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao  
(Example 11 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao)

5 F1: *ciah lau koh e tang po hiam kam u iann?*

6 Liao-jun: *tong jian lo* ren he wu shi dao qi shi wu sui de ren

7 Liao-jun: *tian ue sui ka kha*

→ 8 Liao-jun: *po cing long po e tloh*

(Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

5 F1: is it true that buying insurance is possible despite of being old?

6 Liao-jun: Of course. Anyone aged between 50 and 75

7 Liao-jun: make a call right away

8 Liao-jun: acceptance is guaranteed

(Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao Zheng Bao)

→ bao zheng cheng bao

(in the caption parallel to lines 7-8)

English translation

Guarantees to underwrite

(in the caption parallel to lines 7-8)

24 ren he wu shi dao qi shi wu sui

→ 25 bao zheng dou neng bao

→ 26 kan jian ren shou bao zheng bao

(Example 11, CIGNA, Bao Zheng Bao)

English translation

24 anyone aged 50 to 75

25 is guaranteed to get

26 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao

(Example 11, CIGNA, Bao Zheng Bao)

Customer eligibility is made more prominent in the Taiwanese examples

than is the case with the UK examples. This argument can be supported by comparing the intensity of the references to this theme between Taiwanese and UK data. As indicated in the following extracts from the UK examples, guaranteed acceptance is only mentioned once in examples 1, 6, and 7, and twice in examples 4 and 5. In two examples (examples 2 and 3), this aspect is not presented.

18 you are guaranteed to be accepted without a medical  
(Example 1, Sun Life over 50 plan)

Examples 2 and 3 (Cornhill Senior Security Plan)  
no reference to guaranteed acceptance

guaranteed acceptance  
(in the caption parallel to lines 12-13, example 4, Liverpool Victoria, the fifty plus plan)

12 you are guaranteed to be accepted  
(Example 4 Liverpool Victoria, the fifty plus plan)

11 you are guaranteed to be accepted  
(Example 5, American Life, over 50s guaranteed plan)

Guaranteed acceptance  
(in the caption parallel to lines 10-15 example 5: American Life, over 50s guaranteed plan)

14 so you are guaranteed to be accepted  
(Example 6 Liverpool Victoria, the fifty plus plan)

24 we guarantee to say yes  
29 and we'll say yes  
(Example 7 AXA Sun Life, the guaranteed over 50 plan)

As stated previously, the emphasis on eligibility is reflected in the naming strategies of the two promoted life insurance products in the Taiwanese data.

Similarly, the same naming strategy can be found in two UK examples (examples 5 and 7, see below).

The product names in the UK examples:

Example 1: Sun Life over 50 plan

Example 2 & 3: Cornhill Direct Senior Security Plan

Example 4 & 6 Liverpool Victoria, the fifty plus plan

→ Example 5: American Life, over 50s guaranteed plan

→ Example 7: AXA Sun Life, the guaranteed over 50 plan

As to the semantic meanings of two promoted life insurance policies in the Taiwanese data, both “yi-ding-bao” and “bao-zheng-bao” convey the meaning of “guaranteed acceptance”. “Yi ding” is a Mandarin adverb, meaning, “certainly and surely”. “Bao-zheng” is a Mandarin verb equivalent to English verbs such as “to guarantee, to promise or to ensure”. They both function to modify the word “bao” in the product names. “Bao” stands for a verbal process which indicates either an insurance company’s action to underwrite or a customer’s action to take up an insurance policy. The former one is the appropriate meaning to read in this case. Given the above explanations, the product names (as nouns) in the four Taiwanese examples actually nominalise one foregrounded verbal process, that is, to ensure, to promise and to guarantee the customer’s access to the products and without an embarrassing rejection. The nominalisation enables the repetition of the two phrases in the advertising texts and conveniently transforms the highlighted verbal process into the advertising slogan. For instance, in example 10 (Alico, Yi-ding-bao), the phrase “yi ding bao” (Mandarin) or “it ting po” (Southern min, identical to Mandarin “yi ding bao”) is used as the advertising slogan (lines 6, 10 and 17, example 10) which purports to impose

the main theme easily through repetition.

The emphasis on guaranteed acceptance can be ideologically derogatory because the presupposition behind the claim is the taken-for-granted social (or age-based) discrimination that older customers would otherwise come across (also as made explicit in example 9). The naming strategy also projects an asymmetrical relationship. This is because the nominalised verbal process of guaranteeing acceptance actually entails two participants. One participant is portrayed as the “giver” (the insurance companies) and the other as a “receiver” (the customers). The asymmetrical relationship can also be supported by considering the power the insurance companies have as controlling agents or gatekeepers of social resources (presumably aspired to) over the target customers whose access is actually “allowed”. Thus, the given promise or guarantee of acceptance, at the surface level, seems to be an appeal and a privilege (as highlighted in the caption of example 10, “zhuan shu” 50-75 sui, “only for” the 50-75). Nevertheless, it may, in the meantime, patronise some target customers as if they need to be particularly assured on eligibility (especially given that in the market, customers in their 50s and 60s can still take up life insurance offered to the general public). In addition, it can also reinforce the relatively powerless position that the target age group presumably has in the given society. The ageist implication embedded in this appeal is that older people are believed to be disenfranchised by the society as well as by the advertisers of these Taiwanese examples. When potentially discriminatory practices are referred to in these advertising texts, association between vulnerability and older age is also perpetuated.

### 6.3.2 The consumption of lifestyles as legitimating devices

Similar to example 2 (a biker who does not want to slow down) and example 3 (a grandmother who does not want to spend her “twilight years” on being just a grandmother) in the UK data, examples 10 and 11 in the Taiwanese data legitimate the promoted life insurance plans by directing the target customers to perceive commodities as a means to gain access to certain lifestyles. The constructed lifestyles often demonstrate attributes such as confidence, independence, fun-seeking, and counter-stereotypical, leisure-oriented and physically active. In other words, explicitly positive ageing is ascribed to the consumer images in the above four examples. The messages also suggest that the protagonists are able to act young or age accordingly to what they want as a consequence of the consumption of the promoted life insurance products. These observations will now be elaborated on.

In example 10, many older characters are portrayed as physically active. For instance, a group of ladies are featured dancing in the park and the presenter approaches them to ask questions about the promoted product (see the visual description parallel to lines 1-2 in example 10 in appendix 4) and a man dressed in a tennis suit is also represented. The portrayals of several other older characters (labelled as male 1, 2, 3 and 4 in example 10) playing baseball are particularly informative as the interaction between what they claim and their visual representations can lead us to infer the social meaning ascribed to the promoted life insurance product (see the extract below).

(Extract from example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

7 Shi-ying: *siann mih po hiam?=-*

(The presenter, Shi-ying is featured posing the question to some

older men who are playing baseball and labelled as Male 1, 2, 3, and 4)

8 male 1&2: = rang wo men gen nian qing ren

9 male 1&2: xiang shou tong yiang de bao zhang

10 male 3: yi ding bao (the product name)

(a senior man, labelled as Male 4, is featured running base successfully and facing to the camera)

11 male 4: nian qing ren ke yi wo men dang ran ye ke yi

English translation:

7 Shi-ying: what is the life insurance policy?=  
8 male 1&2: = which allows us like youngsters

9 male 1&2: to enjoy the same cover

10 male 3: yi ding bao (the product name)

11 male 4: youngsters can and of course so can we

(Extract from example 10, Alico, Yi-Ding-Bao)

The visual representations of the older male characters in the above extract are overtly positive. This is because these men are depicted socially active (with friends), physically capable (playing baseball well) and perhaps acting young (wearing their baseball caps back to front).

In the verbal messages in the above extract, a young-old contrast is prominent. For instance, the product enables M1 and M2 to claim that they can have the same protection or cover as younger people (“rang wo men gen nian qing ren xiang shou tong yiang de bao zhang”, lines 8-9). At the semantic level, this utterance informs us that older customers, like younger customers, can take up an insurance policy. At the pragmatic level, the targeted customers need to draw upon an entailment that, without the promoted life insurance, they belong to a social group which does not share an equal position and has less social power than the younger age group they are directed to compare

themselves with.

In line 11, one protagonist comments that, compared to the young, he can demonstrate an equal level of physical strength which is implied in his success at running in baseball game. Actually, this comment can be taken literally as it pertains to the guaranteed acceptance referred to in the preceding lines. However, if the parallel visual messages are taken into consideration, the comment he gives reinforces the youthfulness and fitness he can demonstrate. Given that, the point made here is that the image of acting young is presented to contextualise the utilities of the product which the audience is positioned to focus on since the question in line 7.

The discursive strategy of highlighting an intergroup competition (lines 8-9; 11) not only promises social power (no discrimination based on age) enhanced by the consumption of the commodity but also orients the target customers to associating themselves with the image of youthfulness or active lifestyle (playing baseball like youngsters).

In example 11, the older protagonists are portrayed to be well-travelled ("*huann ging tau tin lai iu lam a*", meaning, "welcome to travel together" line 2). Therefore, there is a construction of a leisure-oriented lifestyle in this advertisement. The choice of this lifestyle, presumably one aspired to by the target customers, is linked to the consumption of the promoted life insurance in the following extract.

1 Liao-jun: *o ji san o pa sang*

2 Liao-jun: *huann ging tau tin lai iu lam a*

...

13 Liao-jun: mei tian bu dao san shi qi yuan

14 Liao-jun: jiu you zhong shen bao zhang la

15 M3: *lan la koo ho ka ti*

16 M3: *si se to bian chau huan*

17 M3: *kho lan ka ti lan ma e tan lai khi iu tai uan*

(Someone says yes in the background and every one laughs)

(Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

1 Liao-jun: older men and women

2 Liao-jun: welcome to travel together

...

13 Liao-jun: with less than 37 dollars a day

14 Liao-jun: then have life-long cover

15 M3: if we take care of ourselves well

16 M3: our children will not worry

17 M3: we can travel around Taiwan on our own

(Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

It is assumed that there is a coherence between the product messages given by the presenter, Liao-jun, in lines 13-14 and the following comments given by one of the older male characters (labelled as M3) in lines 15-17. Based on that premise, the social meanings of the promoted life insurance can be inferred. That is to say, because of the promoted commodity and the obtained life-long cover (line 14), independence ("*kho lan ka ti*", meaning, "on our own" in line 17) and the choice of leisure-oriented lifestyle ("*lan ma e tan lai khi iu tai wan*", meaning, "we can travel around Taiwan") are assumed to be linked together.

In sum, the promoted life insurance products in examples 10 and 11 are given extra social meanings through the associations of positive ageing. The same strategy can be found in UK examples 2 and 3 where the older protagonists are able to act counter-stereotypically due to the products being advertised.

In some instances, the target customers are directed to perceive themselves as the objects to be covered (in fact, their children or dependents are, not the policy holders). For instance, in example 11, the claim of “taking care of ourselves well” (“lan la koo ho ka ti”, line 15) implies that it is the policy holder’s life and future being taken care of by the product. This kind of ideological manipulation can also be realised lexico-grammatically in the UK example 2. The male protagonist who can freely choose a counter-stereotypical route to ageing asserts that “it covers me for the rest of my life” (line 11, example 2). The subject of the sentence is the promoted commodity and the protagonist is positioned as the object of the verbal process of covering. The indicated time period is the rest of his future life. The focus turns to his future being covered and invites the target viewers to infer the relation between the received cover and the choice of active ageing (riding off his bike fast without worries) presented at the end of the ad. In sum, the consumption of the commodity is framed as a choice of lifestyle or of ways to age. Such an ideological construction can be found both in the UK and Taiwanese examples.

### **6.3.3 Stigmatisation of older age as a legitimating device**

This section articulates how old age is stigmatised or problematised in order to legitimate the necessity and enhance the persuasive force of the over

50s life insurance product in example 9. This Taiwanese advertising text is discussed in comparison to example 7 in the UK data. Example 7 is used for comparison because it also directly represents the negative aspects of old age.

(Example 9, CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

(An older man is featured making a phone call at home)

1 M1: wei? Ting bu qing chu a ?

(M1 is on the phone but his call is cut off)

2 M1: ren lao le (M1 looks sad)

3 M1: mei yong le

4 M1: shen me dou bu cheng

5 M1: xiang mai ge bao xian

6 M1: yie bu cheng

7 Liao-jun: bie dan xin

8 Liao-jun: ren he wu shi dao qi shi su sui de ren

9 Liao-jun: kang jian ren shou bao zheng bao

10 Liao-jun: shei dou huan ying

English translation:

1 M1: hello? Can't you hear clearly?

(M1 is on the phone but his call is cut off)

2 M1: being old (M1 looks sad)

3 M1: is useless

4 M1: nothing can be done

5 M1: feeling like taking up an insurance policy

6 M1: also fails

7 Liao-jun: don't worry

8 Liao-jun: anyone aged between 50 and 75

9 Liao-jun: CIGNA bao zheng bao

10 Liao-jun: welcomes all

(Example 9, CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

Example 9 begins by presenting an older man (labelled as M1 in the above extract) attempting to make an enquiry about life insurance over the phone but

apparently he is rejected (as his call is cut off). Explicitly derogatory views about older age are presented, as reduced ability (“ren lao le mei yong le”, meaning, “being old means useless”, lines 2-3) is equated to becoming older. In addition, social exclusion is referred to because his enquiry is refused. The presented image of old age legitimates the promised welcome (line 10) and guaranteed acceptance (suggested in the product name, “bao zheng bao”, which will be discussed later).

11 L1: *aiya, kui sin ku na e cuan moo penn*

12 L1: *si cai si*

13 Liao-jun: bu yong ti jian

14 Liao-jun: bu wun jian kang zhuang kuan

15 Liao-jun: jue bu ju bao

(Example 9, CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation:

11 L1: (sigh) why are there health problems all over the body

12 L1: really annoying

13 Liao-jun: no medical

14 Liao-jun: no health questions

15 Liao-jun: never refuse your application

(Example 9, CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

The second communicative move in example 9 constructs an image of illness and feebleness, as the older lady portrayed in lines 11-12 is not well (*kui sin ku na e cuan moo penn*, meaning, health problems all over the body, line 11). This image is presented to legitimate the exemption from a medical and the promise of no health questions.

The stigmatisation of older age is used to reinforce the persuasive force of

the life insurance plan in example 9. The problematisation of old age can also be found in a question raised in example 11 (see the following extract). It presumes a social discrimination towards older aged people in an attempt to draw customers to appreciate the following product messages.

- 5 F1: *ciah lau koh e tang po hiam kam u iann?*  
6 Liao-jun: *tong jian lo* ren he wu shi dao qi shi wu sui de ren  
7 Liao-jun: *tian ue sui ka kha*  
8 *po cing long po e tioh*  
(Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

English translation

- 5 F1: is it true that buying insurance is possible despite being old?  
6 Liao-jun: of course anyone aged between 50 and 75  
7 Liao-jun: make a call right away  
8 Liao-jun: acceptance is guaranteed  
(Extract from example 11, CIGNA, Bao-Zheng-Bao)

Explicit references to age-associated problems can be insulting. In most of the examples in the UK database, directly representing negative stereotypes of old age is avoided except in example 7, where a man enumerates several concerns (“I’m not a rich man” in line 13; “I’ve not been in the best of health”, line 15) which sound age relevant in this case as they are preceded by reference to age (“I’m in the fifties”, line 11). However, what is different between UK example 7 and Taiwanese example 9 is that a mitigating strategy is adopted in example 7 caused by direct references to potentially insulting messages about older age. This argument is elaborated below.

(Extract from example 7, Sun Life AXA, The guaranteed over 50 plan)

11 M: but (.) I'm in the fifties

12 V: yes

13 M: I'm not a rich man (in a serious tone)

14 V: yes?

15 M: I've not been in the best of health

16 V: yes

17 M: but I don't want to see a doctor

18 V: yes

19 M: ok one last question

20 V: yes?

21 M: do you think I'm gonna catch anything?

(The man who fishes by a canal draws out a large fishing net from the water with a big hole at the bottom)

22 V: er (.) no

(The fishing man shows a slightly sarcastic facial expression)

(The following is female voiceover)

23 If you're aged 50 and 80 and want life insurance you can afford

24 we guarantee to say yes

(At the end, the man uses his fishing rod instead of the fishing net with a big hole. However, he still does not catch a fish but only a shoe)

What is notable in the above extract is the humorous elements constructed near the end (lines 19-22) after the accumulation of numerous concerns (lines 11-18) framed in older age ("the fifties", line 11). The humour derives from the older protagonist's sarcastic facial expression and his question (line 21), to which the answer is obvious (as nothing can be caught by using a net with a hole). Another humorous element comes from the scene in which the man catches something, but it's a shoe, not a fish. The protagonist is represented as cheeky, silly and slightly incapable as he fails in fishing. The humour is like a punch line which can mitigate the potential offense of the daunting image of older age, constructed in the protagonist's questions, by making the viewers laugh. Humour can work as a mitigating device because research has

suggested that humour about old age can serve as a coping means for the elderly (see Richman 1977; Weber and Cameron 1978). Hence, given the comparison between examples 7 and 9, UK advertisers appear to have more awareness to avoid ageism in advertising and will tend to employ certain discursive strategies to minimise the consequent effects.

### 6.3.4 Discursive representations of death

In contrast to the examined UK examples, there are hardly any references to “funeral expenses” or “death” in Taiwanese advertising for the over 50s life insurance products. The only exception is example 9, where bereavement is one of the themes (see the following extract).

(Example 9 CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

(An old lady, labelled as L2, is featured conversing with a guest, labelled as G, who intends to give her some money but is refused. Both of them are dressed in black. The old lady looks sad and sobs. The background is a dark indoor setting, presumably the lady’s home)

16 G: ren zou le zong yao hua qian de

(trying to give L2 money)

17 L2: xie xie ni bu young le (refusing to take the money)

18 L2: zheng de bu young le (sobbing)

19 Liao-jun: ***tioh sng hit kang kau***

20 Liao-jun: ***lan ma e tang an sim li khui***

English translation

16 G: after people are gone, there is always a need to spend money

17 L2: thank you. There is no need (refusing the money)

18 L2: really there is no need for the money (sobbing)

19 Liao-jun: even if that day comes

20 Liao-jun: we can also leave with peace of mind

(Example 9 CIGNA Bao-Zheng-Bao)

The conversation between the guest and the old lady in the above extract clearly indicates the scenario involving a funeral because it is a custom to give the bereaved money for funeral expenses in Taiwan. In terms of the visual representations, the theme of death is directly suggested (i.e. sobbing, black dress, the gloomy physical setting). There is no visual representation of death in the UK examples.

However, in terms of the lexical representations of death-relevant issues, similar to some UK examples (i.e. examples 1-3), euphemisation can be identified in example 9, for instance, “ren zou le” (line 16), “hit kang kau” (line 19), and “li khui” (line 20). “Ren zou le” (Mandarin) can be literally translated as “people went away” in English. “Hit kang kau” (Southern Min) can be literally translated as “that day comes”. “Li khui” (Southern Min) is a verb, literally translated as “to leave”. However, the pragmatic meanings, “to die” or “the day of death” can be inferred based on the visual contextualisation of the bereavement.

The manifested cross-cultural differences and similarities in the discursive representations of older age and the evoked ideological implicatures in the process of building product and customer images are summarised in the subsequent section. They are discussed in relation to some sociological observations of ageing.

## **6.4 Discussion and Conclusions**

The findings discussed so far in this chapter are outlined under the following headings: choices of lifestyle and the consumption of commodities, positive construction of ageing, juxtaposition of positive and negative ageing, and cultural representations of death.

### **6.4.1 Choices of lifestyle and the consumption of life insurance plans**

The promotion of over 50s life insurance products in the UK and Taiwanese examples is closely linked to choices of lifestyle (see ex. 2 and 3 in UK data & 10 and 11 in Taiwanese data). The same strategy can be found in the promotional context of selling holidays to the over 50s (Ylänne-McEwen, 2000). The consumption of over 50s life insurance products, hence, has certain social and symbolic meanings, such as a means to gain access to independence, confidence, youthfulness or untraditional ways of ageing.

