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# A comparative study on the use of female and male voices in television ads aimed at a female audience

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**A Comparative Study on the use of Female  
and Male Voices in Television Ads Aimed  
at a Female Audience**

**Alison J. Clinton**

**Post graduate Dissertation for MLitt in Cultural Studies  
University of Strathclyde**

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*“Cuando sale al mercado un producto dedicado a la mujer se tiene una sensación ambivalente: por un lado puede ser una ocasión interesante, una oportunidad de cambiar tópicos y estereotipos; por otro lado puede ser una ocasión de perpetuar los más afianzados tópicos.” (Alcántara, Gómez, 1999: 71)*

*[When a new product for females appears on the market it causes an ambivalent feeling: on the one hand it might be an interesting event, an opportunity to change topics and stereotypes; on the other hand, it may be an occasion to perpetuate the same old scene.]*

## 1a. Background

As a final project for the module “Language and Society” for the M.Litt in Cultural Studies, I carried out a brief investigation into the use of accents and voices in Mexican television advertisements. (*An Analysis in the use of Accents in Television Advertising in Mexico, October 2002*) During the investigation, I came across the curious fact that unlike in the United Kingdom where many ads employ different accents to promote their products on TV, in Mexico, accents played what seemed to be a rather small part. In fact, in over one hundred of the ads which I observed, a mere 10% of them employed voiceovers or actors who used accents which differed from the standard Mexican accent. This in itself was somewhat of a cultural difference from the UK where accents are often called in to play in persuading audiences to identify with persuaders and buy products.

Furthermore, during the study it came to my notice that there seemed to be a disproportionate number of male voices used in ads. In fact on closer inspection, the data I collected from Mexican television channels revealed that male voices appeared almost three times more often than female voices. To my surprise, this ubiquitous male voice even appeared in ads for products typically

aimed at a female audience like body creams and household cleaning products. In spite of the fact that the ads depicted the image of a female, a male voice would often be present. I was left with the query as to why there seemed to be such disproportion in the distribution of male and female voices. Was this disparity similarly true in the UK, or was there, as I suspected, a proportionally higher presence of male voices in Mexico in television ads? Did this disparity exist because Mexicans prefer male voices, and if so, what qualities did it hold that were attractive to them? Or could it be that advertisers were falsely presuming that Mexicans, especially females, preferred the male voice when in fact, the reality was that when faced with a choice, they would express a preference for the female voice in television ads aimed at them?

The object of this study is to attempt to explore these questions in depth in an effort to shed some light on the issue of the ubiquitous nature of the male voice in television advertising in Mexico.

In the introduction, I shall briefly consider questions relating to persuasive messages in general as regards their efficient use of stereotypes and symbolic elements in a culture in order to transmit their messages clearly and swiftly. Also, I shall take a brief look at the social element of communication and its importance as a reflector of society in contemporary culture. Later, I shall narrow the discussion down to the widespread practice of using ideologies and empowerment in advertising, and the manifestations of such practice with special emphasis on the asymmetrical division of power and authority between the genders. Also, I shall be looking into the use of certain linguistic features associated with particular social network patterns, and the use of different voices in advertising because of the different evaluative reactions that they might evoke in the listener. The last section of the introduction outlines the hypotheses that I believe to be true, namely (a) that there is a greater incidence of male voices in ads aimed at a female audience in Mexico in comparison to ads in the UK, and that this is due to, in part, Mexican cultural values and poor marketing strategy on the part of persuaders, and (b) that when presented with the choice, Mexican females prefer, and are more persuaded by, female voices in ads aimed at them, and that the absence of the female voice in Mexico is the result of a misconception and misrepresentation of the modern Latin American female.

## **1b. Persuasive messages**

For years, persuaders have resorted to various formulas to grasp the public's attention in their attempts to send messages which will provoke consumers into buying the announced product. In our post-modern society, these persuasive messages or advertisements are constantly being thrust upon us so much so that we cannot escape the media or their influence. In actual fact, researchers indicate that in contemporary society, we may come across as many as 3,000 of them every day, but perhaps only ever notice a very few. (Twitchell 1996) But what is 'persuasion'? One definition of persuasion which draws on Burke's identification theory is:

*'Persuasion is the co-production of meaning that results when an individual or a group of individuals uses language strategies and/or visual images to make audiences identify with that individual or group.'* (Borchers 2002: 15)

In short, persuaders want members of society to join with them in the production or 'co-production' of a meaning which is beneficial to the persuaders. In order to do this, the receiver (potential consumer) must align or identify himself or herself to the message and/or to the sender of the message. Advertisers' ability to construct rhetorical messages through the use of sound and image in order to meet this alignment of 'identification' translates into 'persuasive power'.

## **1c. Social Element of Communication**

*"Persuaders play an influential role in determining what people know and believe and how they interpret the world."* (Borchers 2002: 193)

Television is, without doubt, one of the most important means of mass communication in today's society, equally so for both the UK and Mexico, the two cultures which are being studied in some depth in this study. Televised messages are transmitted daily to millions of viewers, and on many occasions the television is the only source of information for numerous sectors of the population.

This broadcasting tool is a highly powerful social influence along with other mediums of socialization like the family, school, and the workplace.

*“Television holds great power as an agency of socialization and it also commands the largest audiences of the media forms”.* (Furnham 2000)

The importance of the construction of persuasive messages on television and their transmission as a social element of communication is self-evident as is its importance in the transmission of values, stereotypes, models of socialization, and so on. Television advertising is just one of the mediums from where we receive these rhetorical messages and it has been argued that the lively and attention-grabbing nature of television advertisements means that the impact of television on social behaviour may be at its utmost during commercials. (Gunter 1987)

Successful advertisers or oral communicators have a close association with their audience; they know them, share certain characteristics with them, and identify with them. In other words, they share a culture. James Carey (1988) explains, *“Communication is a process through which a shared culture is created, modified, and transformed.”* The media carefully select, emphasize, or encode certain stimuli and any culture is, at least partly, dependant on the medium of communication that its members use. With this media influence in mind, the view that some advertisers take and adopt in their continual sexist advertising is especially worrying.

Persuaders seek to create a reality for receivers through images and language. *“The synergy that occurs when language combined with images creates a lasting visual impression in audiences.”* (Borchers 2002:181) Succinctly, our ideas about credibility are subject to persuasive influences. In other words, persuaders can affect what we perceive to be credible.

The media pretends to give society an image or vision of itself. Far from being real, this image is a distorted or mediated one constructed according to certain different interests, some of which are served better than others. Society is complex and complicated, but when television attempts to reflect this complexity for its mass audiences, it does it in a very bland and general way and falls into what are known as stereotypes.

## **1d. Use of Stereotypes**

*“...a stereotype is an exaggerated social belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category.”* (Allport 1954:191)

Stereotyping of television personalities in the Anglo-Saxon world has been studied in depth by Barrie Gunter (1987) who remarks that stereotyping of females on television is characterized by two basic factors: the first refers to the meagre presence of women in dramatic television shows when compared to males, and the second factor consists of the appearance of the female in a set of limited roles, so that she is more likely to be found in the kitchen than at work. Fortunately, since this work done by Gunter in the nineteen eighties, the quantitative presence of women has increased, and the stereotypical roles assigned to the female gender have also adapted so that now the female plays a more central, starring role. Nonetheless, this not mean that the stereotypical feminine roles have disappeared fully, but that together with the traditional ones, new roles have been added to the repertoire.

To a certain extent, my research project on the voices which are used advertising, explores these questions of stereotyping further in that it looks deeper into the presence of the male versus the female voice and the traditional stereotypical evaluations that arise from the use of these voices.