The expansion of consumer culture is a critical factor in explaining the experience of ageing which revolves around the consumption of commodities and leisure (Featherstone and Hepworth 2005). Following Baudrillard (1975 and 1981, cited in Featherstone 1991), Featherstone (1991) argues that in consumer culture, the use of materials is not simply for the sake of the utilities but also for the communicative and connotative meanings of the commodities. He further argues that the demand and supply of materials is accordingly operated in relation to the construction of lifestyles. Advertising texts, such as those examined in this study, are part of the lifestyle imagery or the psychological experiences consumed with the commodity (Leiss, 1983, cited in Featherstone 1991). Hence, customers are oriented to believing that they are

allowed to project their individuality, to pursue a sense of adventure and to have more options [to age] in life (Featherstone 1991:86) in those examples which associate lifestyle construction with the consumption of commodities.

#### **6.4.2 Positive construction of ageing**

In the earlier UK examples (ex. 1, 2, and 3) and two of the Taiwanese examples (ex. 10 and 11), there is an explicit construction of positive ageing, synonymous with attributes such as fun, adventure, confidence, contentment or physical strength.

In the first three UK examples collected in 1999 represented satisfied older protagonists able to lead active lifestyles (examples 2 and 3) and feel cognitively young ("feeling young at heart is easy", in example 1) with the aid of the promoted life insurance plans. The target customers of over 50s life insurance plans in the first three UK examples are imagined as those who believe that ones' ageing experiences are not bound merely by their chronological age or do not have to share a collective form (such as to play a grandmother role or to slow down as expected in stereotypes of older people). Instead, ageing experiences can be chosen to reflect one's subjective identity rather an age identity.

The attribute of being young at heart in example 1 is apparently raised to attract those who differentiate the ageing of the self from the ageing of their bodies. The inner self is considered to be eternally youthful but the physically ageing bodies conceal the young self. In this case, the images of ageing reflect the notion of "the mask of old age" (Hepworth 1991; Featherstone and

Hepworth 1989). Old age is metaphorically likened to a mask because it disguises an older person's inner self which has not changed since younger age. When the ideological focus centres on this notion, the promoted life insurance is thus transformed as a consumerist solution which helps the target consumers to transcend age boundaries or at least, the consumerist lifestyle extends to the consumption of life insurance plans.

Examples 2 and 3 appear to portray the protagonists in line with some features which can be identified as a "mid-life culture" (Featherstone and Hepworth 1989). The term "mid-life culture", according to Featherstone and Hepworth (1989) refers to a "collection of ideals which intersect around the concept of youthfulness...and the irrelevance of chronologically determined age-related statuses" (p.153). They also argue that mid-lifers are dedicated to liberating themselves from chronological bonds and distance from deep old age (ibid. p154). Such an attitude towards ageing is manifest in the ideological stance constructed in examples 2 and 3 because these two examples present images of ageing to be more diverse, flexible and individualised.

Example 10 in the Taiwanese data highlights physical strength in the images of older characters and arguably this can be regarded as an important, positive element in the construction of ageing. However, because a comparison of the demonstrated physical strength is made with respect to younger people, youthfulness is reinforced as an aspiration. In addition, the 'uni-age style' (Featherstone and Hepworth 1989:144; Blaikie 1999:102) featured in some of the older characters' behaviour otherwise associated with the young (i.e. wearing baseball caps back to front) demonstrates an attempt to blur

age-based boundaries. It has been argued that such images also reflect a mid-lifestyle by emphasising the liberation from chronological bonds or age-appropriate behaviours. All in all, the ideological stance in the depictions of older age in example 10, to a certain extent, is consistent with those revealed in the first three UK examples. That is to say, positive ageing is not constructed on the basis of neutral acceptance of older age as it is.

The reference to claiming independence from children in example 11 seems to reshape the cultural expectations of older people that are defined in terms of Confucian doctrines, for instance, the notion of "filial piety", which articulates the interactional norms between the young and the old or parents and children (Ho 1994; Sung 2000, 2001). If this notion was endorsed in example 11, there would be no need to disassociate the older protagonists from the dependent stereotype (as receiving care from children is taken for granted in Confucian tradition). However, in the construction of the leisure-oriented lifestyle ("we can travel around Taiwan", line 17) in example 11, the violation of this tradition is also encouraged. This observation seems to reflect Hsu's (2007) research findings regarding Taiwanese older people's perspectives on successful ageing. Hsu (2007) revealed that autonomy and independence are two of the crucial factors that determine whether elderly people consider themselves as ageing well in contemporary Taiwanese society. Therefore, the agendas for successful and positive ageing, as perceived by Taiwanese elders and as promoted in example 11, started to show convergence towards Western cultures in which independence and autonomy are highly valued. Globalisation may play a part in this transition and this can be regarded as a sign of the declining impact of the Confucian tradition on Taiwanese society.

### **6.4.3 Juxtaposition of positive and negative ageing**

As discussed in the previous section, positive ageing is often resorted to by advertisers to market over 50s life insurance plans. At the surface level, one may judge that the representations of older people are obviously positive and the attitudes towards older age are in no ways derogatory. However, while unpacking the embedded ideological stance towards older age in the discursive representations of the promoted products, the above arguments can no longer be very defensible. The findings reveal that problematisation of old age is commonly found in the UK and Taiwanese examples. Furthermore, in most of the examined examples in both the UK and Taiwanese data, the juxtaposition of positive and negative ageing can be observed. However, positive ageing is foregrounded or more explicitly revealed in the ideological construction of mid-lifestyles while ageist ideology is backgrounded or implied in the discourse and presumes declining abilities with advancing age to be true. There are even examples (see ex. 7 in UK and ex. 9 in the Taiwanese data) which directly stigmatise ageing to legitimise the utilities of the products.

The problematisation of old age in advertising contexts has its precedents, such as in advertising for skin-care products (Coupland, 2003 and 2007). In addition, juxtaposing counter-stereotypical images of ageing and traditional societal assumptions about older age is not a new strategy used to construct customer images in promotional texts targeting the over 50s. For instance, as Ylänne-McEwen (2000) shows, holidays for the over 50s in the UK are marketed by addressing lifestyles associated with romance, adventure and enjoyment. Nevertheless, in the meantime, communalism, insecurity and dependency are also reflected in arranged activities for older customers to attend during the

holidays.

Negative ageing is reflected in some of the names of over 50s life insurance products which emphasise guaranteed acceptance. These product names orient target customers to draw upon insecurity and perhaps a relatively inferior position subject to the power of insurance companies that are gatekeepers of social resources presumably aspired to by older consumers. Compared with the titles ("Golden Times", "Golden Year" and "Young at Heart") of the UK holidays studied by Ylänne-McEwen (2000), the naming strategies adopted to sell over 50s life insurance products in the UK (e.g. Senior Security Plan, over 50s Guaranteed Plan) and Taiwan(yi ding bao, bao zheng bao) seem to position the target consumers with certain needs and concerns which may be relevant to negative stereotypes of older people to a greater extent and therefore, stigmatise older people further.

#### **6.4.4 Cultural representations of death**

From a developmental point of view, death itself is considered as a central aspect to deal with in later life. For instance, Erikson (1982) formulated eight psychological stages describing ego development from infancy to older age. Each stage represents an ego choice or crisis to be resolved for the future development of personality or success in adapting both the inner- or outer-world. The last stage particularly pertains to death. As Erikson (1982) argued, in late adulthood, a sense of ego integrity should be developed and it is about the acceptance that one's life has been meaningful and that death is inevitable. However, at this stage, the crisis of despair deriving from the fear of death should also be overcome so that the sense of integrity could be arrived at.

Acceptance of death without a sense of loss and fear is crucial.

Butler (1963) also identified a key psychological task in old age, which is called "life reviewing". Life reviewing is defined as a naturally occurring and universal mental process triggered when people realise the approaching of death. This process consists of reminiscence, reconsidering the meaning of life and thinking about previous experiences.

The above statements indicate that growing awareness and acceptance of death brings a positive impact of the process of ageing and can foster positive attitudes towards one's later life. Peck (1968), on the basis of Erikson's (1982) theory, suggested that a positive adaptation to death is possible and it enables self-perpetuation after death. As he claimed, living later life constructively can be achieved by making "life more secure, more meaningful, or happier for the people who will go on after one dies" (Peck 1968:91). Therefore, this concept takes an altruistic orientation into consideration for successful ageing. Altruistic appeals and reference to making pre-financed arrangements for the sake of the family are useful for advertisers to sell death-relevant products, such as funerals (c.f. Wernick 1995).

However, it is also argued that from advertisers' point of view, the very topic of death may be troublesome due to its negativity in general. The reference to death, hence, needs to be neutralised, euphemised or mitigated in advertising. Repression of death in the media is common. As Wernick (1995:281) pointed out, in consumer magazines targeting the mature or older age groups in Western countries (i.e. *Modern Maturity* in the U.S., *Discovery* in

Canada and *Choice* in the UK), there are no columns addressing preparation for death. On the other hand, they have constantly perpetuated identification of happy old age and staying young.

Even though acceptance of death plays an important role in psychological development in later life (Butler 1963, Erikson 1982, Peck 1969), this topic is still treated as the most forbidden subject of all (Ariès 1978). Denial of death is even considered as the “worm at the core” of psychological life and a universal fear at least in adulthood (Becker 1973:15). However, in general, the examined UK advertising texts for over 50s life insurance plans do not show an attitude to completely deny death and do not articulate fear of death obviously. Instead, A shift from mitigated towards more direct representations of death can be found in the examined UK examples. The talk of death is more euphemistically delivered in earlier UK examples (ex. 1-3, collected in 1999) because active older age and being young (at heart) are highlighted. Death is the loss of life and the end of ageing. It has the nature contrary to the image of active older age and the claim of being young in whatever way. This conceptualisation of older as active very likely renders death a topic to be mitigated rather than boldly articulated in the first three UK examples.

In the more recent examples, such as examples 4 and 5 (broadcast in 2005), metaphors play an important role in decoding the cultural representations of death. The problematic nature is still ascribed to the very topic of death but at least, in example 4 (the metaphor of gardening), there is an ideological stance towards death constructed at the initial stage of the advertisement in order to justify the necessity of the promoted life insurance

product and there is no avoidance to impose the awareness of death upon the viewers.

Through the metaphor of gift giving in example 5, the viewers are invited to take a positive view towards the end of life and an altruistic stance is embedded (Peck 1968).

As to the last two UK examples (example 6 and 7), viewers are directly positioned to take up the roles of the bereaved or the dead in order to identify with the utility of the promoted commodities. Such positioning may be offensive and there are strategies used to mitigate potential offense, such as the use of humour (example 7) and reminiscing of the 'good old days' (example 6). In brief, regardless of the differences in the discursive strategies, all UK examples, to a certain extent, refer often obliquely to topics relevant to the end of life (funeral expenses or the act of dying, or the time of death).

On the other hand, the talk of death is mostly repressed in Taiwanese TV advertising texts promoting over 50s life insurance products (except for ex. 9 where bereavement is visually represented). The silencing of mortality is marked especially in advertising that involves the association between death and the consumption of life insurance plans. As Huang (1989) points out, Chinese perspectives on death and dying are reflected in the daily use of language. For instance, the word "death" or its synonyms are forbidden on happy occasions. Words (i.e. the number "four") with a similar pronunciation to "death" are carefully used in order to avoid the association with it. Taiwanese advertising texts for over 50s life insurance appear to reinforce this cultural

attitude towards death as indicated in the above statements. Fear of death in Taiwanese examples is embodied in the avoidance of making “preparations for funeral expenses” (widely mentioned in the UK examples) as the purpose of the consumption of life insurance and confronting death as an age-appropriate norm. There is only one Taiwanese example (ex. 9) which sheds some light on death as it is highly graphic about a funeral. However, mitigation of death can also be found. While viewing the scene of a funeral suggested by a woman sobbing in the advert, the target customers are positioned as observers of the consequence (the need of money) of someone’s death rather than being positioned as the one being dead or bereaved (see UK example 6). There is certain distance kept between the viewers and the depicted funeral and bereavement in this case. Death, arguably, can not be regarded as directly confronted in example 9 though the scenario of a funeral is suggested.

#### **6.4.5 Concluding remarks**

In conclusion, the discussions presented in this chapter reveal more similarities than differences in the discursive representations of older people and older age in the two data sets. As to the main difference, the stigmatisation of older age is more directly expressed as a legitimating device of the advertised over 50s life insurance product in the Taiwanese data. It is delivered without employing any mitigating devices to downgrade the potentially offensive impressions caused by problematising older age (see the discussion in section 6.3.3). Another difference identified in the UK and Taiwanese analyses indicates a higher degree of avoiding the reference of death-related topics in the marketing of over 50s life insurance products in Taiwan (except for ex. 9).

As to the main similarities, positive ageing is often foregrounded as the consequence of consuming over 50s life insurance plans. The target customers are therefore positioned to share a consumer community characterised with qualities such as being active, leisure-oriented, disregarding age-based bonds and being responsible for their later life (including dealing with issues related to funeral expenses or being independent). While the golden ager stereotype seems to be the main quality resorted to in the ways older protagonists are represented in advertising texts for over 50s life insurance plans, it is found that advertisers still imagine their target customers in line with negative stereotypes of older people when decoding the ideological implicatures in product messages. Juxtaposition of positive and negative stereotypes is commonly identified in both Taiwanese and UK examples regardless of the ideological focus (e.g. ageing experiences are complex and cannot be defined merely by age; preparing for death is addressed in age-normalised discourses; stigmatising older age is the ground to market over 50s life insurance plans). Advertisers of over 50s life insurance plans do not show a consistent ideological stance towards older people. The struggle between negative and positive stereotyping of ageing is obvious. How can this finding be interpreted in relation to ageism will be turned to later in chapter 7.

## Chapter 7 Conclusion

Chapter 7 begins with an outline of the differences and similarities in the results obtained from the three modes of analysis. This is followed by an assessment of any ageism found in the data as well as some implications of the findings. Moreover, in order to highlight the methodological innovation of this thesis, the research designs are critically revisited by addressing the merits and limits observed in the process of analysis. Limitations of this thesis and suggestions for future research are also presented at the end of this chapter.

### 7.1 A summary of findings

Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 respectively list the findings reported in the three modes of analysis. The summaries are presented in terms of the similarities and differences in the portrayals of older people.

Table 7.1 a summary of findings in chapter 4 (content analysis)

Similarities	Differences
Under-representations.	UK TV adverts under-represented older people to a greater extent than the Taiwanese adverts.
The association between product types and presence of older characters showed stereotypical expectations of older age.	In terms of product associations, Taiwanese adverts depicted older people in adverts for health/medical products more often. UK TV adverts associated older people with finance/insurance products more often.
The salience of the roles played by older characters was highly relevant to the target age of products. Greater role salience was observed in association with older-age	Taiwanese TV adverts more often depicted older characters in salient roles than UK TV adverts.

exclusive products and less role prominence was found in younger-age preferential products.	
Older characters were not depicted in educational settings.	As informed by setting associations, UK TV adverts drew upon the golden ager stereotype more often (more in outdoor and entertainment settings) while Taiwanese TV adverts showed negative stereotypes more frequently, such as the decline of health in older age (in medical settings) and less social engagement (more often depicted at home)
In terms of associated social relationships, most of the older characters depicted in UK and Taiwanese adverts were depicted to have a certain degree of social engagement (not featured to be lonely). Older people were hardly portrayed to have romantic relationships in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts.	Taiwanese TV adverts more likely featured older characters to be alone (but they could simply be the only person featured in the advert, such as a presenter). When older characters were not depicted alone in Taiwanese TV adverts, they were more likely featured to be with their friends and family members while UK TV adverts showed older characters with their spouses more often.

Table 7.2 a summary of findings in chapter 5 (Prototype analysis)

Similarities	Differences
Character types commonly found in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts include "competent", "tough/serious/strong-minded", "incompetent" (physically, mentally and socially), "golden ager", and "humorous"	<p>Character types such as "conservative/traditional", "unwell and declining in health", "engaged in intergenerational relations" and "vulnerable" were more strongly manifested in Taiwanese TV adverts.</p> <p>On the other hand, UK representations of older people showed the following characteristics to a greater extent: pursuing romance and being light-hearted</p>

Table 7.3 a summary of findings in chapter 6 (critical discourse analysis)

Similarities	Differences
<p>Patronising communication is realised in the emphasis on medical exemptions and the offer of free gifts as incentives to buy over 50s life insurance plans; positive ageing is constructed as legitimating devices for over 50s life insurance plans; repressions of death-related topics can be observed in the mitigating expressions, problematising older age can be found in the ideological assumptions of product messages</p>	<p>Repressions of death is more obvious in Taiwanese examples as death-related topics are almost universally overlooked while UK examples still refer to these topics by employing certain mitigating strategies (death euphemistically expressed or cloaked with positive attributes).</p> <p>Stigmatisation of older age is more direct in Taiwanese examples while it tends to be implied in UK examples (otherwise, mitigated with humour).</p>

## 7.2 Assessment of ageism in the data

Based on the above summaries, I will now revisit ageism (see chapter 1 for more details) and its manifestations in the findings reported in this thesis.

Ageist representations can be identified in the examined advertising data and the evidence can be found in the three modes of analysis.

For example, there were two ways in which UK and Taiwanese TV adverts did not fully appreciate the value of older people. First, as revealed in the content analyses in chapter 4, older people were underrepresented. Their presence did not reflect their demographic significance. This finding supports a belief that advertisers consider the presence of older people to be problematic, (especially for products aimed at the general population) because their appearance would alienate the majority of customers who belong to the youth market (e.g. Mazis, Ringold, Elgin and Denman 1992; Thomas and Wolfe 1995).

Under-representation of older people, to a certain extent, is a form of repression and this result arguably echoes the notion of unwatchability of older age articulated by Woodward (1991). Second, the presence of older characters was found to be significantly associated with older-age exclusive products. This finding indicates that the value of older people as protagonists in advertisers' views is only based on their age. When they do appear in advertising, their (older) age identity is more likely resorted to rather than their individual values. Moreover, because older age is highly marked, the attributes ascribed to older characters in advertising for older-age exclusive products may be justified as age-normalised. This contributes to stereotyping older age, which is a form of ageism.

As discussed in chapter 1, stereotyping older people is a fundamental characteristic of ageism and it is evident in the findings of this thesis. For example, as revealed in chapter 5, the emergent character types are mostly consistent with some widely perceived stereotypes of older people (see the details in section 5.4.1). Advertising as an agent of ageism is supported in terms of stereotyping older people.

Furthermore, Butler and Lewis (1973) consider ageism to be a process categorising older people as senile, rigid in thoughts and manners, and old-fashioned in morality and skills. Ageism is based on negative stereotyping of older people and in this case, it is evident in various findings, for example, some character types reported in chapter 5, such as "Vulnerable" and "Incompetent" (also in relation to "Unwell and declining in health"). Moreover, Illness and frailty as attributes of older age can be inferred from the strong

association between medical settings and health/medical products (in chapter 4). These findings are more prevalent in the Taiwanese data (the implications of this finding will be returned to in the next section).

Patronising communication with older people is also regarded as one form of ageism. Advertising texts of over 50s life insurance examined in chapter 6 are arguably ageist because of some patronising attitudes embedded in the product messages. In the emphasis on medical exemption, free gifts and perhaps even including the detailed information of low cost, advertisers of over 50s life insurance plans arguably imagine the target customers in line with certain negative stereotypes of older people, such as illness or having financial difficulties. Since the target customers are clearly defined in terms of an age range (e.g. 50-75), the above attributes ascribed to them can be regarded as age-based. There might be some customers who feel identified with the presumed concerns over health, the dislikes associated with medical examinations (e.g. "I don't want to see a doctor", line 17, example 7, chapter 6) or a relatively weak financial status (e.g. "I'm not a rich man", in example 7, chapter 6). However, ageing is a continuous process in which everyone is involved. In addition, the above concerns are of course not limited only to those who are aged over 50 or those in the age range between 50 and 75 (the target age range of over 50s life insurance plans). Imaging older customers in line with these concerns can be unnecessary (therefore, patronising).

Furthermore, repression or silence about death, as argued in chapter, 1 can be ageist and it is evident in the mitigating strategies used in adverts for over 50s life insurance plans to express death-related topics. Death and ageing can

be further stigmatised when the ideological focus is fitness and endorsed active later life (see for instance, examples 1-3 in chapter 6). The ideological conflict between the endeavour to survive or live well (active ageing images) and the distance kept from the inevitable end of ageing, death, can appear to be ironic given that advertisements for life insurance plans presumably are produced to create more awareness of death.