## **1e. Symbolic Elements in a Culture**

Male and female stereotypes are examples of symbolic elements of culture. It might be argued that in advertising stereotypes are used so often because the requirements of televised media are such that our communication be short and to the point, because advertisers have only a brief amount of time to get across their sophisticated ways of exerting influence using words and images which have many symbolic meanings and persuasive power. In turn, their persuasion, which employs the signs of the given culture, affects the attitudes of audience members.



Audiences are convinced not only by the argument but also by the speaker as well, and delivery is an important part of the speaker's effectiveness. Audience members may evaluate one persuader as being more 'credible' or 'persuasive' than another, thus resulting in what Burke (1969) calls 'identification',

*"You persuade a man (sic) only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (p.55)*

In order to foster this identification, persuaders use certain images and gestures, which all share symbolic cultural meaning, or alternatively, certain elements may be selectively excluded.

In addition to their use of the symbolic elements of culture, advertisers also greatly affect how we see ourselves and our world around us.

*"Advertising often sells a great deal more than products. It sells values, images, and concepts of love and sexuality, romance, success, and perhaps most important, normalcy. To a great extent, it tells us who we are and who we should be" (Kilbourne 1999: 74)*

Persuasive practices, nowadays, are a reflection of the cultural beliefs and values as well as the economic and social structures that govern society. As a result, advertisements and advertisers are constantly presenting society with a complex web of powerful influences---both implicit and explicit.

## **1f. Ideologies and empowerment**

*"..language is used to support the status quo and to serve the interests of the powerful." (McConnell-Ginet 1983)*

Within this web of powerful influences that are put forward by persuaders and advertisers, there are some ideologies which are better served than others:

*“Hegemony and patriarchy are two powerful forces that maintain particular cultural beliefs, practices, and values. Persuaders who benefit from the status quo use these tools to uphold the culture that supports them”.* (Borchers 2002: 210)

Feminists would argue that the ‘status quo’ is patriarchy, and gender, being a human construct toward the reproduction of the patriarchal order, has historically been linked to ‘the natural order of things’.

*“Society has manufactured a whole range of ontological meanings for masculine and feminine, that is, the sexual difference.....gender differences are geared towards the symbolic reproduction of societies based on sexual hierarchies.”* (Cobo 1999:14)

The idea that women are ‘intuitive’ while men are ‘rational’ illustrates a point in patriarchal ideology or mass consciousness. A woman in the public arena who wants to get something done well is catalogued as *too ambitious* (no man is ever too ambitious). A case in point would be Hilary Clinton. Likewise, ideographs (words or phrases that are pregnant with ideological commitments) are used by persuaders as a way of referring to a culturally understood set of meanings and behaviours in order to gain the audience’s commitment to share values and beliefs.

In the world of advertising, the ideology of patriarchy is perpetuated in several ways. For instance, it determines what roles women may play and the values attached to those same roles. The media creates expectations about a woman’s body image which lead to conflicts about self-image, self-esteem and ill health. (Telford 1997)

In the world of advertising, the female is associated with good looks rather than with the advancement of personal and academic pursuits. In a Spanish study carried out to investigate the role portrayals of males and females in television advertisements, Freeixas et al (1999) found that males are portrayed (a) in professional paid employment, (b) in positions of power and knowledge, and (c) in situations of risk and adventure compared to the females in the ads who were (a) doing household chores, (b) in the kitchen, (c) working with food, (d) doing some notably altruistic activity, (e) appearing to be stupid, simple and frightened, and (f) they exhibit themselves, insinuate and undress. Similarly, Schneider and Schneider (1979) found that women in ads were over-represented in domestic settings and under-represented in out-of-the-home occupations. In a cross-cultural study in America, Mexico and Australia, Gilly (1988) found that males were more

likely than females to be used as voice-overs in ads and were also depicted in independent roles more often. In a more recent study on gender stereotyping in ads by Furnham and Mac (1999), it was demonstrated once again that men and women are portrayed differently in television advertisements.

In advertising, when the image of a female and a male appear together, camera angles are used when creating images to evoke and create power and status, thus helping persuaders create a look of superiority of the male over the female with visual images. Moreover, there are numerous representations of the female body as an object of the male gaze. Graham Turner comments on the culturally charged power of both images and words, "*Images as well as words carry social connotations.. in connotations we find the social dimensions of language*" (Turner 1994:121). The asymmetrical division of power and authority between the genders is echoed expressively in advertisements.

*"In social interaction between the sexes, biological dimorphism underlies the probability that the male's usual superiority of status over the female will be expressible in his greater girth and height."* (Goffman 1976: 28)

Goffman goes on to discuss the way many ads show women mentally drifting from the physical scene, and of their facial expressions with connotations of 'weakness' and 'inadequateness'.

*"In ads, women, more than men, appear to withdraw themselves from the social situation at hand through involvements, including emotional response."* (Ibid p.68)

Stuart Hall comments on the connotations used in advertising,

*"Every visual sign in advertising connotes a quality, situation, value or inference, which is present as an implication or an implied meaning, depending on the connotational positioning...codes of this order clearly contract relations for the sign with the wider universe of ideologies in a society. These codes are the means by which power and ideology are made to signify in particular discourses."* (Hall 1994:206)

Faludi (1991) and Templin (1999) argue that negative portrayal of "*failed females*" in the media confirm patriarchy and add towards the disempowerment of women's voices. Indeed, Cheri Kramarae argues that a woman's presence as a persuasive source is not "*always fully acceptable*" (1981:xiv), and goes on to explain how women face disadvantages when they communicate with

men. It would seem that these gender displays of the asymmetrical division of power in advertising iconically reflect one of the fundamental hegemonic divisions of power in society.

In 1970, Althusser proposed that certain ideologies are perpetuated through an array of '*ideological state apparatuses*' (ISA's) such as the education system, the Church, the family, law, the media, and so on. Indeed, the majority of the ISA's that Althusser refers to are controlled and run by men much more so than by women, and thus the ideas which are perpetuated by them are to the male's advantage and the female's disadvantage. One of the functions of such an ideological apparatus is a divisive one aimed at systematically dividing society into groups, some of which are better served than others.

*"The are numerous social facts that both individually and collectively condition women's lives and put them at a social disadvantage."* (Cobo, 1999:11)

This argument can be used to help explain gender differences and their subsequent inequalities. Institutional broadcasting media influence the use to which certain male and female voices are used in both programming and advertising. Cameron (1985) argues that the activities of both informal and state institutions ultimately ensure that little value is placed on woman's language. (*Feminism and linguistic theory*) As a result, women are, more often than not, relegated to second status relative to men. This is especially so in extremely patriarchal or 'machista' societies like Mexico.

The culture of any particular group of people is full of 'rules' for determining what things mean. Traditionally, the male voice is endowed with power which connotes 'expertise', 'status' and 'dominance', while the female voice is rendered 'powerless'. Indeed, these same ideologies of gender may ensure that a given style has different meaning if used by a woman. For instance, a standard or RP (received pronunciation) voice when used by a man connotes 'education', but if used by a woman is connotive of 'politeness'.

This idea that social context is a significant part of meaning has grave and far-reaching implications for society. Graddol and Swann explain the weight of the social context of meaning,

*“The idea that social context is an important aspect of meaning is a simple one but nevertheless has some far-reaching implications. It suggests that speech styles (or other discourse practices) do not have absolute meanings that transcend their context of use, but must be understood by reference to particular gender ideologies and power relations between the sexes. First, by proposing that similar behaviour in men and women may be given different social meaning, it focuses attention on the role of the gender ideology rather than on sex differences in language use as the source of gender inequality...Second, ideology and the nature of institutionalised power relations may ensure that the linguistic strategies which enable men to maintain their status and position are rendered impotent when used by women”.* (Graddol & Swann 1989: 161)

Language then, which is rendered meaningful by being situated this way is referred to as ‘discourse’. Discourse implies power relations and ideologies. Thus, any female repression is a consequence of the discourse of language, not of the language itself. Language is just one in a number of social elements where women are put at a social disadvantage. Throughout the world of advertising the asymmetrical division of power between the genders is played out either explicitly or implicitly. The objective of this study is to attempt to take a closer look at one of these social realities.

## **1g. Social context of language**

*“Whenever differences are registered between groups of speakers who use ostensibly the ‘same language’, these differences become a site for the interplay of social judgements as part of the intricate symbiosis between language and society.”* (Montgomery 1995: 64)

*“Voices can carry evaluative repercussions for its utterer”* (Giles & Coupland 1991:32)

The use of certain linguistic features is associated with particular social network patterns. For instance, hearing someone in Britain speak with an RP (received pronunciation) accent, might lead listeners to believe that the speaker came from a middle or upper class background. This is because listeners make judgements about speakers on the basis of voice quality. Many socio-psychological experiments have shown that there is considerable social consensus among listeners who make judgements about the stereotypical traits associated with voices. In work on the assessment of

speech style and social evaluations, judgements are based on one speaker where that one person is taken to be an exemplar of the group in question. Hamilton et al (1985) comment on the cognitive biases that result from stereotypical conceptions or evaluations:

*“...stereotypes influence information processing about persons in a variety of ways. For example, they may lead to selective attention and also biased interpretations of selective retrieval of information processing about persons in a variety of ways..”* (Hamilton et al 1985)

Evidence from many socio-psychological experiments suggest that there might be rewards for speakers who adopt particular language varieties,

*“Such slight and inherently trivial details of pronunciation can clearly take on crucial social significance, when they index differences in ‘standard’ versus ‘non standard’ language use, with their echoes of prestige, class and competence.”* (Giles, Coupland 1991: 32)

Many studies have indeed shown that there is a considerable consensus among listeners and their judgement about the stereotypical traits that they associate with voices. For instance, Giles and Powesland (1975) found that RP (received pronunciation) speakers were judged as having ‘high prestige’, ‘intelligence’, ‘self-confidence’, and were more ‘competent’ in comparison to non-RP speakers, even though it was actually the same speaker talking on both occasions. A later study of listeners’ evaluations on women’s speech by Elyan et al (1978) indicated that RP provides some of the same advantages for females as for males. Ironically, although RP used by females was rated as being more feminine than northern-accented speech, it was at the same time, rated high on certain characteristics which would be typically associated with masculinity. Thus leading Elyan et al to describe, the British female RP voice as *‘the voice of perceived androgyny’*.

In the same way, this study also looks into the question of social evaluations which listeners may make when confronted with different speakers, but instead of accents, what is being looked into are the gender differences. Specifically, I would like to study the emotive qualities of the male and female voice and their ‘persuasive power’ in the world of television advertising in Mexico.

## 1h. Differences between male and female voices

The voice is prone to perform an important ideological role in that it is constantly establishing a difference between the sexes. On hearing a male or female voice, listeners are predisposed to inferring a particular set of character attributes. These listeners' evaluations of speech styles do not reflect any intrinsic linguistic or aesthetic qualities, but solely depend upon the level of prestige and status that is associated with a particular linguistic variety.

More often than not, the male standard variety is associated with power, prestige and high economic status. It is these same connotations which make the male voice particularly attractive in the world of advertising because of the social meanings which become attached to voice characteristics.

In most cases, women can easily be distinguished according to the average pitch of their voices, and, as has been argued, by their intonational rises and falls. (McConnell-Ginet 1983) The average pitch of voice seems to be due to a number of factors. In part it is due to vocal anatomy. Men are, on the whole, larger and their vocal chords are thicker causing them to vibrate more slowly, and therefore males produce a lower pitch. Also, pitch may be subject to a speaker's lifestyle habits, in that excessive smoking or drinking will cause a lowering of the pitch. Pitch also changes according to the language or the dialect spoken, and lastly pitch can also change according to social adaptation. On comparing the average range of women's and men's voice pitches, it is notable that there is considerable overlap, but still, women speak with a higher pitch than men. It is argued that social adaptation leads men to talk with a lower pitch and women to speak with a higher pitch.

*"..men and women could, if they wished, use similar pitch ranges and hence adopt a similar average speaking pitch. To do this, men would have to restrict themselves to the upper part of their ranges, while women would have to avoid their upper ranges."* (Graddol and Swann 1989:19)

In effect, pitch carries social meanings. That is, a high-pitched voice carries very different meanings than a low-pitched voice and men and women are trying to communicate different things through their control and use of voice pitch.

Advertisers use pitch to their advantage when rhetorically structuring their ads for television consumption. For example, they often use a lower pitched voice at the end of their ads to evoke

‘positive’ evaluative reactions relating to power, status and authority. Since the male voice has a lower pitch, then invariably the masculine voice is used at the end of many ads, even when the message is aimed at a female audience.

## **1i. The effectiveness of male and female voices in advertising**

In the summer of 2002, Whipple and McManamon led a study into the evaluation of male and female voices and their communicative effectiveness in delivering persuasive messages. It was found that for a female gender-imaged product, (i.e. a product aimed at a female consumer) the sex of the spokesperson and the announcer significantly affected advertising evaluations. Similarly, studies by Debevec and Iyer 1986, show that a product’s gender image is related to the sex of its most likely user. In a 1991 study, Bellizzi and Milner look at the effectiveness of male versus female voiceovers. In spite of these findings, male voices still outnumber female voices in advertising throughout many cultures.

The social consequences of under representing female voices in advertising are twofold. Firstly, advertisers may be limiting their ability to reach their target markets effectively if they under-represent women in commercials (Ford, La Tour, and Lundstrom 1991). False assumptions about the preferred use of the male voice leads to underemployment of female actresses in a world already laden with gender inequality, not to speak of the financial losses which are arguably occurring.

Secondly, the overuse of male voices and under use of female voices perpetuates the gender stereotypes held by society. To a certain extent, the ubiquity of the male voice denies the female voice a chance to be heard. The dearth of the female voice also perpetuates the stereotype of the submissive, quiet female who, many patriarchs believe, like children, should be seen and not heard. This is especially true in traditionally patriarchal Latin American societies like Mexico, where the female figure is revered as the sacred giver of life, the centre of all that is holy, but at the same time is not given her own place, or voice in society. She is constantly referred to as someone else’s mother, wife, or daughter. Many Mexican males in all classes of society present their spouses as *‘mi*



*vieja* /my old lady or *mi esposa* /my wife without consideration for supplying the given name of their partner. The Mexican female is not considered a person in her own right, but as a possession of another. In the world of advertising this stereotypical view of the female in her limited roles of 'mother' and 'wife' is exploited to the full, especially in patriarchal cultures like Mexican society.

## **1j. Hypotheses**

Having covered a brief description of the background of this study, and having looked at the importance and incidence of advertising in contemporary society, and the types of manifestations of the asymmetrical divisions of power between the genders, it would seem fair to say that a study into the use of male and female voices in advertising might prove an interesting path to follow. There have been many studies into the use of images to demonstrate gender differences, but this dissertation takes a look at the use of voice and attempts to investigate whether or not, like images, it is used in advertising to perpetuate unequal divisions of power between the genders and what qualities in the male and female voices give them persuasive ability?

More specifically, an in-depth comparative study into the use of the female and the male voice in Mexico versus its counterpart in the UK might reveal interesting cross-cultural data that would add to better cross-cultural awareness and perhaps give a better insight into the divergent media controlled roles of females in Mexico. How and why are the Mexican females' roles in television advertising being limited, and by whom?

The primary objectives of this study are two-fold. In the first instance, it is to establish some comparative quantitative analysis data on Mexican versus United Kingdom television ads regarding the use of female versus male voices in ads for female gender-imaged products. In other words, to collect data on voices from television ads aimed at a female audience in both the UK and Mexico in order to make a cross-cultural comparative analysis.