The analysis in chapter 6 also provides some intriguing observations of bipolar ageism (negative and positive ageism). The two poles of ageism are manifested in different ways. Active ageing is overtly represented as an endorsed way of ageing and is constructed to legitimate the consumption of over 50s life insurance plans in some examples (e.g. UK examples 1-3, Taiwanese examples 10-11). It becomes a kind of ideological stance manipulated in this particular marketing context. On the other hand, negative ageism tends to be subtly suggested or obliquely expressed. Negative stereotypes of older age are widely drawn upon in the product messages. Contradictory views of older people were juxtaposed. However, arguably, viewers' attention was more likely placed on the positive ageing images (as they are visually and verbally explicit) and made the consumers believe that they could therefore lead a more promising later life. For example, they can lead a later life according to their wishes, they can be care-free or they can lead an independent life without being perceived as a burden because of the consumption of the promoted life insurance plans.

Katz's (2001) critique of positive construction of ageing (as discussed in chapter 1) can be reiterated here for the juxtaposition of positive and negative

ageing especially in the adverts promoting over 50s life insurance plans (though this can be observed as well in my data as a whole). As maintained by Katz (2001), positive construction of ageing does not always lead to the empowerment of older people and make them more politically and socially powerful. On the other hand, it simply creates communities or marketing demographics which are imagined in line with mobility and activity. In some over 50s life insurance adverts, the target customers were positioned in the realm of active ageing but active ageing was actually not presented as automatically ascribed to older customers. It only becomes accessible through the promoted life insurance plans. On the other hand, what is presumed to be true regarding older customers (taken-for-granted characteristics of older people) by advertisers reflects certain negative prejudices of older age. Ironically, active ageing does not appear in all of the examined over 50s life insurance adverts in chapter 6 but some negative prejudices do.

Given the above arguments, at the surface level, the targeted viewers may feel empowered through identifying with the constructed active images but to explore the product messages further, older people are presumed to be (socially, physically and perhaps financially) disadvantaged. Negative ageism is disguised in positive ageism and negative ageism can become less likely detected by the viewers. To foreground active ageing images and to background negative stereotypes of older age is an advised advertising strategy for the grey market (see the relevant discussion in section 1.4) and it can be observed in the case of promoting over 50s life insurance plans. However, the critique that can be raised towards such an advertising strategy is that positive and active ageing represented for marketing purposes does not really empower older customers

as at the deeper level, the attributes consistently ascribed to them are still derogatory.

### **7.3 Cross-cultural differences and the implications**

Based on the revealed differences in the portrayals of older people and older age in Taiwanese and UK TV advertisements, the discussion in this section will focus on two points. First of all, Confucianism, especially the notion of filial piety appears to be a crucial cultural factor which contributes to explaining the identified differences. Second, the Confucian culture inherent in Taiwan does not assure more overtly positive qualities in the representations of older characters in Taiwanese advertising and the implications of this finding will be discussed in this section, too.

The notion of Confucian filial piety, as mentioned above, explains some of the identified cross-cultural differences in the ways older people were depicted in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements. The supportive evidence is more directly revealed in the prototype analyses in chapter 5. For instance, portraying older characters as authoritative figures could only be found in the Taiwanese data. Parents (older characters) were expected to play the guiding roles and their children were on the other hand depicted to comply with their orders or advice (see "Authoritative Family Elders" in chapter 5). Older characters as parents were depicted well taken care of by their adult children. These images reflect a power asymmetry between generations, which is advocated as a socio-structural norm in Confucianism. Therefore, as discussed in section 1.4, advertisements resort to local cultures to make their messages

more effective. This is supported in the above-mentioned findings. However, there are also some findings suggestive of the decline of the relevance of Confucian filial piety (see section 1.6 for the relevant discussions).

For example, there were messages especially in adverts for health-related products preaching the importance of maintaining independence and stigmatising dependent older people as family burden. This is clearly a challenge to the notion of filial piety (see the supportive evidence in "Independent Family Elders" and "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence in chapter 5; or example 11 in chapter 6). In UK TV advertisements which featured older people to be healthy, active, fit and independent, there was no message referring to the necessity to retain independence as if it is already a taken-for-granted concept. This contrast suggests that asking older people to be independent or not to expect care from children is rather a new notion in the Taiwanese society. Hence, it has to be made explicit.

Even though the Confucian culture can be regarded as a cultural factor contributing to the revealed differences in representations of older people in Taiwanese and UK TV adverts, it does not always promise more positive results as opposed to those derived from the UK data. This conclusion is not consistent with Lee et al.'s (2006) cross-cultural comparative study, where, as they maintained, representations of older people in South Korean TV adverts were more positive than those in American TV adverts because of the Confucian culture endorsed in South Korea.

The three modes of analysis commonly showed that overtly derogatory representations were more often observed in the Taiwanese data. In the content analyses, even though Taiwanese older characters had greater role salience and presence, the examinations of certain coding dimensions (e.g. medical settings, health/medical products) suggested that negative stereotyping of older age was provoked to a greater extent in Taiwanese advertisements. As reported in chapter 5, more character types which are negative in nature emerged merely or mainly from the Taiwanese data. They were, for example, "Problematic Couple Interactions", "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence", "Images of Illness: Vulnerable and Incompetent", "Upset/Suffering/Sad", "Painful Self-Disclosure", "Created/Victimised", and "Socially Discriminated/Rejected". The critical discourse analyses of over 50s life insurance adverts also revealed that the themes of bereavement and painful disclosure of ailments or social discrimination based on older age were more directly presented in the Taiwanese data (see the discussion of example 9 in chapter 6) while the above themes were hardly observed in the UK corpus of data. Moreover, as discussed in chapter 6, when negative attributions of older age must be referred to (see the discussion of UK example 7), UK advertisers used humour as a strategy to mitigate the potential offence caused by negative stereotyping of older age.

The above findings suggest that UK advertising (advertisers) showed a stronger awareness of negative ageism and therefore, they tended to avoid representing older people in an overtly negative way or used strategies such as humour to mitigate the offence of negative ageing representations. The following discussion attempts to ask why Taiwanese advertising showed

derogatory representations of older people more openly. The implication of such an observation perhaps is that there is a lower degree of sensitivity towards ageism in Taiwanese society (or in Taiwanese media) than in the UK. This argument can be elaborated on by looking at two social aspects, namely, the establishment of institutions combating ageism and the academic attention given to "ageism in the media" in these two countries.

In the UK, there are organizations, such as *Help the Aged* (<http://www.helptheaged.org.uk/en-gb/Campaigns/AgeDiscrimination/default.htm>) or *Age Concern* ([http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/ageism.asp?gclid=CMT-xeOIu6E\\_CFR0EIAodyD4o\\_A](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/ageism.asp?gclid=CMT-xeOIu6E_CFR0EIAodyD4o_A)), which are dedicated to combating ageism, especially for older people (the two organizations have recently combined into a new force, called *Age UK*). On the websites of the two organizations, messages regarding how to be actively engaged in public matters (such as having a voice in an election), lifestyles, and arrangements for ageing well (housing, health, work, pensions, learning and death) are conveyed. More importantly, age discrimination and the identification of ageism are two themes included on the websites. These websites and the charities are nation-wide in the UK and help to raise social awareness of ageism.

On the other hand, there is no charity organization as influential as *Age UK* aimed at anti-ageism and combating age discrimination against older people in Taiwan. There do exist legal regulations for older people in Taiwan, under the "Senior Citizens Welfare Act" (see [http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/04/02/02\\_1\\_eng.htm](http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/04/02/02_1_eng.htm) for the English translation). There is also a government webpage

(<http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/04/new04.asp>) produced to promote the concerns of senior citizen's welfare. However, in terms of the content of the government webpage as well as the "Senior Citizens Welfare Act", the foci are rather limited to actions taken to attend to older people's physical needs. The incorporated themes present appeals for the provision of a safer environment for older people, assistance offered to older people living in a single household, searching for missing elders, medical information about infectious diseases and locations of nursing homes. There is no message generated to conceptualise what ageism is or to highlight ways to combat it. On the other hand, UK legal regulations related to older adults are more elaborate and cover more dimensions (see the details in Griffiths, Grimes, and Roberts 1990).

The brief observations given above are to provide the background for speculating why Taiwanese TV adverts do not show much mitigation when representing older people in an obviously negative light. The speculation is that Taiwanese society generally does not show awareness of ageism as much as the UK society. There is less ideological force inherent in Taiwanese society than UK society to push private institutions (such as charity organizations) and the government to make efforts on anti-ageism and make it a mainstream issue in Taiwan.

Another social aspect to be discussed is the relative level of academic attention given to this topic in Taiwan and the UK. This PhD study is the first one to examine advertising discourses in relation to ageing, stereotypes and the discursive construction of older age based on data from Taiwan, while these research topics have been discussed in the UK context for a number of years

(Ylänne-McEwen 2000; Coupland 2000; Coupland and Coupland 2000; Coupland 2003 and 2007). Furthermore, there is an abundance of academic works conducted by UK scholars interested in older people and the status in the media in various disciplines (e.g. Featherstone and Hepworth 1989; Carrigan and Szmigin 1998; Carrigan and Szmigin 1999; Williams et al. 2007; Ylänne, Williams and Wadleigh 2009; Ylänne and Williams, 2009; Williams et al. 2010) while very few Taiwanese scholars (e.g. Tsang and Tsai 2005a and b; Tsai and Tsang, 2008a and b) follow a similar trajectory. In addition, there is no linguistic study dedicated to language and interaction in later life in Taiwan, but this research area has been developed by UK scholars for more than two decades (e.g. Coupland, Coupland, Giles, Henwood, and Wiemann 1988; Coupland and Coupland 1990; Coupland, 1991; Coupland, Coupland, Giles, and Henwood 1991; Coupland, Coupland and Grainger 1991; Coupland and Coupland 1994).

These contrasts presented in the last paragraph are to develop a point. That is, in the Taiwanese education system, attention given to topics surrounding ageism in the media or language use appears to be considerably scarce. Taiwanese academia responds to such research trajectories much more slowly than Western scholars, even though Taiwan is a dramatically ageing country. If the above discussions imply a lower degree of awareness of ageism and the issues surrounding it in Taiwanese society, it can be expected that Taiwan would show more social allowance for derogatory media messages about ageing and older people.

#### **7.4 Globalisation, cross-cultural studies and outcomes**

As discussed in section 1.8, the force of globalisation has blurred cultural boundaries and decreased cultural diversities. Because of the effect of globalisation, a cross-cultural study in advertising can be more challenging in hypothesising that differences outweigh or outnumber similarities. This argument can be particularly noteworthy given that Taiwan is highly industrialised and has received cultural impact from the West intensively due to the consumption of some globally distributed media forms, such as Hollywood movies, dramas produced in the U.S. or the UK and magazines (e.g. *Cosmopolitan*, see *Machin and van Leeuwen 2003*) edited primarily in the Western world. Even though this current comparative study tends to highlight the identified differences, it is also important to note that similarities shared between the two data sets are numerous (see the summaries in tables 7.1-7.3).

The analysis based on older age exclusive adverts (over 50s life insurance adverts) rather than general advertising (e.g. the data for the analysis in chapters 4 and 5) could provide evidence to suggest that differences may not usually outweigh similarities in a cross-cultural study in advertising.

The similarities identified in the discourse analysis were manifest in the various discursive conventions used to describe over 50s life insurance products available in Taiwan and the UK. Moreover, because the images of over 50s life insurance products in the UK and Taiwanese examples were constructed in almost identical ways (see the discussion about patronising communication in chapter 6), the

target customers (regardless of the cultural/ethnic origin) of all the promoted insurance plans were hence positioned to be universally similar (see the relation between building product image and customer images in Fairclough 2001:171). Furthermore, the golden ager stereotype (active, happy, independent and healthy) and leisure-oriented lifestyles (e.g. engaged in biking, dancing, sporting and travelling) could also be found as the ideological resources prioritised in some UK and Taiwanese examples to attract a certain cohort of customers aged 50 and over.

Given the above results, the cross-cultural comparison based on Taiwanese and UK advertising texts for over 50s life insurance plans revealed more similarities than differences. It is worth noting that the reference to leisure-oriented lifestyles and active ageing in the Taiwanese examples may be read as a reflection of a western view of (successful) ageing (see for instance, the notion of "busy ethic" in Ekerdt 1986 and the discussion in chapter 1) is imposed upon Taiwanese advert viewers. This advertising strategy may contribute to shaping the perceptions about what older age looks like in Taiwanese society to be more west-like.

On speculation of the above outcome (more similarities than differences) is that with multinational companies (the life insurance companies providing over 50s life insurance products in Taiwan originate in the U.S.) promoting their globally-distributed services, their preferable advertising strategy may more likely focus on the

degree of globalisation rather than localisation/standardisation of the advertising messages if it is getting increasingly difficult to estimate whether the local cultures could definitely be more dominant than foreign ones.

The discussion presented in this section alludes to the complexity and problematicity in conducting a cross-cultural comparative study in advertising and recognises the need to re-examine the obtained outcomes in the context where globalisation plays a part. What is to be critically reviewed next is the research designs of this thesis.

## 7.5 The research designs revisited

This thesis distinguishes itself from previous studies on media representations of older people because of the employment of three different analytical approaches to explore the same general question (how older people or older age is portrayed in advertisements?). The three modes of analysis are tailored to ask different sets of questions which, as argued previously in chapter 3, can bring complementary insights to the general question addressed in this thesis. They respectively have various strengths and weaknesses (as outlined in table 7.4) which enabled the researcher to explore the general question in different ways and in the meantime, limitations were also identified. This section will revisit the research designs of this thesis and bring in more critical views of the analytical approaches.

Table 7.4 Strengths and weaknesses of the research designs

Approaches	Analytical foci	Strength	Weakness	Weakness complemented by
Content analysis	Frequency counts of the occurrence of various pre-determined dimensions	The coding process is standardised and the coding of a large amount of data is manageable	Unexplored qualities (dimensions) are left unknown. Only manifest content of advertisements is examined	Constant comparative analysis (to identify themes which characterise the same sets of data but can be overlooked in the content analyses  CDA attends to the implied messages.
Constant comparative analysis	Prototype analyses and to identify the defining qualities of various character types through constant comparisons of each older character	To effectively develop a set of thematic structures to characterise all of the examined images of older characters while in the meantime, differences and similarities between each older characters are identified. A	The analysis generates outcomes which are aimed to describe the data but do not attend to the impacts on or relations with the wider socio-cultural contexts.	Critical discourse analysis (taking into account the interactional relations between contexts and the examined texts)

		convenient tool for comparisons.		
CDA	Implied ideological values in relation to social inequality and power asymmetry	Analysis is made in relation to the various levels of context (social, cultural, or advertising) in which the examined advertising texts are produced. Implied ideologies of older age (views about older age drawn upon in the production and interpretation process) are uncovered.	The analytical focus is on ageism so there is a risk that the examined data are sought to fit in the expected outcomes (the data can be highly selective).	Content analysis (the overall data are not sought particularly for ageist representations but the frequency results based on all examples can show ageism)

Table 7.4 summarises the foci, strengths and weaknesses of the three research approaches and the ways the other modes of analysis can complement the weaknesses. The following discussion will revisit the research designs with more critical views.

Content analysis can be objective because the coding is conducted by closely following a set of pre-determined coding rules. Therefore, the coding process is highly standardised. However, to a certain extent, content analysis is not as inherently and fully objective as it is deemed to be. For instance, the content analyses conducted in this thesis demanded the coders to judge characters' ages based on some rules developed for this task. However, as for telling age, there is not universally agreed standard. This task, to a great extent, was carried out by allowing the coders to draw upon their own understanding of people's age and the associated behavioural patterns or physical appearances. The judgements actually are very subjective regardless of the

provision of coding rules, which makes the coding action appear to be objective. Nevertheless, the coding results derived from coders' subjective judgments in this case are still regarded acceptable because the consistency of coding results between two (the main and the secondary) coders is adequate.

As argued previously in chapter 3, critical discourse analysis is complementary to content analysis because it attends to the ideological values which are implicitly suggested and sometimes subjectively inferred by the researcher. However, it does not necessarily mean that the ideological values accessible to critical discourse analysis are inaccessible to content analysis. For example, critical discourse analysis allows the researcher to identify certain ideological stances which imply negative stereotypes of older people in patronising discourses observed in adverts for over 50s life insurance plans. The same set of ideological stances actually can be unfolded and accessed by content analysis as well. However, the research condition is that the analyst must presume the existence of these ideologies in the examined data and accordingly, translate them into operational definitions in the coding schemes. However, the focus on manifest content in content analysis can still limit the possibilities to identify the negative stereotypical expectations inferred in CDA.

Moreover, one limitation of content analysis is that in practice, there is no way to determine how complete and adequate a coding scheme employed in a content analytical study can be for the purpose of characterising the examined data. Moreover, it is also not feasible in practice for a content analyst to explore every possible dimension observable in the data. In order to find out whether there are important themes which are not investigated in the content analysis,

the approach of constant comparative analysis becomes useful.

The prototype analyses in chapter 5 also bring some insights to the portrayals of older people which cannot be inferred on the basis of the coding results in the content analysis. For example, the content analysis as reported in chapter 4 suggests that Taiwanese older characters were frequently depicted in association with health/medical products and medical settings. It is reasonable to resort to the negative stereotype that older people are widely perceived to be feeble and frail when inferring the qualitative meanings of these distributional findings. Presumably, this kind of attribution is deemed derogatory. However, as revealed in chapter 5, the character type “Unwell and Declining in Health” and its defining characteristics (subtypes) show a different picture from the above-mentioned inference made in the content analysis. That is, when Taiwanese older characters were portrayed to be unwell or to have deteriorating health, positive attributes could still be observed in such representations. For example, older characters can be depicted coping well with their health problems and trying very hard to be independent. Characteristics such as vulnerable and incompetent do not always come hand in hand with health-in-ageing representations.

In this thesis, constant comparative analysis is utilised as an approach to conduct a prototype analysis with a focus on characterising the examined images of older characters in a systematic way. Constant comparative analysis in this thesis is tailored to asking questions about what prototypes of older characters can emerge from the examined advertising data. The analyses are conducted to generate outcomes which describe the nature of the data but do

not attempt to explore the impacts on or the relation with the wider social contexts. For example, the constant comparative analysis stops at the generation of character types and the defining attributes. It does not ask whether they reproduce certain cultural or ideological values of ageing or on the other hand, whether they challenge the taken-for-granted ideologies about older age. However, the above aspects can be questions probed in the critical discourse analysis (see the third dimension of Fairclough's CDA in section 3.3.5).

As opposed to the data selection for the content analysis and prototype analysis in chapters 4 and 5, that for the CDA in chapter 6 is relatively specific. The data was particularly sought to allow the analyst to investigate ageism. Ageist representations of older people and older age had been expected before commencing the critical discourse analysis and looking into the details of the textual features of over 50s life insurance adverts. This rationale of data selection is relevant to the shared moral and political agenda of critical discourse analysts (see the details in section 3.3).

The political commitment to social inequalities and the focus on power asymmetry in CDA have received challenges, for instance, from Tyrwhitt-Drake (1999) who considers CDA as an attempt at hegemonic control. Indeed, critical discourse analysts are at pains to remand social wrongs and to minimise the textual or discursive manifestations of social inequalities by increasing awareness of the social impacts through the analyses. However, such an attempt should not be regarded as a hegemonic control because as argued by Flowerdew (1999:1090), CDA is still open to multiple readings. This attitude is

indeed essential for critical discourse analysts to bear in mind as we can never assure that the ideological readings of a text or a communication event by a critical discourse analyst is identical to those made by the participants.

For example, a critical discourse analysis is aimed to decode the ideological resources drawn upon by the participants of a communication event. In order to do so, the critical discourse analyst has to position him/herself as the participants so as to decode how the participants come to comprehend the utterances. However, more importantly, the analyst has to possess the members' resources which are also shared by the participants for the interpretation of the communication event. Members' resources in Fairclough's (2001:9) words are "representations [of the world] you have stored in your long-term memory....and [they are] socially and ideologically shaped". Whether a content analyst shares a similar set of members' resources has a bearing on socialisation and the social origins. The differences in the experiences of socialisation can have impact on the ability to infer what ideological resources are exactly drawn upon by participants in a communication event. Hence, plausibility can be one drawback of a critical discourse analysis.