My suspicions are that female voices are used more in the UK and less in Mexico; that persuaders in the UK are more used to the 'soft sell' approach, relying on more sophisticated methods of persuasion and market research. I suspect that advertising executives in the UK are more aware of

and pay heed to consumer investigations like the type carried out by Whipple and McManamon (2002) which demonstrate that females prefer to hear female voices in ads directed towards them. The question is then, are women in the UK more vocal when compared to their Mexican counterparts? Is their voice heard more in comparison to the Mexican female who, in many instances, is still repressed and submissive in patriarchal Mexico? Are cultural values in Mexico 'silencing' the voice of the female in spite of the fact that she desires to be vocal?

I suggest that there will be a more frequent use of the female voice in the UK in comparison with Mexico because the former is a less patriarchal society than the latter. Indeed, not until 1955 did Mexican females finally get the right to vote, almost some forty years after Mexican males and British females got that same right. I suggest that the results will show that the stereotypically superior male voice is heard on Mexican television ads because it is still a very patriarchal society where women are relegated to second place not only at home, and in the workplace, but in the media and its mediated stereotypical portrayals as well.

Having established some data to relate to the above, there is now a platform to allow further investigation into the area of study. Supposing that the results of the cross-cultural study prove that there is a larger presence of female voices in television ads in the UK directed at a female audience when compared to their counterpart in Mexico, then this would suggest that my first hypotheses is correct. It would suggest that in comparison, female voices are heard less in Mexico and more in the UK. I further suggest that this would be a reflection of the traditional cultural views of the female stereotype in Mexican society, but I would argue that these traditional views are now rather outdated and that the female audience is willing and eager to be heard. This would take me to the next step in the investigation. I propose that the following measure would be to set up some sort of trial whereby Mexican female evaluative reactions to voices can somehow be measured to see if there is indeed a justifiable reason for advertisers' ubiquitous use of the male voice. A semantic differential scale would be the type of instrument with which voice reactions could be measured. The scale would hopefully be able to show that there is a preference for the female voice and which qualities in it are desirable to women.

If I prove this to be indeed so, the question would then be, are advertisers falsely assuming that females prefer the male voice and are making a 'hard sell', or could it be argued that this is proof of yet another consequence of patriarchal society silencing the female voice?

If I prove this second hypotheses that Mexican females prefer to hear female voices in ads directed towards them, then I suggest that it would leave much room for questioning in the world of advertising in Latin America. Positive proof of the hypotheses would not only confirm my belief that the Mexican female is an independent person with her own thoughts and feelings, but that the corporate world of advertising in Latin America is light years behind in its market research and investigation.

### 2a. General Outline

In an initial study carried out on television ads on Mexican television to look at the use of accents in advertisements, (personal research project, *“An Analysis in the use of Accents in Television Advertising in Mexico”*, October 2002), in over one hundred ads observed, it was found that the presence of male voices outnumbered the presence of female voices by almost five to one. Even in ads which were aimed at a female audience, for example in ads with a gender-imaged product (a product which in most cases would be purchased by a female) the voice over was often male, even when the actor in the image was female. Similar results were found by Marechek et al (1978), that men in television advertising tend to do the voice-over more than women, even when the central character is a woman. Advertising critic Guy Cook comments on the ubiquity of the male in the final voice-over, even in ads portraying or aimed at women, *“..the most authoritative summarizing voices are almost always those of indigenous middle-class males”* (Cook 1992: 95)

In order to investigate even further into the absence of female voices on Mexican television commercials, I decided to focus exclusively on the use of voices in television commercials targeted at a female audience. It was determined that in order to ‘qualify’ as a female-gendered ad, it would be one of two types (1) an ad for an intimate hygiene product, for example body cream, shower gel, sanitary towels, and so on, and type (2) an ad for a household product that in most cases would be bought by the female in the household, for instance kitchen cleaner, soap powder, and so on. Data was only collected on these two types of ads.

In order to make the comparative study on the use of female voices in female gendered ads in the United Kingdom and Mexico, data was collected in both countries under similar circumstances. That is, daytime television schedules were controlled, similar channels were observed (no cable or private television channels were taken into account), similar points were noted in both instances: product type (intimate or non-intimate), gender of actor in image, and gender of voice used in the

ad. Facts were collected and cross-cultural results were compared. Statistics were compiled to compare the incidence of male to female voices for both types of ads in both cultures.

As a further stage on from this, two ads from Mexican TV were chosen. Both ads, although aimed at female audiences, used male voice-overs in their original TV formats. One ad was for “*Grisi*” shampoo and the other was for “*Snuggle*” fabric softener. These ads were chosen because they were thought to be addressed to a female consumer. In the ad for the ‘Grisi shampoo’ the model has long back shiny hair, and the product appeals to consumers under the pretence of having ‘long shiny black locks like mine’. The second ad used in this study was similarly thought to be aimed at a ‘typical’ female consumer. The Snuggle fabric softener ad shows a young mother looking after her little baby boy. In Mexico, many mothers are solely responsible for raising their children and the domestic chores. Laundry is thought to be a ‘female activity’, and principally the responsibility of the female in the household.

These two particular ads came to my attention because in spite of the fact that they were aimed at a female consumer, and the images used in the ads were of females, on both occasions male voices were used in the off-camera voice-overs. Furthermore, and on a more practical note, neither ad lasted for more than twenty seconds and would therefore be somewhat easier to dub and voice-over than longer, more complex ads with multiple voices. Also, the very fact that the voice was coming from off camera in both ads, would make voice over recording easier. For the above reasons, these ads were chosen.

Under controlled experimental conditions, the ads were dubbed and voiced over with new male and female voices. Although the original ads already had male voices, it was important to dub with both new male and female voices so that all factors would be controlled. If I had only dubbed over with a female voice and used the original male voices, then dependant variables would not have been kept under control. The ‘new’ voices were carefully chosen so that the voice quality of both the male and the female actors, to the ‘naked ear’, was equally good. To help with the making of a semantic differential scale, the ads were shown to a control group who were asked to comment on the voice qualities of the actors. Based on the same adjectives that came up during the focus group session, the semantic differential scales were written up. The ‘new’ ads were then shown to female control

groups, evaluative reaction handouts were filled in, and data on their persuasive appeal was collected.

## **2b. Scheduling**

*“It is easier for outsiders to perceive the national television characteristics of any television ecology or system because to the population it appears to be a natural part of the tissue of everyday life.” (Ellis, J. Seeing Things 2000:130)*

Since this study involved ads aimed at a female audience, it was important to gain access to them at a time of day when there are more ads aimed at the female audience. By audience, it is meant the group of people who can potentially receive media content. Typically, in both the UK and Mexico, daytime TV is aimed at the female and child audience. It is at these times of day when the audience segmentation is made up principally of these two groups of consumers. During these times, TV programmes are scheduled to appeal to them. Mechanisms of control within the TV system balance genres and create the branding which is at the heart of scheduling. Scheduling helps with the process of sharing similar characteristics like language, images and repetitions. The national broadcasting systems in Mexico and the UK are very different and have very different generic mixes.

*“ Each television system and each broadcaster within each system maintains a particular shifting, balance between the genres of television. The key to the management of this process is the little understood activity of scheduling.” (Ellis, 2000:131)*

The genres that a network broadcasts are, as John Ellis says, the *‘building blocks’* of television and the architecture that combines them is the *‘schedule’*. (*Ibid* p.131) The basic choices which a television network offers are defined by the schedule, and it is easier for outsiders to perceive the national characteristics of any TV system, whereas for natives they are harder to perceive because they appear to be natural in the everyday fabric of life. At its simplest, the schedule is like a grid made up of time slots each lasting thirty minutes. Each slot is given a program or part of a program around which television ads, trailers and announcements are built, so the actual length of the program is less than the thirty minutes allotted to it. The grid contains fixed points, programs or

genres that are immobile. These fixed points reflect the patterns of everyday life in any given society. In the case of the UK it would be the placing of the news bulletins at certain fixed times of the day. In the case of Mexico, an example would be the assorted array of ‘*telenovelas*’ or soap operas which start mid-afternoon and finish late in the evening.