Nevertheless, this drawback does not necessarily downgrade the values of a critical discourse analysis because as suggested by Flowerdew (1999:1094-1095), the plausibility of CDA could be enhanced by presenting literature which shows similar arguments or findings (see for instance in chapter 2, section 2.3) or interviewing the participants involved in the examined communicative event (see section 7.6).

## 7.5 Limitations

Several limitations have been experienced in this research and the reasons for the compromises made in relation to the limitations are discussed next.

First of all, the researcher had to be involved with the coding tasks in the content analysis though ideally, content analysts are advised not to take part in the coding process. The main reason is to prevent from producing biased judgements due to the content analyst's awareness of the research purpose. However, in practice, this has not always been strictly followed in previous studies (e.g. Miller et al. 2004; Lauzen and Dozier 2005; Williams et al. 2010). The main reason for making such a compromise in this case was the shortage of funding for recruiting (at least) four coders (two coders for each set of data). Nevertheless, this compromise did not jeopardise the generated results because it was assured that my coders worked independently from me and they were not informed of the research purposes. Furthermore, the content analysis was conducted on the basis of coding results which showed adequate degrees of intercoder agreement.

As stated in chapter 3.2, the second analytical approach used in this thesis was a modified version of the grounded theory method. What was mainly overlooked was the "theoretical sampling" step. Due to time constraints, the data for developing character types of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts was collected within a fixed period of time. The data collection occurred prior to the analysis, instead of taking place simultaneously. In a grounded theory analysis, theoretical sampling provides more input to discover variations among evolving concepts. In this case, the researcher needs to know where to

find them so as to explore more diverse properties and dimensions of the evolving theory. If this sampling principle had been applied in this thesis, archives of TV advertisements might be good sources to refer to for the abovementioned research purpose. However, access to them is costly and financial limitations made this option unfeasible. Hence, the compromise was made to develop a conceptual framework suggestive of how older people could be characterised or stereotyped based on UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements which were obtained through the random sampling principles, rather than employing the notion of theoretical sampling.

The main limitation experienced in the critical discourse analysis was that the cross-cultural comparisons were made on the basis of the examples which were not contemporary with each other. Due to the late introduction of over 50s life insurance products into the Taiwanese market, available examples in Taiwan were restricted to those broadcast in 2007 (the time of data collection). Brining in an extra set of UK data (dated back to 1999) for the critical discourse analysis promises more diversity in the manifest communication conventions and ideological values of older age. This decision also enabled the researcher to observe certain similarities shared only between earlier UK examples and some Taiwanese examples (see the discussion in section 6.4.2). Furthermore, extending the UK corpus of data back nearly a decade allowed a longitudinal look at the possible shift of the ideological focus in the marketing of over 50s life insurance products. It is also acknowledged that the CDA analysis only concentrated on adverts for one particular product. There are advertising texts for other “grey-market” products (such as funeral arrangements, stair lifts or bathroom arrangements) which can be taken into account for future research

to examine how potentially problematic aspects of later life are represented to viewers/readers.

## **7.6 Future research suggestions**

Given the above limitations, there are several suggestions presented below for future research. First of all, it is advised that future researchers interview advertisers who produce advertising texts promoting over 50s life insurance products and explore whether their rationalisation is consistent with the conceptualisation of older age argued and inferred in the critical discourse analytical study in this thesis.

Furthermore, a focus group of viewers from a variety of age ranges might also be worth conducting to study how differently they position themselves in relation to age identity when responding to the advertising messages of over 50s life insurance products (or general advertising containing older images) and whether they share any interpretations along ageist lines.

The critical discourse analysis in this thesis could also be extended by incorporating a corpus of advertising texts promoting life insurance products for the general public. The purpose is to examine whether the discursive strategies employed to elaborate product messages for over 50s life insurance products really carry age-marked purposes. Moreover, the arguments as to the patronising slant embedded in the emphasis of cost, medical exemption and eligibility could be further examined to further scrutinise whether these aspects are only foregrounded in advertising texts addressed to older people.

The investigation on character types of older people in UK and Taiwanese TV adverts could be extended by examining how they are positively and negatively perceived by viewers from both of the two cultural contexts. Different from the literature on stereotypes of the elderly, the generated character types were not dichotomised in terms of valence when reported in chapter 5. It would be interesting to explore whether some concepts are perceived negatively in an Eastern society but positively in a Western country (see for instance, Liu, Ng, Loong, Gee and Weatherall 2003). The investigation could be conducted by using a questionnaire survey or a focus group.

In chapter 5, the findings were transformed into a number of hypothetical statements. They could be further tested based on another set of data, using for instance a quantitative content analytical method. The purpose of course is to test the generalisability and validity.

Character types in relation to humour and romance have not been thoroughly discussed in the literature on stereotypes of older people. However, their emergence indicated possible counter-stereotypical representations in advertisements. Since the emergence of romance and humour-related character types was only derived from a relatively small set of examples (see the frequency report in Appendix 5) and has important theoretical implications, it might be worth seeking more data to identify new properties and dimensions of these two themes.

## **7.7 Final remarks**

In terms of combating negative ageism, UK advertising seems to show a more proactive attitude because overtly negative representations are hardly ever observed in UK advertisements. However, while active, fit and happy attributes are highly promoted as the endorsed way of ageing in UK TV adverts, more social pressure is imposed to those older people whose status quo is otherwise different from the above picture. Realities of very deep old age are further marginalised than before as a consequence. This risk must be seriously considered because there is no message in the examined UK advertisements advising those who are no longer fit, active and enjoying health as to how they should act to accommodate these realities. As to those who are able to maintain active ageing as expected by Western societies, they could confront a greater sense of loss when someday they found they could not cope to comply with the social images of successful ageing defined solely by the notion of the busy ethic (Ekerdt 1986). These are the aspects and issues which UK advertisers need to take into account in the future so as to produce more constructive advertising messages as a means for older viewers to learn how to age well.

On the other hand, ageism as identified in the Taiwanese data is more consistent with the traditional definition of ageism (see for instance Butler and Lewis' view of ageism). That is, Taiwanese advertisers need to be more cautious of negative ageism and avoid stereotyping older people negatively for marketing purposes.

There is one more observation which is considered noteworthy. As

reported in chapter 5 and chapter 6 (see for instance, "Independent Family Elders", "Images of Illness: Struggling for Independence in chapter 5, example 11 in chapter 6), Taiwanese advertising messages start to convey challenges to Confucian filial piety, which can be regarded as a reflection of the decline of Confucian tradition (see the discussion in chapter 1). Successful ageing images in the Taiwanese society may be in transition and this can be a consequence of receiving influences from Western cultures. The emergent new views of ageing promoted in Taiwanese advertising messages can be confusing for those older viewers who attempt to seek models for appropriate ageing because the endorsement of filial piety and challenges to it coexist in Taiwanese advertisements. Moreover, those who have been leading their later life in line with the traditional Confucian perspective of ageing can turn out to be rather disadvantaged in response to the emergent norm of maintaining independence. The emphasis on independence, if advocated as an element of successful ageing in the Taiwanese society, means that the above-mentioned kind of older people are expected to act differently from their original expectations towards later life (dependence on adult children is an honoured status). Since they have been socialised to follow another set of views of older age for decades, they may be little prepared for accommodating themselves to the new view of successful ageing.

The above argument entails a premise, that is, advertising messages can affect older people's identity construction and their attitudes towards older age if older viewers tend to believe what they see in advertising. However, it is beyond this thesis to scrutinise to what extent this premise is true. Therefore, it is considered necessary to acknowledge that advertising is just one of the

potential resources which provide information to and have impact on older people when they come to decide how to age approximately.

Moreover, it is also worthwhile to take into account the nature of advertising context when concerning the potential impact of ageist imagery. As opposed to general advertising, we perhaps should pay more attention to ageist representations found in age exclusive advertising because it addresses directly to older people and could consequently be more influential in shaping their attitudes towards older age.

These final reflections perhaps can be issues explored in more systematic ways and verified in future research aiming to specify the impact of media representations of older people.

## Notes

### **note 1 (ch2-3)**

Thimm (1998 a and b, cited in Williams et al. 2010) classified images of older people in advertising in terms of four dimensions which took into account the target customers of products as well as the overall rhetorical schemes of the advertisements. The four dimensions were labelled as "age inclusive, age exclusive, age contrastive and age preferential". "Age exclusive" advertisements are aimed at older people. "Age preferential" advertisements convey product messages which more likely attract older adults than youngsters. "Age inclusive" advertisements do not focus on certain age groups. "Age contrastive" adverts draw contrasts between the old and young by portraying older age group more negatively. Anti-ageing skin products, as Coupland (2007) maintained, also convey messages to customers as young as in their 20s (as a reminder of the beginning of ageing) but mainly address older customers, so the advertising texts should be "age preferential", rather than "age exclusive or inclusive" if Thimm's terms were adopted. As to Yläne-McEwen's (2000) examined materials, they addressed only older customers (over 50s) so they should be "age-exclusive".

### **note 2 (ch3-1)**

"Age incidental" is a term borrowed from Williams, Yläne, Wadleigh and Chen's (2010) study. It indicates a product type which does not target at a specific age group and does not use the character's age as a selling point (p.4). However, this concept was originally developed in Thimm's studies (1998a and b) in which the concept was put as "age inclusive" (see footnote 3).

### **note 3 (ch3-1)**

This footnote is to explain the reason of observing standardized residuals in a

chi-square test. A chi-square test is used to examine whether there is an association between two nominal categories. The association is assessed by examining whether the frequency distribution of the cells in a chi-square cross-table is random. If the distribution happens at random, the observed values are not very different from the expected values. The degree of association in a chi-square test is basically assessed based on differences between observed values and expected values. The differences are "residuals". The larger the residuals are, the more likely there are certain associations between the two categorical variables in a chi-square test. Standardized residuals are to express the values of residuals in standard deviation units. By observing the absolute value of a standardized residual, the researcher is able to assess whether the difference between an observed and an expected value should be a concern and whether the converted standardized residual is with a value so high that it is unlikely to happen by chance (a guideline for this is provided in section 3.1.7). The cell with a high value of standardized residual ( $>1.96$ ) is considered crucial or statistically meaningful to explain a significant chi-square association. Therefore, in sum, to examine standardized residuals is to determine whether they reach a level of statistical significance and to break down a significant chi-square test further.

**note 4 (ch3-2)**

Debates as to whether Glaser or Strauss's version of GT should be considered as orthodoxy and the differences could be found in literature (Kelle 2007; Glaser 1992; Heath and Cowley 2004; Maghaddam 2006). However, regardless of the debates, GT is still an evolving method (Glaser, 2002; Charmaz, 2000; Charmaz, 2006). Hence, what matters most in the practice (at least in this thesis) is to conform to the fundamental philosophy of GT, that is, to develop conceptual statements which "work" and "fit" the data.

**note 5 (ch4-2)**

The public issues that older characters were depicted for in UK TV adverts were exclusively about giving blood.

**note 6 (ch4-4)**

Fisher's exact test (Fisher 1922) is a suggested computing method when expected frequencies ( $<5$ ) are concerns in a Chi-square test. It is designed to overcome the problem of small samples as expected frequencies of fewer than 5 indicate insufficient sampling distributions in a chi-square test (cited in Field, 2009: 690).

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## Appendix 1: Coding Schemes

### Coding scheme 1: for each TV advert

Please only observe TV commercials with at least one human figure whose face (at least the profile) can be clearly recognized and whose appearance must be at least three second long. Human figures do not include animation, dolls, or cartoons.

Please identify whether each commercial features the 50-64 or 65plus age groups. If yes, 1, otherwise, 2

#### 1.1 presence of the 50-64 age group

1 = yes

2 = no

#### 1.2 presence of the 65plus age group

1= yes

2= no

Coders are allowed to rely on their subjective judgments to determine the age of characters in a commercial. However, people at older age might show certain characteristics as follows:

- (a) Having children who are middle-aged
- (b) Having grandchildren
- (c) Wrinkled appearance
- (d) Events recalled to imply actual chronological age to be over 50
- (f) Retirement
- (g) Mobility aids needed
- (h) Grey hair

#### 1.3 Product types

Please identify the promoted product type of each TV commercial

1= food/drink/grocery retails: fresh milk, milk powder, fizzy drinks, mineral water, tea, sweets, chips, oil, rice, fish, noodles, meat, fruits, or retail for food and drink.

2= health-related products or medicine and medical services, including clinics (eye clinic), labs and hospitals or health-relevant products, including nutrition supplements, pain-relief, anything with medical effects, or any devices used to relieve pain or health problems.

3= beauty / personal hygiene : denture cleanser/ fixtures,, toothpaste, mouth wash, shampoo, body wash, face wash, make-up, cream, beauty and hair products, perfume, or retail for the above products.

4= finance/ insurance: financial plans, insurance plans, banking services, credit cards, or investments etc.

5= public issues: advertisers are government departments or charities. Public issues could cover any topics advertised to increase awareness of safety, health, legislation, community, concerns for minority, or fraud etc.

6= holidays: tourism, hotels and resorts

7= household necessities and appliances: bath aids, pampers, stationery, furniture, pet food, detergent, kitchen ware, tissues, towels, fridge, air conditioning, napkins, heaters, vacuum cleaners, television sets, toilet fragrance, energy (patrol, gas or electricity), apparels,

8 = computer/communication/information: dictionary (on-line), print media (newspapers, magazines), TV channels, movies, music albums (MTV), websites, broadcasting service, mobiles, computers, digital cameras, printers, broadband services, etc.

9. Miscellaneous (i.e. transportation, toys, education, solicitor, gambling, breakdown services, asking for directions, recruitment, housing agents)

## 1.4 Target age level of the product

Please identify which age level is targeted in the commercial based on the nature of the advertised product as well as the rhetorical scheme.

1 = **younger age preferential**: the advertised product is more likely of interest to youngsters (or children) rather than older people. Product types that are very unlikely of use by older people are also classified into this subcategory. Examples could be job-searching websites, career training services, anti-acne gel, toys, game boys or meals for kids, etc.

2 = **older age exclusive**: some products are clearly stated as for "older people", "senior citizens", or "over 50s" and in this case, they are older age exclusive. Products of this kind could be mobility aids, retirement community, financial or insurance services for the over 50s, funeral arrangements or nutrition supplements for senior citizens.

3 = **age incidental**: this category is chosen if the advertised product is generally needed or used by all age groups. Products that do not target a specific age group include, for instance, groceries, food, furniture, drinks, or household appliances, etc.

## **Coding scheme 2: for each older character**

Coding scheme 2 provides guidelines for the coding of older characters aged over 50 in TV commercials. Repetitions are included. Please remember, only those who appear at least 3 seconds in a commercial are observed.

### **2.1 Gender**

Please identify the gender of each older character who appears to be aged 50 or more.

1 = female

2 = male

### **2.2 Age level**

Please identify the age level of each older character featured in TV advertisements.

1= 50-64

2= 65+

### **2.3 Role prominence**

Please identify the role prominence of each older character featured in TV advertisements.

1 = major roles

2 = secondary or supporting roles

3 = background or peripheral roles

The coding rules for role prominence are elaborated as follows:

1 = Major role

- There could be more than one major role in a television commercial
- A main character is shown for at least half (included) of the commercial (this is compulsory).
- When there is a dialogue involved in a commercial, a major role is the one who speaks for most of the time.
- Compared to other characters, a major role is on camera longer.
- If the development of the story or plot in a commercial centres on a character, he or she is a major role.

2= Secondary and supporting role

- A secondary character does not appear more than half of the commercial but his or her existence is still necessary because he or she is involved with the interactions with other characters or expresses influential opinions to the developments of the plot in the commercial.
- A secondary character quite often surrounds the central character (if applicable) and supports the function a central character provides in the commercial.
- Anyone who possesses most of the attributes of central characters but appears less than a half of the commercial is in a secondary role

3 = Background and peripheral role

- A background or peripheral character can be seen very briefly
- A background or peripheral character is often depicted as one member in a group of people and normally does not speak when others do.
- A background or peripheral character is often depicted in the background and never "on camera" as a focus of the commercial
- A background or peripheral character is replaceable and without the appearance of a peripheral role, the commercial can still be comprehended by the audience.

## 2.4 target age level of products

Please refer to dimension 1.4

## 2.5 Settings (activity and physical contexts)

In a commercial, an older character might appear in more than one setting suggested below. Please observe whether the examined older character is featured in any of the following settings/contexts. If yes, please choose 1, otherwise, 2.

1. Working context: an older character is depicted "**at work**". He/she can work at any kinds of physical settings, such as, indoor, outdoor, in the streets, shops, restaurants, offices, or factories, etc.

2. Home setting: when an older character is shown inside a house, at the front door or in the garden.

3. Outdoors: when an older character is engaged in any activity (except for working) in the mountains, in the countryside, near the sea, near river, or in the park, this category is chosen.

4. Medical settings: Hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes.

5. Contexts for Entertainment: When an older character appears to be spending his or her leisure time, enjoying activities for entertainment, fun or relaxation (i.e. SPA, sports, games, gambling, attending concerts) in the physical environments other than outdoors, this category is selected.

6. Religious contexts: when an older character is depicted to be in religious buildings such as temples, churches, chapels or engaged in any religious activities or rituals, this category is chosen.

7. Educational settings: when an older character is depicted in an educational context, such as university, school, classroom, lecture or seminar, etc., this category is selected.

8. Public places: this category excludes any contexts suggested in the above categories and public places simply refer to places that every body has access to, such as shops, restaurants, public transportation. When you decide to assign an older character into this physical context, you must make sure he or she is not at work, involved with any entertainment (for category 1 and 5) or outdoor activities.

9. Unclear or studio: this category is chosen when there is no clue to suggest any of the physical settings described above.

## **2.6 relationships with other characters**

Please identify the social relationships the observed older character is involved with. If any of the following relationships apply, please assign 1, otherwise 2.

1. Intergenerational relationships: this is chosen when an older character is with his or her parents, children, or grandchildren.

2. Friendships: friends here do not include any romantic relationships.

3. Spouse: an older character appears with his wife or her husband.

4. Romantic partners: the character is portrayed dating or defined as another character's boyfriend, partner, or girlfriend.

5. Colleagues: the older character is featured at work with others

6. Strangers: no specific social relationships are suggested and the observed older character happens to appear with others with whom s/he does not interact with.
7. Being alone: When the observed older character is depicted isolated or living alone in the whole commercial, this category is chosen.
8. Service relationships: if the older character is featured providing services (i.e. care service, medical service, delivery or food service, etc.) to others or receiving services from others in the commercial, this category is chosen.

## **2-7 associated product types**

Please identify the product type each older character is used for. See definitions provided in coding scheme 1.3 for the details.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Brief descriptions of 185 older characters examined in Chapter 5**

This appendix contains brief descriptions of the 185 older characters (judged to be aged 50 and over) selected as the data for the analyses in chapter 5. They are all coded as "character number (1-185) \_ applicable age group (50-64 or 65+) \_ product name\_ character of interest".

#### 1\_65plus\_esure home insurance \_Michael Winner

Michael Winner featured as a presenter for Esure home insurance product.

#### 2\_65plus\_acron stair lifts \_a man keeps using stair lifts

An elderly man keeps finding excuses to go downstairs so that he can use the new stair lift. His wife tells him what he is up to. He embraces her and kisses her before going to bed.

#### 3\_65plus\_acron stair lifts \_a woman keeps using stair lifts

An older woman is portrayed having tea and chatting with her friend at her friend's home. She does not concentrate on the chatting but keeps excusing herself to use the stair lift until she is caught up sitting on the stair lift by her friend.

#### 4\_65plus\_Anglian home insurance\_ an old man saving a lot

An older man is featured pruning a hedge while claiming how much he managed to save through Anglian home insurance.

#### 5\_65plus\_B&Q\_an elderly lady gardening

An elderly female is depicted caring for her plants while the voiceover is talking about the price cuts on plants in B&Q shops.

#### 6\_65plus\_Bertoli\_a grand mother

An older woman is depicted as a grandmother buying food in a market and picking up her grandchildren from school. A very charming young man catches her eye so she drops a pack of Bertolli pasta sauce before she drives her car back home. The man follows her home with the pack of sauce and finds out that dinner is already set for him. The seat for him is next to the older woman's daughter.