*“These are important moments in each channel’s schedule and they reflect a number of important features: the inscribed assumptions about basic patterns of everyday lives; the tradition of the channel itself, especially in the placing of the main news bulletins; and assumptions about the schedule of other channels.”* (Ellis, 2000: 134)

Scheduling delivers programs to audiences when they are most likely to want to watch them, and it also delivers audiences to persuaders in the composition that makes their advertising most likely to be effectual. Todd Gitlin comments on how television network systems use the scheduling process to deliver audiences to advertisers,

*“As it is, the ‘science’ and the ‘art’ of program development and scheduling do only a few things for certain. They reinforce the networks’ claim to be efficient servants of the popular will. Most important, they buttress network television’s position as the most efficient medium for advertisers.”* (Gitlin 1994:62)

Scheduling allows television programmers to subdivide audiences so that they are segmented and assembled and sold to persuaders as an ideal audience for their product. Ang (1991) talks of audiences being ‘*commodities*’ that are sold by the television networks to the ad agencies. They, in turn, buy time or space for their commercials. Persuaders can manipulate audience size through narrowcasting or broadcasting strategies, and technology allows persuaders to more specifically target their persuasive messages to the audiences. For example, local television provides a medium for local businesses to target certain consumers in the local community who might be likely to use their product or services.

To summarize, the character of a national TV economy is defined by the sum total of its schedules. Daytime television in Mexico is defined by the soap opera, talk show, and children’s program genres, while daytime UK television is defined by genres of a more mixed nature including talk shows, home improvement, and quiz shows as well as programs aimed at a younger audience. In both cases, this daytime television is, in general, aimed at females and children, and for the

purposes of this study into the voices used for ads aimed at a female audience, the data was collected during scheduling time for shows aimed at this audience.

## **2c. Collection of initial data on TV ads in UK and Mexico**

For the part of the study in the UK, data was gathered on television ads aimed at a female audience during the first two weeks of July, 2003, on Monday to Friday, since viewing patterns and scheduling patterns at the weekend change, while weekday ads tend to be consistent in terms of number and product advertised. Data was exclusively collected from channels 3, 4 and 5, which are all commercial channels in the UK. No data was collected from any one ad more than once. After some fifty ads, new fresh data was difficult to find. Repeat ads were excluded from the analyses as were those depicting animated characters as central figures. (Furnham 2000)

In Mexico, the data was collected under comparable circumstances, during daytime TV shows (Monday to Friday) aimed at a female audience during the first two weeks in August, 2003. Ads were recorded from channels 2,4,5,9,11,13, all of which are commercial TV stations on national television. Similarly, channel switching was employed in an effort to collect and be exposed to as many female-gendered ads as possible.

The commercials were divided into two female gendered categories: (1) ads for *non-intimate* products which were thought to be products which were typically bought by the female in the household: for example detergent, fabric softener, toilet cleaner, aerosol freshener, and so on, and (2) *intimate* products, which were classified as products which the female might typically buy for herself, for example hair dye, cosmetics, deodorant, and so on. Data was not collected from any ads which were not aimed specifically at a female audience.

Three items were noted during the gathering of the data: (1) type of product i.e. intimate or non-intimate; (2) gender(s) of spokesperson(s) or model(s) whose image(s) appeared in the frame; (3) gender(s) of the voice(s) that could be heard in the ad.



An example of this would be:

TV ads in the UK			
Product	Intimate/ Non-intimate	Image	Voice
Radox	i	F	F
Tampax	i	F	F
Pampers	ni	M,F	F

(Complete data can be found in Appendix 1).

## 2d. Selection of ads for voiceovers

In order to collect suitable commercials which could be dubbed and voiced over to test for listeners' evaluative reactions, two ads were chosen from the selection of ads from Mexican TV that had been recorded previously. One ad featured a non-intimate product aimed at a female audience (*Snuggle* fabric softener) which used a female image of a young mother but a male voiceover, and the other ad was for an intimate product similarly aimed at a female audience (*Grisi* shampoo for black hair) which also used a female image of a young female with long shiny black hair, but a male voiceover.

The copy for the 'Snuggle' ad reads:

*snuggle sabe que existen diferentes tipos de piel / algunas más sensibles que otras / por eso presentamos el nuevo snuggle piel delicada / el primer suavizante de telas formulado con glicerina / nuevo snuggle para piel delicada con glicerina / un cariñito extra*

*[snuggle knows that there different types of skin / some more sensitive than others / that's why we give you snuggle for delicate skin / the first fabric softener with glycerine / new snuggle for delicate skin with glycerine / an extra embrace]*

While the copy for the 'Grisi' shampoo ad reads:

*no té conformes con un cabello simplemente negro / organogal extrae lo mejor del cactus y el nogal / dándole a tu cabello la intensidad / brillo y sedosidad / que ningún otro shampoo te puede dar / deja fluir la magia de tu cabello / con organogal de grisi*

*[don't just accept simple black hair / organogal extracts the best from the cactus and the nopal / to give your hair the intensity / shine and smoothness / that no other shampoo can / let magic flow through your hair / with organogal by grisi]*

Initial determinations of these female gendered products were confirmed by perceptions from a sample of 50 males and females who judged the products for gender association with respect to the purchaser. The question used was: 'Is this product used primarily by females, males or both?' In 92% (Grisi) and 85% (Snuggle) of the cases, they confirmed that they were intended for female purchase.

## **2e. Recording the voice-overs on the chosen ads**

The original male voices in both commercials were dubbed and replaced with the controlled voices of two trained radio announcers, one male (Manuel), one female (Susana), under controlled experimental conditions in a sound cabin with the help and guidance of a professional sound engineer. It was felt important that professional communicators should be used because they should have credible voices, which by Giles and Powesland's definition includes sounding *valid*, *expert*, and *trustworthy*. (Giles and Powesland 1975:91) All independent variables were controlled as much as possible (the announcers were both of the same age (nineteen), both came from similar socio-economic backgrounds, both used exact same scripts. Voice intonation and speed of voice were controlled as much as possible too. Both actors agreed upon intonation patterns before recordings began. Since the effect of knowledge of receiver's sex upon speech patterns has not been

thoroughly investigated, it was not mentioned to the announcers what the gender, age, or socio-economic make up of their audience would be. There was a real attempt made to achieve the same speech rate and paralinguistic features during the voice-over sessions. The announcers rigorously followed the same script since the sender's psychological state can affect the speaker and predispose him or her to select certain patterns of speech from their repertoire. Furthermore, all endogenous factors like emotional state, blood pressure and anxiety factor were as controlled as much as possible since these can also have an effect on voice intonation. (In fact, another female voice, that of Mariana, was also recorded, but her recordings were disregarded and were not used in the trials because she did not have similar intonation to the male voice, and also because she had arrived late and was in a bit of a rush. I felt that her performance was rather precipitated and not as good as the other female candidate's).

To conclude, during recording of the vice-overs, independent variables were controlled as much as possible, so that the only independent variables were (a) announcer's gender and (b) ad, while the only dependent variable was listeners evaluative reactions to the different voices in the two ads. In the final analysis there were four ads with newly recorded voices: (1) *Snuggle* with male voice, (2) *Snuggle* with female voice, (3) *Grisi* with male voice, (4) *Grisi* with female voice.

## **2f. Set up of semantic differential scale**

*“judgements of the quality of prestige of language varieties are dependent upon a knowledge of the social connotations which they possess for those familiar with them.” (Edwards 1982: 21)*

Social connotations of an utterance reflect an awareness of social convention and preference which, in turn, are a reflection of the status and prestige awarded to the speakers of these varieties. In effect, when a listener makes an evaluation upon voice or accent, what is being evaluated is not the speech, but the speaker. It has been suggested that there are four dimensions to meaning: structural, contextual, denotative, and connotative. It is this social connotation of meaning which is being looked at more closely in this investigation. The psychologist Charles E. Osgood developed a method to measure the last of these dimensions of meaning through the semantic differential scale.

The scale is one way to measure people's attitudes, and in this case, measuring their attitudes to, or evaluations of different voices. Moreover, it is also appropriate to use the semantic differential scale in this experiment on voices in television ads since market researchers in the advertising industry already employ it when determining how a product is perceived.

What I am attempting to do is, with the help of semantic differential scales, map the emotive connotations of a voice to measure it for things such as persuasiveness, friendliness, attractiveness, and so on. In many previous studies on evaluative reactions to voices using the matched guise technique (MGT), the semantic differential scale is also used. In 1960, Lambert et al introduced this technique to study and assess language attitudes towards speakers. Judges evaluate a speaker's personality after hearing them read the same passage in two or more guises, but they are ignorant of the fact that there is only one speaker. This area of study, which is also referred to as 'language attitudes' research, is built on the supposition that speech style elicits certain social categorizations or stereotyped reactions which will lead to a set of group related trait inferences. For example, hearing a female voice which is classified as 'throaty' will perhaps predispose listeners to infer a certain set of personality traits like sexually promiscuous, aggressive, and pushy. Giles and Coupland describe the process entailed in an MGT experiment,

*"Listener judges are asked to listen to a series of (supposedly) different speakers on audiotape, to form an impression of these speakers, and to frame these appraisals using a series of person-perception rating scales (for example, along dimensions to do with competence traits, such as intelligence, ambition or confidence, and social attractiveness and integrity traits, such as sincerity, friendliness or generosity) provided for them on a questionnaire". (Giles & Coupland 1991: 34)*

In general, on studies of accent evaluation carried out in the UK, standard accents usually connote high status, high competence, but score low on personal integrity and attractiveness, while regional accents tends to score higher on these last two traits. Language varieties, which tend to differ from the standard variety are likely to be viewed less favorably than the standard, especially on characteristics relating to status and competence. In this study, the differences in reactions to male and female speech are being evaluated. Is there a difference in listeners' reactions? Is the male voice the standard, and all others are deviations? Is the male's the voice against which all others are measured? These are some of the questions which I will attempt to take a closer look at.

Before setting up a semantic differential scale, the newly recorded ads were shown to a focus group of six females and after viewing the ads, subjects were asked to describe the voices of the actors. Words used to describe them included: *interesting, nice, warm, convincing, no accent, sensual, gentle, convincing, youthful, exciting, too young, and mature*. These same words (or their synonyms) along with other words, which describe qualities of persuasion, authority, and friendliness, were chosen for the semantic differential scale.

To apply the Semantic Differential, a profile of the voice is made using a scale of eleven voice qualities each defined by polar adjectives. (Since each ad only lasted 20 seconds, it was thought that extracting any more information than this would be difficult). The method is to attribute the qualities of the voice on a five-point scale from 1 to 5.

This is what the scale looked like. (Translated into English from Spanish).

Please indicate the number that corresponds to your answer to the question ...the voice in the ad was.....						
<b>dominant</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Weak</b>
<b>unfriendly</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Friendly</b>
<b>sincere</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Insincere</b>
<b>not persuasive</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Persuasive</b>
<b>young</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Old</b>
<b>authoritarian</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>not authoritarian</b>
<b>not wise</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Wise</b>
<b>emotional</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Boring</b>
<b>intimate</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>not intimate</b>
<b>Mexican</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Foreign</b>
<b>trustworthy</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>not trustworthy</b>

So, **1** would represent definitely not weak, i.e. dominant, and **5** would represent weak, i.e. definitely not dominant. In this way, a map of the subject's connotations for the voice can be drawn up. It was important not to align all the 'positive' adjectives on one side of the scale, so that subjects would have to think about their choices, and not try to 'second guess' the emphasis of the experiment. In this way, it was hoped that respondents would avoid developing a response set (consistently moderate answers, or always either agreeing or disagreeing).

## 2g. Parameters to be controlled during Group Trials

Since this investigation is a focus on ads directed at a female audience, only females are used in the focus groups. The interest here is to see whether females are more persuaded by male or female voices in the ads, and therefore males were not required in the trial groups. Other listener variables like age, sex, socio-economic status, and ethnicity are also controlled since these factors can also have an effect on the evaluative reactions. In various studies carried out in the 1960's, Lambert et al found that listener's language background is another factor affecting evaluation of personality from speech. Furthermore in another separate study carried out by Lambert in 1967, it was found that socio-economic background could also affect evaluative reactions to voices.

*“the type and strength of impression depends on characteristics of the speakers--their sex, age, the dialect they use, and very likely the social class background as this is revealed in speech style. The impression also seems to depend on characteristics of the audience of judges---their age, sex, socio-economic background, their bilingualism and their own speech style.”* (Lambert 1967)

So, it would seem clear that evaluative reactions or belief reactions can be affected by many factors which can vary not only on the part of the speaker, but also on the part of the listener. It is the intention of this experiment to control these variables as much as possible. The listeners chosen to participate are all female undergraduate students at a fee-paying university in Guadalajara, Mexico. All of them come from middle or upper middle class backgrounds, and none of them are bilingual. The ads were shown to 79 females (41 for the intimate product ad and 38 for the non-intimate product ad).

On setting up the experiment, the subjects were not informed about my measurement of the independent variable, that is, the gender of the speakers was not brought to their attention. They were merely asked to listen carefully to the voices in the ads, and then they would be required to make evaluations on those voices. Subjects were informed that they would see the same ad twice, each time with a different voice. After answering both questionnaires, subjects were then asked to explicitly express a preference with the questions : *Which of the two voices was more persuasive...the man's or the woman's? Why do you think so?* For that same reason, groups were only shown ads for one type of product, either intimate or non-intimate. It was felt that after having

asked this question, it might have provoked listeners to imagine what the experiment was about, i.e. male versus female voices, and it was felt unwise that they should then go through the listening of another ad, perhaps knowing what the root of the investigation was about.

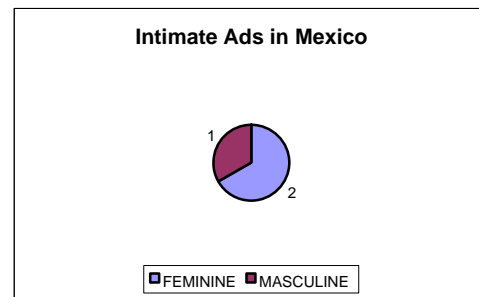
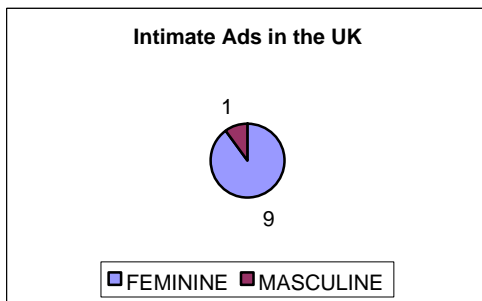
## **2h. Group trials**

The ads were shown to groups of subjects and evaluative reactions were recorded on the semantic differential scales. All 79 subjects were young Mexican females between the ages of nineteen and twenty-three, studying at a private university. Subjects were either shown the ads for the intimate product (41 subjects) or the non-intimate product (38 subjects), but on no occasion were they shown ads for both products. Subjects were informed that the study was aimed at measuring their reactions to the voices in the ads and that they should listen carefully to the ad and then answer the questions about the voice. They were then exposed to the second ad for the same product, but the voiceover was of the opposite sex. On some group trials the female voice was used first, followed by the male voice, and on other occasions the order was reversed. After viewing and evaluating both voices with the semantic differential scales, subjects were asked explicitly which voice they preferred: that of the male or the female and their reasons why. At this point the trial was over and their evaluations and written comments were collected.