#### 7\_65plus\_Carbit chewing gum\_ Marvin

Marvin is an older man asked to wear a white suit to fight against plague. He fights very hard but his effort is in vain as plague is invisible.

#### 8\_65plus\_fixodent\_husband biting an apple

This character is an older man playing apple bobbing. He is competing with his wife over this game. His family members cheer when he and his wife manage to catch an apple. After the game, he and his wife are pictured hugging two granddaughters and his wife leans slightly on him.

#### 9\_65plus\_give blood\_ an older man who had his lip replaced

An older man is portrayed sitting on a crowded bus with his son, Richard Branson, who reveals that his father could not have had his hip replaced without the blood donated by another woman on the bus. This older man then turns his head to his son and nods his head without saying a word. The next scene shows this older man smoking a cigarette and standing still next to the woman who donated her blood to him.

#### 10\_65plus\_Havens holidays \_a grandfather

Character 10 is an older man who is in Havens holiday resort with his family members. He is offered an exotic cocktail with a sparkler on it. He stares at it for a while and then bursts into laughter.

#### 11\_65plus\_Muller vitality \_an older man explaining about the product

An older man sitting with his wife reveals information (Muller vitality contains three in one) about the product to the viewers.

#### 12\_65plus\_muller vitality\_ an older woman drinking Muller vitality

An older lady in red top is featured sitting next to her husband drinking Muller vitality yogurt drink. Her facial expression shows disagreement with what her husband says about older age.

#### 13\_65plus\_Muller vitality \_an older man expressing opinion about his age

An older man is portrayed sitting in the country side next to his wife who is drinking Muller vitality drink. His wife seems to be displeased after he says "cos we can't go gallivanting about at our age, we do ourselves a mischief".

14\_65plus\_Nestle Shreddies \_Betty

Betty is an older woman depicted knitting Nestle Shreddies at a very high speed (80 Shreddies per minute)

15\_65plus\_Nestle Shreddies\_ the lady in blue suit presenting the product

Character 15 is an older woman who is depicted as the main presenter revealing the secret recipe of Nestle Shreddies (cereals). She is also depicted as a knitter producing Nestle Shreddies and a quality controller assuring the taste of the product.

16\_65plus\_Nestle Shreddies\_ Ruth

Ruth is an older woman working in a factory producing Nestle Shreddies. She is depicted knitting the product and shows the viewers the secret recipe of Nestle Shreddies.

17\_65plus\_Nestle Shreddies\_ an older woman giving a presentation

Character 17 is an older woman portrayed to give a formal presentation as to the secret recipe of Nestle Shreddies in a meeting room.

18\_65plus\_nation wide home improvement \_ John Stalker the presenter

John Stalker is featured at home with his dog, presenting Nation Wide Home Improvement. The product is presented as easy to use and as he claims, even his dog can do it (by pressing the buttons on the remote control).

19\_65plus\_safestyle\_an older man reading newspaper

Character 19 is depicted reading a newspaper and his friend tries to tell him about Safestyle's sales. He then says the information about the sales very fast so his friend has to keep quiet.

20\_65plus\_seabond denture fixative seals\_ a female user

Character 20 is an older lady who claims that she could not put up with the mess caused by denture fixative seals. After the product information is introduced, she testifies the difference of Seabond denture fixative seals compared with other brands.

21\_65plus\_Wiltshire farm food\_ an old man having a date

Character 21 is an older man who is depicted preparing food in the kitchen to entertain his girlfriend. Nevertheless, he is just pretending to cook by making noise with kitchenware. The food he serves to his girlfriend is actually delivered by Wiltshire Farm Food. He manages to stop the deliver at the door to prevent his girlfriend from finding out the truth.

#### 22\_65plus\_Tetley tea\_ strong older lady

Character 22 is an elderly lady who raises a car with one hand so that she can serve tea to the car mechanic who lies underneath her car fixing it.

#### 23\_65plus\_outside clinic \_ the wife

Character 31 is featured sitting, presumably at home, with her husband (character 32) explaining how outside clinic service is delivered. In the advertisement, they are portrayed receiving the service and having their eyes examined at home. She jokes about her husband as a female optician puts a "twinkle in his eyes".

#### 24\_65plus\_outside clinic\_ the husband

Character 32 is featured sitting, presumably at home, with his wife (character 31) recommending the service given by outside clinic. He is portrayed having his eyes examined by a female optician. His wife thinks the optician puts a "twinkle in his eyes".

#### 25\_65plus\_premier bathroom\_ a male presenter

Character 25 is an older man depicted as the presenter explaining what premier bathroom is like.

#### 26\_5064\_yell\_a man who has his coffee spilled

Because of sudden braking, character 26 spills his coffee in his friends' car so he is blamed for the mess.

#### 27\_5064\_Kleenex\_a man with his dog puppet

Character 27 is featured, with his dog puppet, auditioning as a ventriloquist, hoping to impress the other man in the advertisement. But, he spits, as part of the performance. This annoys the other man who is presumably the judge of his audition.

#### 28\_5064\_Optivita cereal\_ male presenter

Character 28 is featured walking on the street, talking about the new Optivita cereal product. He does not want to coerce the viewers to buy the product as he thinks that is the granny's way of forcing people to take healthy food. He simply tells the viewers the benefits of the product and then leaves them to decide what they are going to do next.

#### 29\_5064\_HSBC\_a man who can't sleep with his wife

Character 29 is featured as a man living in Hong Kong. He is asked to sleep on the sofa in the lounge because his wife prefers to have their dog in bed with her.

#### 30\_5064\_teletext\_a man talking to another woman

Character 30 is an older man featured talking to another older woman in the advertisement. Their talk is interpreted into sign language by a young lady who finally gets bored by their conversation. The background music is "blah blah blah"

#### 31\_5064\_teletext\_a politician giving a talk

Character 31 is featured as a politician giving a public talk. The background music "blah blah blah" implies that his speech is nonsense and boring.

#### 32\_5064\_teletext\_a woman talking to a man

Character 32 is an older man featured talking to another older woman in the advertisement. Their talk is interpreted into sign language by a young lady who finally gets bored by their conversation. The background music is "blah blah blah"

#### 33\_5064\_Kwai garlic extract\_ the wife

Character 33 is featured with her husband and her family in a family party celebrating their anniversary. She is depicted taking the promoted product, dancing with her husband, blowing out candles on a cake with her husband.

#### 34\_5064\_RAC direct\_ the shop owner

Character 34 is an older man who owns a grocery shop. He becomes very wary when a black young man comes in. He considers this black customer as a villain so he looks timid and afraid when he comes to the counter to pay.

35\_5064\_playstation 3\_a man with his dog

Character 35 is an older man featured dressing himself up while his dog runs out of his room (a hotel room). He later discovers that his dog brings him an unexploded bomb which scares him and is thrown away immediately.

36\_5064\_Barclay mortgage \_the father

Character 36 is featured sitting at a dining table with his wife and daughter at his daughter's house. They are listening to a voice mail left by their son-in-law who is on his way home. He looks annoyed when hearing his son-in-law call him and his wife "old duffers". When his son-in-law comes into the house, everyone appears to be quiet and embarrassed.

37\_5064\_Barclay mortgage\_ the mother

Character 37 is featured sitting at a dining table with her husband and daughter at her daughter's house. They are listening to a voice mail left by their son-in-law who is on the way home. She gets annoyed when her son-in-law calls her and her husband "older duffers". When her son-in-law comes into the house, everyone appears to be quiet and embarrassed.

38\_5064\_confused.com\_a man in an animated car

Character 38 is a user of confused.com and manages to save a lot of money with the website.

39\_5064\_KitKat\_a man working at a lab

Character 39 works at a lab researching how to make KitKat crunchier. He claims if the customers are not satisfied, they can punish the workers at the lab. He then unties his trousers to let a lobster in as a way of punishment for the customers' reference.

40\_5064\_Kwai garlic extract\_ a man dancing

Character 40 is an older man who is dancing with his granddaughter. His wife is then shown to remind him to take the promoted product. He kisses and hugs his wife when she approaches. They blow out the candles on a cake to celebrate their anniversary. The scenario is a family party.

41\_5064\_gala bingo\_ Sharon Osbourne

Sharon Osbourne is featured in a Hollywood mansion, claiming that she is playing gala bingo with her friend in London.

42\_5064\_Kenco Coffee\_ a black man as a mentor

Character 42 is a black man who plants coffee and teaches a young man knowledge about coffee. He gives him a little test but the young man just reads information on a can of Kenco Coffee as the answer.

43\_5064\_Fixodent\_the husband

44\_5064\_Fixodent\_the wife

Characters 43 and 44 are a couple watching a movie in the cinema. They are featured eating popcorn and smiling at each other.

45\_5064\_Polarix world\_ a man walking on a beach

Character 45 is featured walking on the beach, presumably in Spain, and suggests anyone who wants to buy property in Spain to contact Polarix world.

46\_5064\_RSPCA\_the female presenter

Character 46 is an older woman featured with her pets in the kitchen. She talks about the concerns for animal welfare after their owners' death and makes an appeal for RSPCA "home for life" project.

47\_5064\_Acron Stairlifts\_ the woman hosting her friend

Character 47 is an older woman chatting and having tea with her friend at home. She discovers that her friend is obsessed with the stair lift.

48\_5064\_directline.com\_the cow seller

Character 48 is featured selling cows and repeats "discount". He raises issues as to possible discounts that insurance companies could offer if there is no claim in the past few years.

49\_5064\_directline.com\_the man on the screen

Character 49 is a man shown on a computer screen, asking if there is anyone there to answer his question. He is trying to raise an issue relevant to the services of call centres.

50\_5064\_Wiltshire farm foods\_ the woman whose partner pretends cooking

Character 50 is an older lady at her partner's home. He pretends to cook in the kitchen while she is waiting outside. She does not know the food served by her partner is actually ready-to-eat food delivered by Wiltshire Farm Foods. Hence, she admires his cooking skills as the food is so divine.

51\_5064\_Tesco\_the man wearing a grey coat

52\_5064\_Tesco\_the man wearing a blue coat

Characters 51 and 52 are two men shopping in Tesco. They seem to compete with each other as to who can find what they want more quickly and finish shopping first. Hence, they are in each other's way and stealing food from each other's cart.

53\_5064\_safestyle\_the man who wants to share product information to his friend

Character 53 is an older man who attempts to tell his friend about the sales of the promoted products. Nevertheless, his friend already knows and reveals all what character 70 wants to say to shut him up.

54\_5064\_BT\_the grandfather

Character 54 is an older man watching football at home with his son and grandson and his favoured team wins. It is revealed that his way of celebrating the victory of the team he likes is considered embarrassing (a big hug and a kiss on the forehead). His son can put up with it but his grandson can't.

55\_5064\_fixodent\_the wife biting an apple

Character 55 is an older woman playing apple bobbing. She is competing with her husband over this game. Her family members cheer when she and her husband manage to do so. After the game, she stands next to her husband, embracing two granddaughters and leans slightly on him giving him a kiss.

56\_5064\_give blood\_ a black man

Character 56 is a black man whose blood saved someone's life. He is featured standing still, probably as a guard working in a museum or gallery.

57\_5064\_give blood\_ Richard Branson

Richard Branson is featured in an advertisement to "give blood". His father is with him on the bus. He reveals that his father could not have had his hip

replaced if another woman on the bus had not given her blood.

#### 58\_5064\_kitkat\_golf player

Character 58 is a golf player in a match. He does not perform well so he steps aside for a while to have a break and eat Kit-Kat chocolate.

#### 59\_65plus\_Velux windows\_ a female artist

Character 59 is featured drawing some kind of artistic work on the floor in a dark and dirty attic. Next scene shows her as a gallery owner, well-dressed up and standing confidently in the same room which becomes bright and tidy because of the new windows.

#### 60\_65plus\_肯德基\_叫乖孫的老伯

Character 60 is an older man who happens to pass by a young man eating chicken with his girlfriend in the park. He wants to share a piece of the fried chicken so he calls the young man (a stranger to him) "grandson" and takes one piece away.

#### 61\_65plus\_Lanew 保暖夾克\_第一個出現的老人

Character 61 is an older man who is featured climbing mountains with a young man and a young woman who are presumably his children.

#### 62\_65plus\_Sony\_織布的老人

Character 62 is an older woman dressed in aboriginal style of clothes. She is portrayed weaving clothes in front of her house. A photographer is interested in what she is doing.

#### 63\_65plus\_一度讚\_搞笑的阿嬤

Character 63 is a grandmother who walks into her grandson's room with a bowl of instant noodles. She moves slowly around the room in order to spread the smell of the noodles. She is murmuring the product name to bring luck to her grandson's test.

#### 64\_65plus\_一度讚\_改運算命師

Character 64 is a fortune teller in the advertisement. A young man who is looking for a job needs to know more about his future and asks for help from him. He therefore simply sells a bowl of instant noodles (more expensive than usual) to him and claims this could bring the man good luck.

#### 65\_65plus\_三好皇家香米\_丈夫

Character 65 is an older man who watches a younger couple eating. His wife suddenly approaches with exaggerated make-up and offers him a chance to kiss her. Nevertheless, he ignores his wife's offer.

#### 66\_65plus\_三好皇家香米\_太太

Character 66 is an older woman who applies make-up in order to imply that her husband can kiss her if he wants. Nevertheless, her husband is shocked when seeing her and ignores her aspiration for a kiss.

#### 67\_65plus\_保力達 B\_說別人鐵齒的中醫師

Character 67 is an older man dressed like a Chinese medical doctor but he does not understand why many people want to buy the promoted product (Chinese herbal medicine to enhance human vitality) from him. He therefore is told that he can never understand the benefits of the product.

#### 68\_65plus\_1919 救助急難\_ 白秀雄

#### 69\_65plus\_1919 救助急難\_ 孫越

Characters 68 and 69 are two male celebrities featured to promote information to help those families who need emergency aids as a consequence of domestic violence or child abuse.

#### 70\_65plus\_165 防治詐騙\_老爸

Character 70 is an older man who received a fraud call and hence lost a lot of money.

#### 71\_65plus\_台灣基督教醫院\_堆積木等待的老人

Character 71 is an older man who is disabled, sitting in his wheelchair, playing with bricks alone in a room without much furniture. It is told that he is waiting for the construction of a medical care centre dedicated to older people like him. However, the waiting is suffering. The ad is to make an appeal to raise money for the medical centre he needs.

#### 72\_65plus\_台鹽膠原骨錠\_奶奶

Character 72 is depicted as a user of the promoted medical product so she can cycle with no difficulty.

#### 73\_65plus\_台鹽膠原骨錠\_爺爺

Character 73 is an older man who tells his grandson that he gives his wife (character94) the promoted product to maintain her health.

#### 74\_65plus\_永慶房屋\_找房子的婆婆

Character 74 is an older lady who is able to use computer technology to search for houses she would consider to buy. She has bone problems but she can still walk fast. The house she decides to buy is near a park where she can meet a lot of new friends.

#### 75\_65plus\_永慶房屋\_公園問話的婆婆

Character 75 is an older lady who kindly welcomes a new neighbour (character 74) in a park while she is exercising with her friends.

#### 76\_65plus\_用心無障礙網路任遨遊\_老婆婆

Character 76 is an older lady who does not have a good eye sight and can't read words on the computer screen well without the web-device promoted in

the advertisement.

77\_65plus\_桂格完善\_擔心孩子吃不好的婆婆

Character 77 is an older lady who is so worried about her children that she can not eat well or sleep well.

78\_65plus\_桂格完善\_藥吃多沒胃口的爺爺

Character 78 is an older man who takes so much medicine that he does not have an appetite. He is told to take good care of himself by the listener in a caring and loving attitude.

79\_65plus\_桂格完善\_牙齒不好消化不好的婆婆

Character 79 does not have good teeth or good digestion. Her daughter says she only has one mother and if character 102 does not use the vitamin supplements promoted in the advertisement, she does not want to eat.

80\_65plus\_猴標六神丹\_石英

Character 80 is a celebrity who reminiscently recalls how people used to greet to each other by asking whether they have had their meal already. Now, people don't do so anymore. He also adds that there is no need to worry about food shortage but people instead have more stomach problems. Then, he presents the promoted medical product to the viewers.

81\_65plus\_全面禁菸\_孫越

Character 81 is a celebrity featured to raise the public awareness as to "no smoking in the public space".

82\_65plus\_美吾髮快速染髮霜\_染髮的婆婆

Character 82 is an older lady having her hair dyed with her friend.

83\_65plus\_銀寶善存\_扛腳踏車的老爸

Character 83 is an older man who meets his neighbour after a bike ride, carrying his bike into the apartment block. He is told that he is becoming younger by his neighbour. He ascribes this consequence to the promoted vitamin product given by his daughter and also recommends it to his neighbour. In the next scene, his daughter and son-in-law visit him and give him another bottle of the product. His daughter urges the viewers to buy the product, giving it to their parents as parents' health can't wait.

84\_65plus\_白蘭氏蜆精\_老伯

Character 84 is an older man who reminds the viewers to buy the promoted product (food supplements) to maintain health.

85\_65plus\_白蘭氏燕窩\_爸爸

Character 85 is an older man portrayed reading a newspaper in the living room. He endorses his son's act of "filial piety".

86\_65plus\_白蘭氏燕窩\_媽媽

Character 86 is an older woman who is given a gift (food supplements) by her son and she is concerned about the price because the gift seems to be expensive. However, later she also expresses that she feels grateful and changes the topic to why her son still doesn't want to get married.

87\_65plus\_全國稅務反詐騙\_老婆婆

Character 87 is an older lady who has received a fraud letter and she did not realise what it is. Later, a young lady (a celebrity presenter) appeared to give the older lady a warning about the latter she had just received.

88\_65plus\_全聯米果\_螢幕右邊的老伯

89\_65plus\_全聯米果\_螢幕左邊的老伯

Characters 88 and 89 are two older men who are hired to testify how crunchy the promoted product (rice cookies) is because they have strong teeth.

90\_衛生署藥單宣傳\_不懂藥單為何的老伯

Character 90 is an older man given a prescription by a doctor but he does not know what it is for. His granddaughter explains what a prescription is for and how it can be used.

91\_老神在在意外險\_文英

Character 91 is a female celebrity presenting the insurance product in the advertisement.

92\_65plus\_若元錠\_太太

93\_65plus\_若元錠\_先生

Characters 92 and 93 are an older couple sitting next to each other in a Japanese house. Character 92 is featured showing a smiling face when looking at her husband, character 93.

94\_65plus\_宏星血艾通\_身體不好的先生

Character 94 is an older man who is blamed for his lack of health management (eating a lot but never exercising) by his wife.

95\_65plus\_宏星血艾通\_數落老公的太太

Character 95 is an older woman who is featured complaining about her husband' health problems and his lack of health management to another woman in the advertisement.

96\_65plus\_宏星血艾通\_介紹藥的明星

Character 96 is a female celebrity recommending the promoted medical product to the other older characters in the same advertisement to take in order to maintain their health. She claims that we have to take good care of our own health so that our children need not worry.

97\_65plus\_合格禽肉衛生標誌\_三號的雞婆

Character 97 is an older lady who informs others of the sign signifying good quality chicken on the street. She also asks the head of the village to broadcast the information. Her name connotes "meddlesome".

98\_65plus\_味全高鮮味精

Character 98 is an older woman (a celebrity), cooking for a young man (a male celebrity) and enjoying watching how much he likes the food.

99\_65plus\_丫鈣\_文英

Character 99 is a female celebrity claiming that she is using the promoted product and hence has healthy knees.

100\_65plus\_保力達 B\_程明加竹藝師

Character 100 is an older man featured in a workshop dedicated to the production of bamboo handicrafts. He is the expert.

101\_65plus\_保麗淨\_素珠牙齦痛

Character 101 is a female celebrity complaining about her infected gum and is told what causes the problem in a dental clinic.

102\_65plus\_保麗淨\_陶大偉

Character 102 is a male celebrity explaining what causes character 128's infected gum.

103\_65plus\_康健人壽\_抱怨身體不佳的婆婆

Character 103 is an older woman who is climbing stairs and complaining about her health problems.

#### 104\_65plus\_康健人壽\_喪偶的婆婆

Character 104 is an older lady who is bereaved and given money for the funeral expenses.

#### 105\_65plus\_康健人壽\_被拒保的老人

Character 105 is an elderly man making a phone call to make an enquiry about life insurance but he is cut off. He feels upset and blames his age for being so useless.

#### 106\_65plus\_康健人壽\_顧好身體的老人

Character 106 is an older man portrayed travelling with his friends and claiming that he had better take care of himself well so that he does not need his children's company to travel round Taiwan.

#### 107\_65plus\_統一烏骨雞精\_婆婆

#### 108\_65plus\_統一烏骨雞精\_爺爺

Characters 107 and 108 are an older couple who are portrayed drinking the promoted product (chicken soup). In the end of the advertisement, they are depicted with their children.

#### 109\_65plus\_勞保給付申請\_石英

Character 109, a male celebrity, is featured as a retired person, playing Chinese chess with his friends. They are talking about application for pensions and he is the only one who managed to apply in the correct way.

#### 110\_65plus\_就是茶\_用箭殺蟲的老人

Character 110 is a tea farmer shooting insects and worms with a bow and arrow. That is why his tea leaves can be used to make good tea. This tea is enjoyed by a younger man at the end.

111\_65plus\_過年送白蘭氏\_爸爸

Character 111 agrees with his wife's opinion about the gift given by their son and praises his son for choosing the right present to give during Chinese New Year.

112\_65plus\_過年送白蘭氏\_媽媽

Character 112 is a mother who acclaims her son for choosing the right gift (the promoted product) to give in Chinese New Year because the gift can help enhance the health. She comments that being healthy is the most important wish of all for a New Year.

113\_65plus\_維力活力補帖蠟精\_八十歲的老伯

Character 113 is asked by a young man as to his age. He reveals his age to be nearly 80 and claims that he is still very healthy.

114\_65plus\_維骨力\_啥事都自己來的老爸

Character 114 is an older man who would like to do things on his own. He is suggested to have bone problems but he copes well with the aid of the product and can even play baseball with his grandson.

115\_65plus\_貝納頌咖啡\_不再追尋的咖啡達人

Character 115 is featured as an expert who never gives up improving his skills to make good coffee. He eventually gives up such kind of pursuit because he is defeated by the promoted coffee product.

116\_65plus\_維骨力\_鳥來嬭

Character 116 is a female celebrity who shows the other celebrity presenter (a male) how to examine the authenticity of the promoted products so that he will not be cheated again to buy counterfeit ones.

117\_65plus\_銀寶善存\_背太太的老先生

Character 117 is an older man travelling with his wife in the mountain area. His wife asks him if he remembers how he used to piggyback her when they were in the same place before at a younger age. He then does that again to show that he is still as young and as strong as before because he uses the vitamin supplements advertised.

#### 118\_65plus\_養命酒\_最後出場的老伯

Character 118 reveals to the viewers that he and his wife have been using the promoted product (food supplements) since they were young.

#### 119\_65plus\_雙貓感冒液\_脫線

Character 119 is an older male celebrity depicted with a young woman who has a cold. He instructs her what should be done for the cold.

#### 120\_65plus\_nissan 鬆九九九\_按摩師

Character 120 is an older man depicted working as masseur. The exaggerated actions of massage shows the masseur has to try very hard to make the customer feel relaxed from pressure.

#### 121\_65plus\_保麗淨\_牙齒不好切芭樂的的老太太

Character 121 is an older woman, claiming that she can only eat sliced guava because her denture fixative is not good.

#### 122\_65plus\_保麗淨\_假牙堅固的素珠

Character 122 is a female celebrity, biting a piece of guava with no difficulty because she uses the denture fixative promoted in the advertisement. She also tells others that it is also important to use anti-bacterial denture cleanser to prevent the gum from infection.

#### 123\_65plus\_美國人壽\_石英

Character 123 is a male celebrity presenting a life insurance product to the

viewers.

#### 124\_65plus\_宏興大雄丸\_騎腳踏車的老伯

Character 124 is an older man featured cycling in the mountain area. He claims he can cycle faster than youngsters because he is taking the promoted medical product to maintain his health.

#### 125\_65plus\_飛利浦省電燈泡\_餐桌旁的老伯

#### 126\_65plus\_飛利浦省電燈泡\_餐桌旁的婦人

Characters 125 and 126 are an older couple depicted waiting in a dining room for the dinner cooked by their children. Character 153 (the husband), sitting next to his wife, looks at his wife dearly. Character 154 (the wife) smiles when her children approach her.

#### 127\_65plus\_桂冠湯圓\_奶奶

#### 128\_65plus\_桂冠湯圓\_爺爺

Characters 127 and 128 are an older couple depicted waiting anxiously at home for their daughter's family to come. Character 128 (the husband) keeps asking about time. They both look so happy seeing their granddaughter and embrace her in arms. They are later featured having sweet dumplings with their daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter. They enjoy the family union very much.

#### 129\_65plus\_桂格什錦珍穀\_媽媽煮飯

Character 129 is portrayed as a mother busy cooking because her daughter's boyfriend is the guest. She reminds her daughter to take good care of her boyfriend as if he is the future husband. Her daughter's boyfriend likes the food very much, especially the rice, which pleases character 129.

#### 130\_65plus\_桂格完膳\_白冰冰的媽媽

Character 130 is an elderly lady depicted suffering from poor appetite. Her daughter is worried about her health and blames herself for not taking care of character 130 well. Her daughter, hence, gives the promoted product (food supplements) to character 130 to improve her health.

#### 131\_65plus\_宜蘭童玩節\_超級終結者

An old man wearing a Hawaiian shirt is featured having fun with his water gun toy.

#### 132\_5064\_國民年金\_低收入 55 歲老人

Character 132 is an older man who is revealed having low income. He is depicted collecting recyclable material to make a living.

#### 133\_5064\_566 護色洗髮乳\_一個五十歲的女人

Character 133 is a woman aged 50 whose hair is revealed as shining and young because of the use of the promoted shampoo. She is depicted posing sexily and glamorously in a hair saloon.

#### 134\_5064\_安麗\_反對女兒做安麗的母親

Character 134 is a mother who can not understand her daughter's career decision so she tries to get involved with what she is doing. She finally decides to support her daughter's decision and considers it wise.

#### 135\_5064\_中國信託個人信貸\_爸爸

Character 135 is a father whose daughter wants to study abroad but is about to give up because she is concerned about the expenses. Character 135 then assures his daughter not to worry about money and works hard to support her. His daughter is very grateful to him.

136\_5064\_ la new 氣墊鞋 \_吳念真

Character 136 is a male celebrity who presents the promoted shoes to the viewers and explains the special material used to make the shoes.

137\_ 5064\_ 大鵬人參\_ 神明桌前的白髮老伯

Character 137 is an older man who interprets messages revealed by sacred spirits and explains what the worshippers should do as the answer to the question they ask to the sacred spirits. Character 137 is considered as a medium.

138\_5064\_公投討黨產\_店老闆娘

Character 138 is a female owner of a small shop selling food. A number of young customers reveal their intentions to create their own business but can't do so due to shortage of money. Character 138 then give advice as to how to obtain funding for launching a business. Her advice is related to the political issue highlighted in the advertisement.

139\_ 5064\_中華電信光纖 \_ 董事長

Character 139 is known as the president of the biggest telecommunication company in Taiwan. He is portrayed with another celebrity (a young baseball player) talking over the benefits of establishing optical fibre broadband network in Taiwan and how challenging it could be.

140\_5064\_台灣固網\_ 講台上擦汗的老人

Character 140 is featured as a company representative standing on the stage hosting a meeting. He seems to panic because he does not know how to respond to the questions asked by the customers.

141\_5064\_桂格完膳\_ 白冰冰

Character 141 is a female celebrity featured listening to three other senior characters' personal problems. She comforts them and gives them suggestions.

142\_5064\_力攝氏\_ 幫忙做月子的老媽

Character 142 is an older lady who has diabetes but can cope well by using the promoted product. Hence, she is energetic (even more than her son-in-law) and able to travel alone abroad so as to help her daughter take care of the new-born grandchild.

143\_5064\_ 挺力\_路過的婆婆

Character 143 is an older lady who has the problem of scoliosis.

144\_5064\_惠氏\_服用維他命的醫生

Character 144 is a doctor portrayed taking vitamins in the morning. He is asked why he is doing this and explains the benefits of the promoted vitamin product to the other man.

145\_5064\_克風邪\_公園介紹用藥的老伯

Character 145 is an older man featured chatting with his friends under a tree. He introduces the promoted medicine to his friend as her husband is having a cold.

146\_5064\_台灣彩券\_ 輪椅婆婆

Character 146 is an older lady who is disabled so sitting in a wheelchair. She is depicted selling lottery tickets to a young man and enlightens him with her opinion as why the girl he likes just keeps calling him but saying nothing matters.

147\_5064\_ 固勒沙敏 \_王滿嬌跟女婿

Character 147 is a female celebrity, playing a role as a mother-in-law given a gift (the promoted medicine) by her son-in-law. She is pleased with it.

148\_5064\_ 固勒沙敏 \_ 王滿嬌

Character 148 is a female celebrity, claiming that she can climb stairs fast with no difficulty because she is the user of the promoted glucosamine product.

149\_5064\_ 青島純生 \_解說員

Character 149 is a man dressed in a lab coat explaining to the viewers how the promoted beer is manufactured.

150\_ 5064\_ 金蜜蜂葡萄酒 \_白冰冰

Character 150 is a female celebrity dressed in a glamorous gown hosting a party. She serves the guests the wine she presents in the advertisement.

151\_ 5064\_ 金豪蠔精\_ 日本養蠔達人

Character 151 is represented as an expert, very experienced in raising oysters.

152\_ 5064\_ 國安感冒液\_女性代言人

Character 152 is a female celebrity presenting the product and asks the viewers to recognize the logo.

153\_ 5064\_ 健保有你真好\_醫生

Character 153 is a doctor who sees patients in the remote area and claims that it is good to have National Health Insurance system in Taiwan.

154\_ 5064\_ 台灣紅麴香腸\_ 男性說明員

Character 154 is an older man dressed in a white protective coat in a laboratory, assuring the quality of the sausages promoted in the advertisement. He is revealed as the president of the company which produces the promoted sausages.

155\_ 5064\_ 國民年金 \_50 歲的自耕農

Character 155 is represented as a self-employed farmer in the advertisement, working in his farm and listening to the radio. The theme of the advertisement is to encourage Taiwanese residents to take up a new social insurance provided by the government so that they do not have to worry about life at older age. This social insurance benefits those who are economically vulnerable.

156\_ 5064\_ 桂格大燕麥片 \_陳美蘭

Character 156 is a lady who reveals herself as a user of the promoted oat product. She wants to recommend it.

157\_ 5064\_ 白帥帥地板清潔 \_白冰冰

Character 157 is a female celebrity who plays a role of a housewife, cleaning the house with the promoted product. Her husband is trying to sneak away from home and looks scared when he is discovered by her.

158\_ 5064\_ 引藻 \_ 李昌鈺

Character 158 is a well known forensic medical expert and is featured recommending the promoted medical product.

159\_ 5064\_ 康健人壽旅行團 \_廖俊代言

Character 159 is a male celebrity featured with a group of older people who are travelling on a coach. He is answering questions asked by other older people who are interested in the promoted life insurance product.

160\_5064\_得意的一天五珍寶油\_公公

161\_5064\_得意的一天五珍寶油\_婆婆

Characters 160 and 161 are an older couple featured sitting in the lounge waiting for a meal served by their children. Character 161 (the wife) is also represented as a mother-in-law who is concerned about her daughter-in-law's cooking skills and waits anxiously by looking constantly into the kitchen. Her husband (character 162) notices this and suggests that she goes into the kitchen to check whether everything is alright. She then approaches her daughter-in-law who is nervous and examines her preparation for food. She is finally relieved as her daughter-in-law chooses the same kind of cooking oil she would recommend. Later, character 160 and 161 are both having a meal with their son and daughter-in-law.

162\_5064\_統一麵\_普渡誠心的媽媽

Character 162 is a mother who is asked by her daughter what to prepare for the festival on the seventh full moon in a Chinese lunar year and later depicted sincerely worshipping to the dead.

163\_5064\_頂好超市\_丫好嬲

Character 163 is an older lady talking to the viewers as to how capable her daughter-in-law is because she is able to finish shopping within 15 minutes. Character 163 praises her daughter-in-law for the efficiency and later served food by her daughter-in-law.

164\_5064\_政府過年送好禮\_蘇貞昌

Character 164 is a politician (the premier) depicted conducting an orchestra but what he is actually promoting is the agricultural products made in Taiwan.

165\_5064\_維力活力補帖蠔精\_挖蚵的婦人

Character 165 is represented as a worker who takes oysters out from the shells.

166\_5064\_維大力\_代言人蔡振南

Character 166 is a male celebrity presenting the promoted soft drink.

167\_5064\_維大力\_放整箱的老伯

Character 167 is an older man depicted worshipping and interpreting what the P-shaped incense signifies. He considers it as a message indicating that the worshipped sacred spirits are pleased with the offered soda-drink.

168\_5064\_維骨力\_方駿

Character 168 is a male celebrity who is misled by his friend to buy the counterfeit of the promoted medical product. He is then informed as to how to tell the authenticity of the promoted product by the other celebrity presenter.

169\_5064\_維骨力\_韓教授

Character 169 is a well-known doctor who informs a number of women he met at the airport how to recognize the logo indicative of the authenticity of the promoted medical product.

170\_5064\_遠雄第二代\_說明的董事長

Character 170 is a president of a construction company and depicted presenting the concept relevant to what kind of buildings or houses to be constructed by his company.

171\_5209\_5064\_桂格完善\_白冰冰當女兒

Character 171 is a female celebrity, talking about her mother's deteriorating health. She blames herself for being too busy to take good care of her mother. She later presents the advertised product (food supplement) as a means to improve her mother's health.

172\_銀寶善存\_被老公背的婦人

Character 172 is an older woman travelling with her husband in the mountain area. She asks her husband whether he remembers that he piggybacked her at the same place when they were still young. He then immediately does that again. They are both featured as users of the promoted vitamin product to maintain their health and vitality.

173\_5064\_鄭杏泰\_說明的爸爸

Character 173 is an older man depicted coughing and taking medicine. He later talks about the importance to maintain health at older age so that children

will not suffer from taking care of sick parents.

#### 174\_5064\_萬家香\_阿基師

Character 174 is a well-known cook in Taiwan, depicted cooking with the promoted seasoning product which is claimed to be part of his secret recipe.

#### 175\_5064\_養命酒\_社長

Character 175 is represented as a company owner who uses the promoted medical product (food supplements) to maintain his health so that he can keep on working hard.

#### 176\_5064\_十八銅人行氣散\_吳念真

Character 176 is a male celebrity who is depicted chasing after his car towed away by the policeman. He is short of breath after running just for a while. He is later shown taking the promoted medical product (Chinese medical powder) and drops the herbal powder on the floor. His wife blames him for the mess.

#### 177\_5064\_保素齋 super12 天然油\_廖俊

Character 177 is a male celebrity, represented as a cook who reminds others of the risk of using ordinary cooking oil for stir-frying. He also recommends the promoted oil product as a better option of cooking oil.

178\_5064\_櫻花廚油煙機\_葉全真的媽媽

Character 178 is represented as a mother cooking for her daughter who is concerned about the health of her lungs damaged by soot.

179\_5064\_灣仔碼頭手工水餃\_奶奶

Character 179 is an older woman who is happy to see her grandson and has dumplings with her daughter's family.

180\_65plus\_養命酒\_最後出場的老婆婆

She is portrayed with her husband who reveals to the viewers that they have used the promoted product long in their life as food supplements to maintain their health and vitality.

181\_5064\_Dove pro-age shampoo \_a woman posing

Character 181 is an older woman posing in front of the camera. The focus of the advertisement is her hair which is claimed to still look young as the consequence of using Dove pro-age shampoo.

182\_5064\_Acron Stairlifts\_ a woman chatting with her friend

Character 182 is an older woman chatting and having tea at her friend's house. She is obsessed with the stair lift at her friend's house and keeps using it as a toy.

183\_5064\_政黨再輪替\_馬英九

Character 183 is a politician, known as a candidate in the Taiwanese presidential election, portrayed promoting his policies.

184\_5064\_特別費政治廣告\_馬英九

Character 184 is a politician who is criticized in the advertisement produced for the presidential election in Taiwan.

185\_5064\_台灣不能流失\_蕭萬長

Character 185 is a Taiwanese politician who raises some political issues in the advertisement.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Examples for each character type in chapter 5**

**The applicable examples for each character type (including the subgroups) are listed here (only the coded numbers). The content of the examples can be referred to in appendix 2.**

#### **Character type 1: Competent**

Socially Successful

UK: 1, 18, 19, 41, 57,

TW: 102, 109, 116, 119, 122, 123, 136, 139, 141, 148, 150, 154, 157, 158, 159, 164, 166, 169, 170, 174, 175, 177, 68, 69, 80, 81, 91, 96, 98, 99, 152, 171, 176, 183, 184, 185,

Mentally Capable

UK: 1, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, 38, 39, 4, 41, 42, 45, 46, 48, 49, 53, 6, 59,

TW: 100, 102, 109, 110, 115, 116, 118, 119, 122, 123, 124, 136, 137, 138, 139, 141, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 151, 153, 154, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 163, 164, 165, 166, 169, 170, 174, 175, 177, 62, 64, 68, 69, 73, 74, 80, 81, 83, 91, 96, 97, 152, 171, 176, 183, 185

Physically Capable

UK: 22, 58, 181

TW: 113, 114, 117, 124, 133, 142, 148, 150, 61, 72, 74, 75, 82, 83, 88, 89, 99,

## **Character type 2: Conservative/Traditional**

Religiously Devoted

UK: N/A

TW: 137, 162, 167

Frugal

UK: N/A

TW: 86

Preserving Tradition

UK: N/A

TW: 62, 100

Reminiscent

UK: N/A

TW: 80

Tough/Serious/Strong-Minded

UK: 42, 56, 9

TW: 115, 135, 151

## **Character type 3: Engaged in Female-Male Relations**

Intimate Couple Interactions

UK: 2, 33, 40, 43, 44, 47, 55, 8

TW: 117, 172

Peaceful Companionship

UK: N/A

TW: 92, 93, 125, 126

Love Pursuers

UK: 21, 50

TW: N/A

Problematic Couple Interactions

UK: 29

TW: 157, 65, 66

#### **Character type 4: Golden Ager**

Health-conscious

UK: 33, 40,

TW: 113, 117, 118, 144, 148, 156, 172, 175, 61, 72, 73, 83, 84, 96, 99, 180

Pursuing Horticultural Leisure

UK: 4, 5

TW: N/A

Well-Travelled

UK: 10

TW: 106, 117, 172

Sociable

UK: 3, 182

TW: 109, 145, 150, 74, 75

Posh and Affluent

UK: 41, 45

TW: N/A

Cheeky/Playful/Young-at-heart

UK: 10, 2, 3, 39, 55, 8

TW: 131, 60

### **Character type 5: Humorous**

Humour-Playful/Cheeky/Fun-Loving

UK: 10, 2, 3, 39, 55, 8

TW: 131, 60

Humour-Competence

UK: 14, 15, 16, 17, 22,

TW: 110, 142, 64, 88, 89, 97

Humour-Hilarious Actions

UK: 27, 51, 52, 54

TW: 120, 63

Humour-Vulnerable

UK: 26, 34

TW: 140

Humour-Female-Male Relationships

UK: 21, 29, 50

TW: 157, 65, 66

Humour-Incompetence

UK: 7

TW: 63

Humour- Offense and Embarrassment

UK: 36, 37

TW: N/A

## **Character type 6: Unwell and Declining in Health**

Coping Well

UK: 2

TW: 114, 142, 146, 74

Struggling for Independence

UK: N/A

TW: 114, 173

Vulnerable and Incompetent

UK: N/A

TW: 101, 103, 130, 71, 77, 78, 79, 94, 95

### **Character 7: Incapable**

Physically Incompetent

UK: 13, 26, 7,

TW: 121, 130, 143, 76, 77, 78, 79, 176

Mentally Incompetent

UK: 30, 31, 32,

TW: 140, 168, 63, 67, 87, 90, 70

Socially Incompetent

UK: 13,

TW: 105, 155, 71

### **Character type 8: Engaged in Intergenerational Relations**

Loving and Helpful Family Elders

UK: 6

TW: 127, 128, 129, 134, 135, 142, 178, 179

Authoritative Family Elders

UK: N/A

TW: 107, 108, 111, 112, 130, 147, 160, 161, 163, 178, 79, 83, 86, 125, 126

Independent Family Elders

UK: N/A

TW: 106, 114, 173, 96

Light-Hearted Family Elders

UK: 2

TW: N/A

### **Character type 9: Vulnerable**

Suspicious/Over-wary

UK: 34

TW: N/A

Scared/Afraid

UK: 35

TW: N/A

Upset/Suffering/Sad

UK: N/A

TW: 103, 104, 105, 130, 71

Painful Self-Disclosure

UK: N/A

TW: 121, 77, 78, 79

Cheated/Victimized

UK: N/A

TW: 168, 87, 70

Socially Discriminated/Rejected

UK: N/A

TW: 105

## Appendix 4 Transcripts of examples in chapter 6

Example 1 Sun Life Over 50 Plan– John Craven, feeling like a youngster

Year: 1999

Channel: five

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption
1 They say you're only as old as you feel 2 So in that case 3 I'm just a youngster	John Craven stands by his van with a dog in it. He is in the countryside.	John Craven
4 Come on boy	He throws out a stick and the dog chases after it	
5 In fact life has never felt better 6 If you like me are over 50 7 Then you've reached the age when you need to start thinking about the future	John Craven is featured facing the camera, talking and walking	
8 Good boy	The dog comes back to him	
9 If you'd like to leave something behind for your loved ones 10 There is an <u>easy</u> solution 11 It's called the Sun Life over 50 plan	John Craven on camera	CALL FREE 0800 40 60 40
12 For just <u>six</u> pounds a month 13 This plan pays out a cash sum which could help towards final expenses 14 or be left to a child or grandchild	An old couple and a little girl pass by John Craven.	From £ 6 a month
15 Morning (by John Craven) 16 Morning (the couple reply)	John Craven greets the old couple who are walking with their little granddaughter	
17 Provided you're aged between 50 and 80 18 You are <u>guaranteed</u> to be accepted without a medical	John Craven is featured back to his van	No medical
19 To find out more, call this number now 0800 40 60 40		CALL FREE 0800 40 60 40
20 You'll receive this free information pack and a personal quotation	Several documents are shown and a flyer showing "a free gift for you" is on the top	
21 You could also choose a free gift to welcome you as a policy holder	A clock, kettle, and a radio clock are displayed	YOURS FREE CALL FREE 0800 40 60 40
22 Staying young at heart is easy when you are taking care of the future 23 with the Sun Life over 50 plan 24 Call now on 0800 40 60 40	John Craven is in his van and drives away at the end of the commercial	CALL FREE 0800 40 60 40