## 3a. Data from UK and Mexico: comparisons

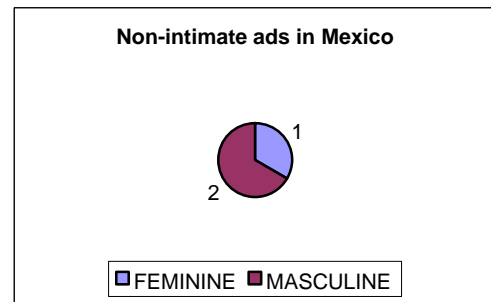
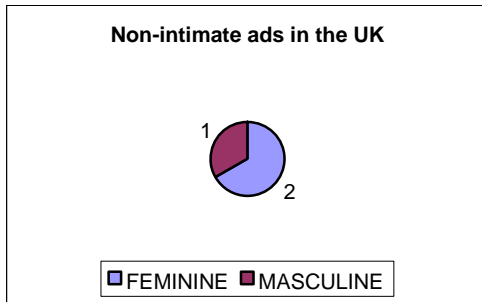
In the United Kingdom, a total number of 51 ‘female audience’ ads were observed (25 of them for intimate products and the other 26 for non-intimate products). In Mexico a total number of 40 similar type ads (i.e. aimed at a female consumer) were observed (26 for intimate products, and 14 for non-intimate products). As well as type of product, category of product (intimate or non-intimate), gender and/or nature of image, and gender of announcer or voice-over voice were also noted.

(See Appendix 1 for complete data collected).



In the category of intimate ads, female voices were used nine times more often than male voices in the UK (9:1), but female voices were only heard twice as often as male voices in Mexico (2:1). This means that for every one male voice in an intimate product ad in Mexico, two female voices are heard, whereas in the UK for every one male voice in an ad for an intimate product, nine female voices are heard. The results suggest that the female voice is more present in the UK when compared to Mexico in ads for similar type products.





In ads for non-intimate products the ratios are even more revealing, culturally speaking. In ads for non-intimate products the presence of the male voice increases in both countries, but in the UK the female presence of the voice still outnumbers the male, while in Mexico the reverse is true. For every one male voice for a non-intimate product in the UK, two female voices are heard (m:f = 1:2). The presence of the female voice in ads primarily aimed at females still comes out on top. However, in Mexico, in these ads the presence of the male voice is heard more than that of the female, in fact it makes itself heard twice as much as the female voice (m:f = 2:1) in spite of the fact that the ads are aimed at a female audience, and in many cases females are the image used in the ad. For example, in the case of the two ads that I used in the voiceovers, both ads used female images, but the voice-overs were males.

There are two points worth noting here. The first is that it is interesting to note that in both cultures female voices were being used more than male voices in ads for non-intimate products, but they were not being used to the same degree. Female voices are employed much more in the UK. The second point worth mentioning is that in both countries the male voice is used more for non-intimate products than for intimate type products. I suggest that this is due to a number of factors. Typically in ads for household cleaning products female images are used, but the male voice of authority is used to lend the product ‘credibility’ and ‘seriousness’ and this is typically so in ads for detergents. This indeed seems to be the case in both countries, but much more so in Mexico where the male voice is used twice as much as the female voice in ads for non-intimate products aimed at a female consumer.

### 3b. The Semantic Differential Scale and its Values

The second part of the data collection involved the screening of the 4 voiced-over ads to female subjects and testing for their evaluative reactions to the voices in the ads. The independent variables were the genders of the voice-overs and the type of product being advertised (intimate / non-intimate), and the dependant variable was the subjects' evaluative reaction. This part of the experiment was carried out in Mexico where the presence of the male voice in TV ads is greater than that of its counterpart in the UK. The aim was to test if females in Mexico would react favourably to female or male voices in ads aimed at them, and what qualities in the voices appealed to them. In essence, the 'persuasive power' in the voice was being tested and the independent variable was voice gender.

Before writing up a semantic differential scale, the ads were shown to a focus group of six females who were asked for words to describe the voice qualities of the announcers. On describing the ads they used words like: *interesting, nice, warm, convincing, no accent, sensual, gentle, convincing*. These same words, or words similar to them were then added to the semantic differential scale. Subjects in the focus group also mentioned that the ads sounded 'funny' since there was no music in them. I explained that since they had been dubbed and voiced-over with new actors, there was no musical background to the ads. Subjects in the focus group expressed surprise at the voiceovers because they sounded like 'real actors' voices'. One person in the focus group mentioned that the absence of the music was better, since she could focus more clearly on the voices.

In order to score the elements in the semantic differential scales that were collected, values were given to each of the items in the five-point scale. These values ranged from 20 to 100, but since the polar adjectives on the scale were not all placed in 'order of attractiveness' then on occasions the values went form 20-100, and on other occasions from 100-20. As a result, the values attached to the semantic differential scale in the study were as follows:

<b>dominant</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>weak</b>
<b>unfriendly</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>friendly</b>
<b>sincere</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>insincere</b>
<b>not persuasive</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>persuasive</b>
<b>young</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>old</b>

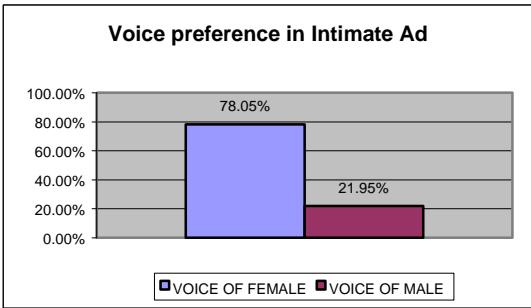
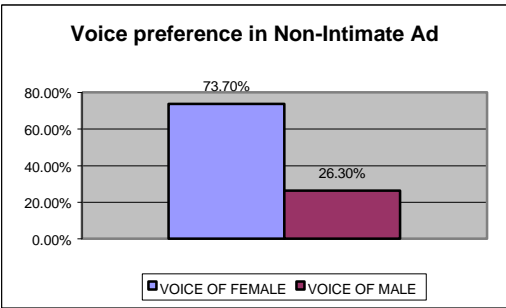
<b>authoritarian</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>not authoritarian</b>
<b>unwise</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>wise</b>
<b>exciting</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>boring</b>
<b>intimate</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>not intimate</b>
<b>Mexican</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>foreign</b>
<b>trustworthy</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>not trustworthy</b>

In this way, the qualities associated with a persuasive voice i.e. friendliness, persuasiveness, authoritarian, wise, trustworthiness, and so on can be measured quantitatively, so that an ‘ideal’ voice would score higher since the ‘positive’ traits are worth more on the scale than ‘negative’ traits. The traits for Mexican/foreign and young/old hold no intrinsic qualities that are relevant to this study, but were merely placed there to make it more difficult for subjects to make false assumptions about their reactions.

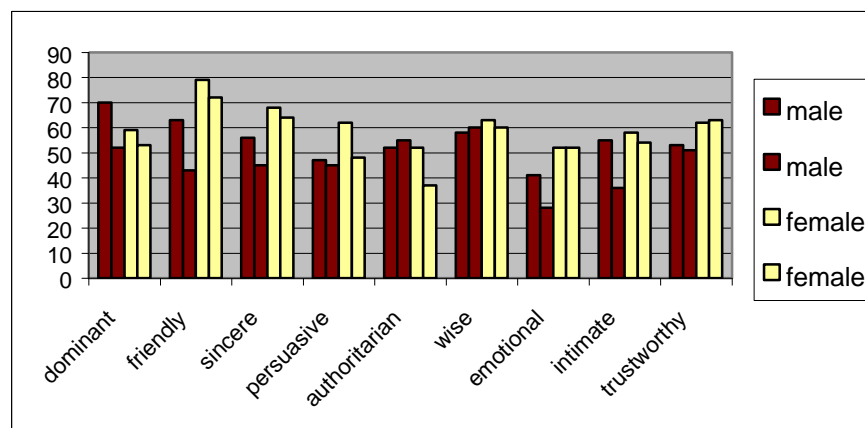
(See Appendix 2 for semantic differential scale).