Example 2: Cornhill Direct Senior Security Plan – slow down  
 Year: 1999 Channel: Five

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption	
1 Slow down she says 2 You are not getting any younger 3 You've worked hard all your life now you should relax (1.0) 4 She thinks I am over doing it (slight laugh) 5 What happens to me if you go she says (1.0) 6 Don't worry I say 7 It's all taken care of (2.0) 8 There are a few good things about getting older(1.0)	There is a close-up of a grey-haired man's face throughout the advert. He is sometimes featured looking into the camera while speaking.	CORNHILL Direct SENIOR SECURITY PLAN	
9 Cornhill senior security plan is one of them (1.0) 10 It's life insurance put together for the over fifties (1.0)		LIFE INSURANCE FOR PEOPLE AGED 50-80	
11 It <i>covers</i> me for the rest of my life for as little as 8 pounds a month		FROM £ 8 A MONTH EQUIVALENT TO 26p A DAY	
12 And can give my family a cash lump sum when they need it most		CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS	
13 Didn't even need a medical to qualify 14 The senior security plan means I don't have to worry about the future		NO MEDICAL CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS	
15 So I <u>can</u> start to relax (2.5) 16 But slow down? (smiles)		CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS	
17 For your information pack (female voiceover) 18 Call Cornhill direct free on 0800 22 66 55 (female voiceover)		The old man is featured riding his motorbike off fast	
19 That's 0800 22 66 55 (female voiceover)			CORNHILL Direct SENIOR SECURITY PLAN www.cornhilldirect.co.uk CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS

Example 3: Cornhill Direct Senior Security Plan – Tango Granny  
 Year: 1999 Channel: Five

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption
1 Mum, she says (.) it must be great when you get to your age 2 You haven't got a care in the world 3 You're healthy (.) you can do whatever you want 4 I suppose she is right 5 For the first time in years I can take it easy 6 Especially now I know the future is taken care of with Cornhill Senior Security Plan	A close-up of a female protagonist's face is presented throughout the advert. The woman looks into the camera occasionally while speaking. She looks rather young-old with blond short hair. She wears a pair of glasses but later takes them off.	CORNHILL Direct SENIOR SECURITY PLAN
7 It's life insurance for the over fifties		LIFE INSURANCE FOR PEOPLE AGED 50-80
8 Covers are made for the rest of my life for just eight pounds a month 9 I can get my family a lump sum when they need it most		FROM £ 8 A MONTH EQUIVALENT TO 26p A DAY
10 I didn't even need a medical to qualify (1.0)		NO MEDICAL CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS
11 So (1.0) How will I spend my (.) twilight years? 12 Looking after my grandchildren? (.) Baking cakes? (.) Knitting (.) 13 All the things that grannies are supposed to do (2.0)	The featured woman is smiling at the camera	CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS
14 For your information pack (male voiceover) 15 Call Cornhill direct <u>free</u> on 0800226655 (male voiceover)	Tango music is on in the background with the female presenter dancing with a sexy, young and good-looking male partner.	
16 That's 0800226655 (male voiceover)		CORNHILL Direct SENIOR SECURITY PLAN www.cornhilldirect.co.uk CALL 0800 22 66 55 FREE LINES OPEN 24 HOURS

Example 4: Liverpool Victoria: like gardening

Year: 2005 Channel: ITV

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption
1 Ohhh 2 Tidying up the garden can seem to be hard work 3 But it's great to know it's all done 4 It's a bit like that in life	An old man is featured pulling out weeds in his garden	
5 As we get older 6 It's more important to be ready for whatever tomorrow may bring		Cover is restricted in the first year
7 Now (.) with the fifty plus plan from Liverpool Victoria 8 The <u>peace</u> of mind that has been prepared could be yours		<b>For those aged 50-75</b>
9 You can give your loved ones a <u>guaranteed</u> cash lump sum to help out with things 10 like funeral expenses and non-paid bills when you're no longer around		<b>Call free 0800 45 45 45</b>
11 From just 8 pounds a month with no medical or health questions		<b>No medical</b>
12 you are <u>guaranteed</u> to be accepted 13 and no salesperson will call	The man sits down in the garden	All UK residents aged 50-75 (excluding the Channel Islands and Isle of Man) <b>Guaranteed Acceptance</b>
14 The first month's cover is free and there is a <u>free</u> gift when your plan starts	A digital camera, DVD and some Mark & Spenser vouchers are shown	<b>FIRST MONTH FREE</b> <b>Choice of FREE Gift</b> <b>CALL FREE 0800 45 45 45</b>
15 Free information pack call 0800 45 45 45 today	The old man is back on camera	Depending on how long you live, the total premiums you pay may be greater than the sum insured
16 The man: Oh thanks love (drinking his tea) (1.0) 17 Give them a call 18 It doesn't take long tying up those loose ends	The man's wife brings in two cups of tea and sits next to him, facing the camera	<b>CALL FREE 0800 45 45 45</b>

<p>(the following is male voiceover)</p> <p>19 For real peace of mind</p> <p>20 Call Liverpool Victoria today on 0800 45 45 45</p> <p>21 Please remember this is a whole of life policy</p> <p>22 If you cancel your plan you won't get back any of the money you've paid in</p>		<p><b>Liverpool Victoria</b> <b>For your</b> <b>information pack</b> <b>call FREE</b> <b>0800 45 45 45</b></p> <p>Inflation will reduce the buying power of the sum assured. It will normally be paid to your estate and liable for inheritance tax.</p>
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Example 5: American life over 50s guaranteed plan, Lynda Bellingham, giving something more

Year: 2005

Channel: ITV2

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption
<p>1 Birthdays anniversaries                      2 It always seems to be <u>someone's</u> special day                      3 When you get to <u>our</u> age                      4 it's important to think about giving something <u>more</u> to your loved ones</p>	<p>Lynda Bellingham is featured in a homely dining room, packing up presents.</p>	<p>American Life                      Lynda Bellingham</p>
<p>(2.5)                      5 The guaranteed 50 plus plan from American Life helps you plan for the future                      6 and ensures that your affairs will be looked after when you're gone.</p>	<p>She stands up and walks towards the camera</p>	<p>American Life                      The Guaranteed 50Plus Plan</p>
<p>7 It's a simple and affordable type of life insurance that                      8 pays out a cash lump sum when you die to leave for your family to                      9 help pay towards funeral expenses                      (1.0)</p>	<p>A picture of a young woman holding a baby is shown. Lynda takes a look at the picture and then puts it back.</p>	<p>Inflation will reduce the buying power of the lump sum</p>
<p>10 If you're aged 50 to 80                      11 you are guaranteed to be accepted                      12 Cover costs from just 23 pence a day                      13 There is no medical and no hard sell                      14 Plus provided that you keep up the payments                      15 you will <u>never</u> pay in more than you get out</p>	<p>Lynda Bellingham walks toward a settee and sits down</p>	<p>American Life                      50 to 80                      Guaranteed acceptance                      From just 23p a day                      No medical</p>
<p>16 Call free on 0800 052 80 50 for an information pack                      17 There is no obligation and your first month's cover is <u>free</u></p>		<p>American Life                      0800 052 80 50</p>
<p>18 Choose from one of these welcome gifts</p>	<p>A DVD and Portable Hi-Fi are shown on the screen</p>	<p>FREE DVD or Portable Hi-Fi                      When you join                      0800 052 80 50</p>
<p>19 Call the guaranteed 50 plus plan now on 0800 052 80 50</p>		<p>American Life                      Guaranteed 50plus Plan                      Call free for                      an information pack                      0800 052 80 50</p>
<p>20 <u>Act</u> now and get the <u>best</u> gift of <u>all</u> (.) peace of mind (soften tone)</p>	<p>Lynda is back on camera</p>	<p>American Life                      0800 052 80 50</p>

Example 6: Liverpool Victoria – Cilla Black – love the 60s

Year: 2007

Channel: Sky sports

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption
1 I <u>love</u> the sixties (Cilla Black)	Cilla Black is featured entering a exhibition room demonstrating many pictures of the 60s	
2 Swinging London changing London (male voiceover)	Three young women dressed in bright mini dresses typical at the 60s in front of a brightly coloured London double-decker bus	
3 John Paul Gorge Ringo (male voiceover) (girls' screaming in the background)	Policemen holding back a crowd of young girls suffering from mass hysteria on catching sight of their idols – the Beatles	
4 It was such a special time (Cilla Black)	Cilla Black is looking around the pictures symbolizing images of the 60s, for example, Carnaby Street, the "mods and rocker", fashion styles, etc.	
5 That's one small step for man (Neil Armstrong)	A picture shows Neil Armstrong, the first man walking on the moon	
6 But nothing stays the same	Cilla is looking nostalgically at a picture of herself in the 60s	

7 Sadly we all lose someone close to us	Cilla is featured facing the camera and talking	
8 We can't prepare for the grief 9 but there is a way you can ease the money worries of <u>those</u> left behind		Exclusively for UK residents aged 50 - 75
10 The fifty plus plan from LV can provide a guaranteed cash lump sum 11 to help toward things like funeral expenses and unpaid bills		Full death benefit payable after first year Inflation will reduce the value
12 It costs from eight pounds a month 13 and with LV there is no medical or health questions 14 So you're <u>guaranteed</u> to be accepted		Premiums are payable for life. If you stop paying you won't get anything back
15 and there's a free gift when your plan starts	A DVD player, a digital camera and a few vouchers are displayed	<b>0800 45 45 45</b>
16 For your free information pack 17 Call LV today	Cilla Black is back on camera	<b>0800 45 45 45</b>
18 on 0800 45 45 45 19 That's 0800 45 45 45		LIVERPOOL VICTORIA CALL FREE <b>0800 45 45 45</b>

Example 7: AXA Sun Life – a man fishing

Year: 2002

Channel: Five

M: the man featured in the ad fishing by a canal

V: the invisible man whom the fishing man is talking to

Verbal content	Visual content	The caption
1 M: I've been thinking 2 V: yes 3 M: after I've gone 4 V: yes 5 M: I'd like to leave the wife some cash 6 V: yes 7 M: to tide her over 8 V: yes	A man is fishing by a canal on an overcast autumn day. He turns around to talk to a man who is unseen by the audience. He is featured looking straight into the camera which is behind him.	
9 M: so I need (.) <u>life</u> insurance don't I? 10 V: yes	The man turns back around again and he is shown from the front	
11 M: but (.) I'm in the fifties 12 V: yes	He now looks sideways into the camera	<b>0800 50 55 50</b> for details of the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan
13 M: I'm not a rich man (in a serious tone) 14 V: yes	The camera zooms into his face from the front	
15 M: I've not been in the best of health 16 V: yes	The camera zooms right out from above him showing him alone on the canal bank except for a cyclist passing by behind him	
17 M: but I don't want to see a doctor 18 V: yes	The camera slowly zooms in again on him from the front angle	
19 M: ok one last question 20 V: yes	He draws out a large fishing net from the water with a big hole at the bottom	

<p>21 M: do you think I'm gonna catch anything? 22 V: er (.) no</p>	<p>He has a slightly sarcastic facial expression</p>	<p><b>0800 50 55 50</b> for details of the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan</p>
<p>(Female voiceover) 23 If you're aged 50 to 80 and want life insurance you can afford 24 We guarantee to say yes 25 Call us now on 0800 50 55 50 to find out more about this whole life plan</p>	<p>The camera shot now is taken to show the canal right into the distance with the man, a solitary figure in the corner of the frame</p>	
<p>26 and how you could choose one of these free gifts 27 Call 0800 50 55 50</p>	<p>a display of a kettle, carriage clock and a radio clock</p>	<p><b>Free Gift</b> <b>0800 50 55 50</b> for details of the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan</p>
<p>28 for details of the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan from AXA Sun Life 29 and we'll say (.) yes</p>	<p>At the end, the man uses his fishing rod instead of the fishing net with a big hole. However, he does not catch a fish but only a shoe.</p>	<p>From £6 a month <b>0800 50 55 50</b> for details of the Guaranteed Over 50 Plan</p>

Example 8 Alico Yi-Ding-Bao Evergreen Life Insurance Plan (1)

Year: 2007 Channel: TTV

Spoken messages	Visual descriptions	Caption
(voiceover) 1 wu shi dao qi shi wu sui de peng you 2 zhong yao xun xi yao gao su ni		mei guo ren shou quan guo shou chuang <b>Yi Ding Bao</b> chang qing shou xian <b>50-75</b> sui du xiang <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
3 <i>cit thong tian ue</i> 4 <i>it ting po</i> 5 <i>cin kan tan o</i> 6 mei guo ren shou Yi Ding Bao 7 <i>it ting ho li po</i>	The presenter, Shi-Ying, a celebrity in Taiwan, is featured talking about the life insurance plan in a study, with a big book shelf in the background.	
8 <i>m bian giam chat sin the</i> 9 <i>ma be bun li tit kue sia mih penn</i>	The following words are shown: No health questions, no medical and 100% acceptance	Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
10 <i>po hui cuat tui be khi</i> 11 <i>po ciong cuat tui be kiam</i> 12 <i>siong o lok e si</i>	The presenter, Shi-ying is shown again in the study, sitting at a desk.	bao fei bu zhang bao zhang bu jian Alico 0800-00-5075 www.alico.com.tw
13 <i>cit kang m bian ngoo cap kho tloh e ing po</i>		mei tian bu dao 50 yuan Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
14 <i>cit thong tian ue</i>	An information pack is shown	Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
15 <i>cu liau bian hui kia kau hu siong</i> 16 <i>hoo li coh cham kho</i>	The presenter, Shi-ying holds the information pack in hand	
17 <i>sann cap kang lai bo buan i</i>		30 tian bu man yi

18 <i>bo tiau kiann cuan giah the po</i>		bao zheng quan er tui fei Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> <a href="http://www.alico.com.tw">www.alico.com.tw</a>
19 xian cai jiu da 080000 wu shi dao qi shi wu		mei guo ren shou quan guo shou chuang <b>Yi Ding Bao</b> chang qing shou xian <b>50-75</b> sui du xiang <b>0800-00-5075</b> <a href="http://www.alico.com.tw">www.alico.com.tw</a>

Example 8 Alico Yi Ding Bao Evergreen Life Insurance Plan (1) (English translation)

Spoken messages	Visual descriptions	Caption
(voiceover) 1 Friends aged between 50 and 75 2 here is a piece of important information for you		mei guo ren shou quan guo shou chuang <b>Yi Ding Bao</b> chang qing shou xian <b>50-75</b> sui du xiang <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
(The following is what the presenter, Shi-Ying says about the product) 3 With a phone call 4 acceptance is guaranteed 5 Really simple and easy 6 American Life insurance Yi Ding Bao Evergreen Life Insurance Plan 7 guarantees to let you take up the policy	The presenter, Shi-Ying, a celebrity in Taiwan, is featured in a study, with a big book shelf in the background.	
8 There is no medical 9 and no health questions either	The following words are shown: No health questions, no medical and 100% acceptance	Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
10 The premiums will never go up 11 The protection will never be reduced 12 What is the most acclaimed is that	The presenter, Shi-ying is shown again in the study, sitting at a desk.	bao fei bu zhang bao zhang bu jian Alico 0800-00-5075 www.alico.com.tw
13 it costs less than 50 dollars a day		mei tian bu dao 50 yuan Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
14 With a phone call	An information pack is shown	Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
15 A free information pack is delivered to your home 16 for your reference	The presenter, Shi-ying holds the information pack at hand	
17 Within the thirty day cooling period, if you are not satisfied 18 the paid-in premiums are unconditionally refunded		30 tian bu man yi bao zheng quan er tui fei

		Alico <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw
19 Now call 080000 fifty to seventy five (voiceover)		mei guo ren shou quan guo shou chuang <b>Yi Ding Bao</b> chang qing shou xian <b>50-75</b> sui du xiang <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw

Example 9: CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao Life Insurance Plan (1)  
Channel: FTV Year: 2007

Spoken messages	Visual descriptions	Caption
(Lines 1-6: by M1) 1 M1: wei? ting bu qing chu a? (M1 is on the phone but his call is cut off) 2 ren lao le (looking sad) 3 mei yong le 4 sher me dou bu cheng 5 xiang mai ge bao xian 6 yie bu cheng	An old man (labelled as M1) is featured making a phone call in his house. After the call is cut off, he looks helpless and slightly sad.	
(lines 7-10 :by the presenter) 7 Liao-jun: bie dan xin 8 ren he wu shi dao qi shi wu sui de ren	The presenter, Liao-Jun (a Taiwanese celebrity), is featured talking about the product. The background is a number of mansions.	<b>50 dao 75 sui</b> 0800-000-813
9 kang jian ren shou Bzo Zheng Bao 10 shei dou huan ying		bao zheng cheng bao 0800-000-813
(lines 11-22: by the old lady climbing the stairs) 11 L1: aiya, kui sin ku na e cuan moo penn 12 si cai si	An old lady (labelled as L1) is featured climbing the stairs with difficulties. She touches her painful shoulder and complains about her health.	
(lines 13-15: by the presenter, Liao-jun) 13 Liao-jun: bu yong ti jian 14 bu wun jian kang zhuang kuang 15 jue bu ju bao	The presenter, Liao-jun	bu yong ti jian bu wen jian kang zhuang kuang 0800-000-813 jue bu ju bao 0800-000-813
(lines 16-18: a conversation between G and L2) 16 G: ren zou le zong yao hua qian de (trying to give L2 money) 17 L2: xie xie ni bu yong le (refusing to take the money) 18 zhen de bu yong le (sobbing)	An old lady (labelled as L2) is featured conversing with a guest (labelled as G) who intends to give her some money but is refused. Both of them are dressed in black. The old lady (L2) looks sad and cries. The background is a dark indoor setting, presumably the lady's home.	
(lines 19-30: by the presenter) 19 tloh sng hit kang kau 20 lan ma e tang an sim li khui	A close-up of the presenter's face	0800-000-813

<p>21 wo jin nian wu shi wu sui 22 mei tian bu dao yi bai yuan</p>	<p>The presenter is featured talking about the product with the background of a number of mansions.</p>	<p>mei tian <b>98</b> yuan 55 sui nan xing jiao fei 20 nian 0800-000-813</p>
<p>23 jiu ke yi yong you zhong shen bao zhang</p>		<p>zhong shen shou xian bao zhang 50 wan 0800-000-813</p>
<p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p>		<p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p>
<p>28 kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao 29 po ciong phong phai 30 po ho i khing sang</p>		<p>0800-000-813</p>
<p>(lines 31-32: male voiceover) 31 xian cai jiu bo 0800000813 32 CIGNA kang jian ren shou</p>		<p>Bao Zheng Bao zhong shen shou xian zhuan an 0800-000-813</p>

(lines 24-27 are excluded in the transcript because the content is about the promotion of another type of insurance, not life insurance and considered irrelevant)

Example 9 : CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao Life Insurance Plan (1) (English translation)

Spoken messages	Visual descriptions	caption
(Line 1-6: by M1) 1 M1: Hello? Can't you hear clearly? (M1 is on the phone but his call is cut off) 2 being old (looking sad) 3 is useless 4 nothing can be done 5 feeling like taking up an insurance policy 6 also fails	An old man (labelled as M1) is featured making a phone call in his house. After the call is cut off, he looks helpless and slightly sad.	
(line 7-10 :by the presenter, Liao-jun) 7 Don't worry 8 anyone aged between 50 and 75	The presenter, Liao-Jun (a Taiwanese celebrity), is featured talking about the product. The background is a number of mansions.	<b>50 to 75 years old</b> 0800-000-813
9 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao 10 welcomes all		Guarantee to underwrite 0800-000-813
(lines 11-22: by L2) 11 L2: (sigh) why are there health problems all over the body 12 really annoying	An old lady (labelled as L1) is featured climbing the stairs with difficulties. She touches her painful shoulder and complains about her health.	
(lines 13-15: by the presenter) 13 No medical 14 No health questions	The presenter, Liao-jun	No medical No health questions 0800-000-813
15 Never refuse your application		Never refuse your application 0800-000-813
(lines 16-18: a conversation between G and L2) 16 G: after people are gone, there is always a need to spend money (trying to give L2 some money) 17 L2 : Thank you. There is no need (refusing the money) 18 Really, there is no need for the money (sobbing)	An old lady (labelled as L2) is featured conversing with a guest (labelled as G) who intends to give her some money but is refused. Both of them are dressed in black. The old lady (L2) looks sad and cries. The background is a dark indoor setting, presumably the lady's home.	

(line 19-30: by the presenter) 19 Even if that day comes 20 we can also leave with peace of mind	A close-up of Liao-jun's face	0800-000-813
21 I am fifty-five this year 22 with less than one hundred dollars a day	The presenter is featured talking about the product with the background of a number of mansions.	<b>98</b> dollars per day Male policy holder aged 55 Premiums paid for 20 years 0800-000-813
23 life-long protection can be possessed		Life-long life insurance protection Values 500000 dollars 0800-000-813
.		.
.		.
.		.
28 CIGNA Bao Zheng Bao 29 the protection is abundant 30 taking up the policy is easy		0800-000-813
(lines 31-32: male voiceover) 31 Now call 0800000813 32 CIGNA		Bao Zheng Bao Life Insurance Plan Life-long insurance policy 0800-000-813

(lines 24-27 are excluded in the transcript because the content is about the promotion of another type of insurance, not life insurance and considered irrelevant)

Example 10 AIG Yi Ding Bao Evergreen Life Insurance Plan (2)  
 Year:2007 Channel: CTS

Spoken messages	Visual description	The caption
1 Shi-ying: hei cao 2 Ladies in the park: cao	A group of ladies are dancing in the park. The background music is light-hearted. The presenter, Shi-ying who is a celebrity in Taiwan approaches the ladies.	zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
3 Shi-ying: <i>lin kam cai ngia cuan kok te it tng</i> ?=	The camera focuses on Shi-ying's face and his background is mild sun light and trees in the park.	
4 Ladies in the park: = shen ti hao huai dou ke yi bao de 5 yin fa zu bao dan	Those ladies dancing in the park say line 4 together.	Shen ti hao huai dou ke yi bao
6 Shi-ying & Ladies: Yi Ding Bao (the product name)	Shi-ying and those ladies in the park display a telephoning hand gesture and say line 6 together	zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
7 S: <i>siann mih po hiam</i> ?=	Shi-ying is featured with some older people who are playing baseball. He then asks them the question in line 7	zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
8 Male 1&2: = rang wo men gen nian qing ren 9 xiang shou tong yang de bao zhang	Two older men (labelled as Male 1&2) are featured to respond to Shi-ying's question. They are playing baseball and they wear their caps back to front.	rang wo men han nian qing ren xiang shou tong yang de bao zhang  zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
10 Male3: Yi Ding Bao (the product name)_	Another man (labeled as Male 3) holding a baseball glove is featured facing the camera and displaying a telephoning hand gesture while saying line 9. He wears his cap back to front.	<b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
(Male 4 succeeds in running base) 11 Male4: nian qing ren ke yi wo men dang ran ye ke yi	A senior man (labeled as Male 4) is featured running base successfully and then giving a comment in line 11. The man wears his cap back to front.	zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
12 Shi-ying: <i>sia mih po hiam pe e</i> 13 <i>be pi kiau e kha cio</i>	Shi-ying is featured alone facing the camera	li pei jin jue bu bi ni jiao de shao  zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico

	An old couple are featured facing the camera with smiling facial expressions displaying a telephoning hand gesture	www.alico.com.tw
14 Shi-ying: <i>mui kang m bian goo cap kho</i>	Shi-ying is featured facing the camera and displaying a hand gesture indicative of five	ping jun mei tian zui di bu dao <b>50</b> yuan yi bao er 20 wan wei li  zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
	An old lady is featured with a little girl together displaying a telephoning hand gesture with smiling facial expressions.	zui di bu dao <b>50</b> yuan (yi bao er 20 wan wei li)  zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
15 Shi-ying: <i>sann pue e i gua po ciong</i>	Shi-ying shows a hand gesture indicative of three	zuo gong cher zuo fei ji
	A man playing tennis with a smiling facial expression displays a telephoning hand gesture.	zuo jie yun yi wai bao zhang <b>3</b> bei (tou bao liang nian hou sheng xiao)  zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
16 Shi-ying: <i>cit thong tian ue</i> 17 <i>it ting po</i> 18 chuan guo yin fa cu <i>sionn kai o lo e</i> 19 AOG mei guo ren shou <i>sionn kai ho</i>	Shi-ying and a group of older people are facing the camera	zhuan shu 50-75 sui <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
20 Shi-ying: <i>a li kha a bue?</i>	Shi-ying and other older people display a telephoning hand gesture	
.	.	.
.	.	.
.	.	.

(voiceover)

31 ni hai cai deng shen me ?

32 xian cai jiu da

33 0800005075

34 080000 wu shi dao qi shi wu

mei guo ren shou chuan tai shou chang

**Yi Ding Bao** chang qing shou xian

**0800-00-5075**

[www.alico.com.tw](http://www.alico.com.tw)

30 tian man man jian shang

bu man yi bao tui

Example 10 AIG Yi Ding Bao Evergreen Life Insurance Plan (2) (English translation)

Year:2007 Channel: CTS

Spoken messages	Visual description	The caption
1 Shi-ying: Morning 2 Ladies in the park: Morning	A group of ladies are dancing in the park. The background music is light-hearted. The presenter, Shi-ying who is a celebrity in Taiwan approaches the ladies.	Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
3 Shi-ying: do you know the first insurance policy in this country?= 4 Ladies in the park:= guarantees acceptance regardless of good or bad health 5 that's a policy dedicated for the silvers	The camera focuses on Shi-ying's face and his background is mild sun light and trees in the park.	
6 Shi-ying and the ladies: Yi Ding Bao (the product name)	Those ladies dancing in the park say line 4 together. Shi-ying and those ladies in the park display a telephoning hand gesture and say line 6 together	The policy can be taken up regardless of the health conditions Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
7 S: what is the life insurance policy?= 8 Male1&2:= which allows us like youngsters 9 to enjoy the same cover	Shi-ying is featured with some older people who are playing baseball. He then asks them the question in line 7 Two older men (labelled as Male 1&2) are featured to respond to Shi-ying's question. They are playing baseball and they wear their caps back to front.	Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
10 M3: Yi Ding Bao (the product name)	Another man (labelled as Male 3) holding a baseball glove is featured facing the camera and displaying a telephoning hand gesture while saying line 9. He wears his cap back to front.	Let us enjoy the same cover as the youngsters do Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw

(Male 4 succeeds in running base) 11 Male 4: Youngsters can and of course so can we	A senior man (labelled as Male 4) is featured running base successfully and giving a comment in line 11. The man wears his cap back to front.	Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
12 Shi-ying: what is the life insurance 13 which never pays out less than the paid-in?	Shi-ying is featured alone facing the camera	The paid-out cash lump sum is not less than what is paid in
	An old couple are featured facing the camera with smiling facial expressions displaying a telephoning hand gesture	Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
14 Shi-ying: less than fifty dollars per day	Shi-ying is featured facing the camera and displaying a hand gesture indicative of five	Average daily cost less than <b>50</b> dollars (the cover is 200000 dollars)  Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
	An old lady is featured with a little girl together displaying a telephoning hand gesture with smiling facial expressions.	The minimum is less than <b>50</b> dollars (the cover is 200000 dollars)  Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
15 Shi-ying: three times of accident protection	Shi-ying shows a hand gesture indicative of three	taking the train taking the flight taking the Metropolitan Rapid Transit system <b>3</b> times of accident protection (valid since the third year)
	A man playing tennis with a smiling facial expression displays a telephoning hand gesture.	Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico

		www.alico.com.tw
16 Shi-ying: with a phone call 17 acceptance is guaranteed 18 The most acclaimed by older people in the whole country 19 AIG is the best	Shi-ying and a group of older people are facing the camera	Only for those aged 50-75 <b>0800-00-5075</b> Alico www.alico.com.tw
20 Shi-ying: Have you called?	Shi-ying and other older people display a telephoning hand gesture	
.	.	.
.	.	.
.	.	.
(voiceover) 31 What are you still waiting for? 32 Call now 33 0800005075 34 080050 fifty to seventy-five		AIG The first in Taiwan <b>Yi-Ding Bao</b> Evergreen Life Insurance Policy <b>0800-00-5075</b> www.alico.com.tw thirty days of trail refund guaranteed if not satisfied

Example 11: CIGNA Bao zheng bao (2) – older people on a tour bus

Year: 2007 Channel: CTS

Spoken messages	Visual description	The caption
1 Liao-jun: <i>o ji sang o pa sang</i> 2 <i>huann ging tau tin lai iu lam a</i>	Liao-jun (the presenter) gets on a tour bus and is warmly welcomed by other older people	kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
3 M1: wo you kan dao <i>li</i> di guang gao o	An old man (labelled as M1) on the tour bus recognises Liao-jun and claims to know a commercial featuring Liao-jun. After this claim, all featured older people say the product name together.	
4 All older characters: kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao		
5 F1: <i>ciah lau koh e tang po hiam kam u iann?</i>	The camera turns to another old lady (labelled as F1)	
6 Liao-jun: <i>tong jian lo</i> ren he wu shi dao qi shi wu sui de ren	Liao-jun is on camera again.	Bao Zheng Bao zhong shen shou xian  kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
7 Liao-jun: <i>tian ue sui ka kha</i> 8 <i>po cing long po e tloh</i>		Bao Zheng Bao zhong shen shou xian bao zheng cheng bao  kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
9 F2: <i>kam u ciah kan tan ?</i>	The camera turns to an old lady (labelled as F2) on the bus.	kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
10 Liao-jun: bu yong shen ti jian cha 11 <i>a ma be kah li mng tang mng sai</i>	Liao-jun is on camera again.	bu young ti jian bu wen jian kang zhuang kuang  kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
12 M2: <i>oh pi siau lian e be po hiam koh kha kan tan</i>	The camera turns to another older man	kang jian ren shou

	(labeled as M2) sitting in the tour bus.	Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
13 Liao-jun: mei tian bu dao san shi qi yuan 14 jiu you zhong shen bao zhang la	Liao-jun speaks to the older people on the bus	mei tian zui di bu dao <b>37</b> yuan 55 sui nan xing jiao fei 20 nian zhong shen shou xian bao zhang 20 wan  kang jian ren shou Bao Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
15 M3: <i>lan la koo ho ka ti</i> 16 <i>si se to bian chau huan</i> 17 <i>kho lan ka ti lan ma e tan lai khi iu tai uan</i> (someone says yes in the background and every one laughs)	Another old man (labelled as M3) on the bus makes a comment	kang jian ren shou Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
.	.	.
.	.	.
.	.	.
23 Liao-jun: <i>cit khuan ho khang e po hiam</i> 24 ren he wu shi sui dao qi shi wu sui 25 bao zheng dou neng bao 26 kan jian ren shou Bzo Zheng Bao	Liao-jun is facing the camera and speaking.	Kang jian ren shou Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
27all older characters: <i>kin lai kha o</i>	All older people on the bus are using their mobile phones to make phone calls	
28 Liao-jun: <i>bian hui e cu liao ma siong kia ho lin o</i>	Liao-jun speaks to other older people on the bus and has some paper documents at hand.	
29 all older characters: wei (voiceover)	All older characters are on the phone.	
30 ma shang bo 0809 067 575 CIGNA kang jian ren shou		<b>Bzo Zheng Bao</b> zhong shen shou xian <b>0809-067-575</b>

Example 11: CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao – older people on a tour coach (English translation)

Spoken messages	Visual description	The caption
1 Liao-jung (labelled as L): Older men and women 2 Welcome to travel together	Liao-jun (the presenter) gets on a tour bus and is warmly welcomed by other older people	CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
3 M1: I saw your commercial 4 All older people : CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao (the product name)	An old man (labelled as M1) on the tour bus recognises Liao-jun and claims to know a commercial featuring Liao-jun. After this claim, all featured older people say the product name together.	
5 F1: is it true that buying insurance is possible despite being old?	The camera turns to another old lady (labelled as F1)	
6 L: Of course. Anyone aged between 50 and 75	Liao-jun is on camera again.	Bzo Zheng Bao Life-long life insurance  CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
7 L: Make a call right away 8 acceptance is guaranteed		Bzo Zheng Bao Life-long life insurance Guarantees to underwrite  CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao 0809-067-575
9 F2: is it really so simple?	The camera turns to an old lady (labelled as F2) on the bus.	CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
10 L: no medical 11 No questions about this and that	Liao-jun is on camera again.	No medical No health questions  CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
12 M2: Oh. It is even easier compared to younger people's buying insurance	The camera turns to another	CIGNA

	older man (labeled as M2) sitting in the tour bus.	Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
13 L: with less than 37 dollars a day 14 L: then there is a life-long cover	Liao-jun speaks to the older people on the bus	less than <b>37</b> dollars a day male aged 55 premiums paid 20 years the cover is 200,000  CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
15 M3: If we take care of ourselves well 16 our children will not worry 17 we can travel around Taiwan on our own (someone says yes in the background and every one laughs)	Another old man (labelled as M3) on the bus makes a comment	CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
.	.	.
.	.	.
.	.	.
23 L: such a good insurance product 24 Anyone aged 50 to 75 25 is guaranteed to get 26 CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao (the product name)	Liao-jun is facing the camera and speaking.	CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>
27 All older characters: call quickly	All older people on the bus are using their mobile phones to make phone calls	
28 L: Free information pack will be delivered to you right away.	Liao-jun speaks to other older people on the bus and has some paper documents at hand.	
29 all older characters: hello (all making phone call)	All older characters are on the phone.	
(voiceover) 30 Call now 0809067575 CIGNA		CIGNA Bzo Zheng Bao <b>0809-067-575</b>

## Transcription Convention:

***Bold and italic words*** : Southern min

**Bold and size 12 font** : emphasized words in the caption

(1.0) pause timed in tenth of a second

( ) description of nonverbal or contextual phenomenon

(.) very slight pause

== continuous utterances, no interval between two utterances

? a question

Vertical ellipses indicate the verbal and visual content omitted from the transcript (the content with respect to accident medical insurance included in the Taiwanese TV ads mainly produced for promoting life insurance)

\_ underlying indicates emphasis in verbal messages

**Appendix 5**  
**Numbers of older characters for each character type**  
**in UK and Taiwanese TV advertisements**

Character types	UK data		TW data		TOTAL	
	N	within group %	N	within group %	N	total %
<b>[Competent]</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>50.8%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>55%</b>
socially successful	6	9.8%	36	29.0%	42	23%
mentally capable	27	44.3%	55	44.4%	82	44%
physically capable	3	4.9%	17	13.7%	20	11%
<b>[Conservative/traditional]</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7%</b>
religiously devoted	0	0.0%	3	2.4%	3	2%
frugal	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	1	1%
preserving tradition	0	0.0%	2	1.6%	2	1%
reminiscing	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	1	1%
tough/serious/strong-minded	3	4.9%	3	2.4%	6	3%
<b>[Engaged in female-male relations]</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11%</b>
intimate couple interactions	8	13.1%	2	1.6%	10	5%
peaceful companionship	0	0.0%	4	3.2%	4	2%
love pursuers	2	3.3%	0	0.0%	2	1%
problematic couple interactions	1	1.6%	3	2.4%	4	2%

### Appendix 5 (continued)

Character types	UK data		TW data		TOTAL	
	N	within group %	N	within group %	N	total %
<b>[Golden Ager]</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>20%</b>
health-conscious	2	3.3%	16	12.9%	18	10%
pursuing horticultural leisure	2	3.3%	0	0.0%	2	1%
well-travelled	1	1.6%	3	2.4%	4	2%
sociable	2	3.3%	5	4.0%	7	4%
posh and affluent	2	3.3%	0	0.0%	2	1%
cheeky/playful/young-at-heart	6	9.8%	2	1.6%	8	4%
<b>[Humorous]</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>20%</b>
Humour-playful/cheeky/fun-loving	6	9.8%	2	1.6%	7	4%
Humour-competence	5	8.2%	6	4.8%	11	6%
Humour- hilarious actions	4	6.6%	2	1.6%	6	3%
Humour- vulnerable	2	3.3%	1	0.8%	3	2%
Humour- female-male relationship	3	4.9%	3	2.4%	6	3%
Humour- incompetence	1	1.6%	1	0.8%	2	1%
Humour- offense and embarrassment	2	3.3%	0	0.0%	2	1%

### Appendix 5 (continued)

Character types	UK data		TW data		TOTAL	
	N	within group %	N	within group %	N	total %
<b>[Unwell and Declining in Health]</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8%</b>
Images of illness: coping well	1	1.6%	4	3.2%	5	3%
Images of illness: struggling for independence	0	0.0%	2	1.6%	2	1%
Images of illness: vulnerable and incompetent	0	0.0%	9	7.3%	9	5%
<b>[Incompetent]</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15.3%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>14%</b>
physically incompetent	3	4.9%	8	6.5%	11	6%
mentally incompetent	3	4.9%	7	5.6%	10	5%
socially incompetent	1	1.6%	4	3.2%	5	3%
<b>[Engaged in intergenerational relations]</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16%</b>
loving and helpful family elders	1	1.6%	9	7.3%	9	5%
authoritative family elders	0	0.0%	15	12.1%	15	8%
independent family elders	0	0.0%	4	3.2%	4	2%
light-hearted family elders	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	1	1%
<b>[Vulnerable]</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8%</b>
suspicious/over-wary	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	1	1%
scared/afraid	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	1	1%
upset/suffering/sad	0	0.0%	5	4.0%	5	3%
painful self-disclosure	0	0.0%	4	3.2%	4	2%
cheated/victimized	0	0.0%	3	2.4%	3	2%
socially discriminated/rejected	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	1	1%
<b>Total characters</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100%</b>