### 3c. Evaluative results of male versus female voice

The results of the trials seem to suggest that females prefer the female voice in ads aimed at them. In the case of the non-intimate product ad, 74% of the subjects explicitly expressed a preference for the female while in the ad for an intimate product the margin was even greater: 78% plainly expressed a preference for the female voice. On average, 76% of the subjects in the trials preferred the female voice, which in itself is somewhat startling considering the fact that both ‘original’ ads used male voices.



Scores were tallied and averaged for both the female and the male voices in both ads. In both ads, the female voice was evaluated notably higher than the male counterpart for the qualities pertaining to friendliness (79 and 72 for the female compared to 63 and 43 for the male), sincerity (68 and 64 for the female compared to 56 and 45 for the male), emotional (52 for the female compared to 41 and 28 for the male), trustworthiness (63 and 63 compared to 53 and 51) and in the case of the ad for an intimate product, the female voice scored notably higher for its persuasive quality (62 versus 47). Furthermore, the female voice was evaluated as more intimate than the male voice in both ads, and notably so in the ad for the non-intimate product (54 versus 36).



The only quality of the male voice that that scored higher than the female voice was for its dominance in the ad for the non-intimate product (70 for the male versus 59 for the female), but this was not perceived in the ad for the non-intimate product. As regards authoritarianism, only in the ad for the non-intimate product, did the male voice score more (55 versus 37).

(See Appendix 3 for data results from voice-over ads).

When asked explicitly why they had expressed a preference for the female voice, most subjects commented on the fact that the ad seemed to be directed at a female audience, and therefore the female voice seemed more logical and more believable :

*‘I prefer the female voice because it is announcing a female product and the voice is more trustworthy.’*

*‘The product is more for women, and they know more about it.’*

*‘I believe her more when she talks about the product.’*

*‘I trust her more because it’s a product for women.’*

*'Because the product is for women and is being said by a woman.'*

*'The product is for women and the voice is more real when it's a woman.'*

*'She sounds like she knows what she's talking about.'*

*'Because there's a woman on the screen, so it's more logical to hear a female, like her talking.'*

*'Because the product is for women.'*

*'The female voice goes more with the ad, it is more logical.'*

*'The female voice because it's a product aimed at women; her voice is more fitting; it is more trustworthy and she knows what she's talking about.'*

*'The female's voice because it's a product that a housewife would use, and it's more fitting than a male voice.'*

*'The female voice because it's a female product and it seems more fitting as well as calming.'*

*'As well as mentioning a product for housewives, they can trust her because from her tone it sounds like she has used it.'*

*'The female voice because it is an ad for detergent and women know more about this than men. You would believe a woman more.'*

*'Because it's a product directed at women and it is more difficult to identify the male voice with the product.'*

*'I don't like either voice, but her voice seems more appropriate for the ad.'*

*'The woman's voice is more appropriate for the market.'*

*'I preferred the female voice because women are in charge of the domestic chores and they look after the children.'*

*'Because the ad is for fabric softener, her voice is more believable than his, even if they present the ad in the same tone of voice.'*

Others mentioned their affinity or identification with a fellow female:

*'Because I identify more with her voice.'*

*'Because it gives the sensation that she uses the product and it creates affinity.'*

Others mentioned their preferring the female voice because of its attractive qualities:

*'Because she sounds more friendly and interesting.'*

*'Her voice is softer with gentler tones.'*

*'Her voice because it sounded nicer and I liked her tone.'*

*'Because her voice sounded sweeter than his.'*

*'Because her voice sounded friendlier and more in keeping with the ad.'*

Those in favour of the male voice were the minority, because a mere 25% of the subjects mentioned a preference for the male voice in the ad, and the only qualities that came out on top were the 'strength' and 'authoritativeness' of the male voice:

*'His voice because it sounds stronger and more mature.'*

*'Because he sounds like he knows more about the thing, even though he does it in a very direct way.'*

*'His voice is stronger.'*

*'Because his voice sounded surer of what he was saying, and stronger than the woman's.'*

Others mentioned preferring the male voice because of it sounded more interesting or more seductive:

*'The male voice because it seduces women more.'*

*'His voice sounded more interesting.'*

*'His voice grabs my attention more.'*

*'His voice sounds more comfortable.'*

*'Because his voice sounded calmer and more trustworthy.'*

Although the male voice does have some appealing qualities like 'strength', 'authoritativeness', and some kind of 'seductive' quality to it, it is not deemed by the female subjects in this study to be as persuasive as the female voice which comes out on top for almost three quarters of the subjects in this study.

The results seem to suggest that when faced with the option, most women prefer to hear the female voice-over in ads directed at them than a male voice-over. Subjects seem to make a connection between the visual and the sound, and since the sound anchors the visual, to most subjects it seems 'appropriate' and more 'believable' that a female voice is used. The qualities of the female voice that seem to appeal to the female are 'friendliness', 'trustworthiness', 'sincerity' and 'intimacy'. In

comparison to the male voice, these qualities were, on average, measured to be greater in subjects' evaluations of the female voice. I suggest that these voice characteristics found in the female voice are the same traits that appeal to fellow females and the same qualities which go towards giving it 'persuasive power'.

In the case of those who expressed a preference for the male voice, the voice characteristics which seemed to stand out were 'dominant' and 'authoritativeness' to some extent. I suggest that these same characteristics of the male voice are appealing to some females. However, when it comes to persuading it would seem that in spite of these attractive qualities, most females, it seems, prefer the voice qualities offered by the female and not the male voice.

I would argue that the findings of this trial are somewhat controversial. The results here show that females express a preference for female voices in ads aimed at them, but advertisers are still producing ads in Mexico with male voice-overs. The higher presence of female voices in UK ads would seem to point towards the way things should be in Mexico. I suggest that this is a wake up call for persuaders and the corporate world of advertising.

### 4a. Advertising

*“The implicit messages of advertisers affect our attitudes and buying behaviour”  
(Borchers 2000: xxi)*

*“Television looks at the world; the television viewer glances across television  
as it looks at the world.” (Ellis 1982:164)*

Persuaders use images, language, words and sound as part of the creative process of making persuasive messages that will appeal to consumers in such a way that they identify with them. Advertising affects not only the consumers’ attitudes, but also actions and purchasing decisions as well. Indeed, if this were not true, then it would be difficult to justify the vast sums of money which are spent on advertising and marketing. Persuaders use and manipulate images, words, and language to their advantage.

These words and images, or ‘signs’, hold both denotative and connotative meaning, but it is in the latter where the ‘social dimension’ of meaning is held. Within the world of advertising, it could be argued that television plays a most crucial role. In fact, it might be argued that television dominates how we experience the world. *“Communicators now penetrate a family’s home.” (Ibid, p.9)* Advertising is indeed the motor behind network television. Viewers are subject to persuasive messages almost every time they watch TV.



## 4b. Television

*“La televisión naturaliza lo que presenta para hacer que sus mensajes aparezcan como si fueran de verdad. Este ‘poder’ de naturalización lo desarrolla la televisión debido a su capacidad técnica de hacer su información evidente ante los propios ojos del televidente – pero ningún mensaje es totalmente transparente.” (Orozco Gómez, 1994:63)*

*[Television naturalizes what it presents so that its messages appear real. This ‘power’ to naturalize is due to television’s technical ability to make evidence appear before the very eyes of the viewers – but no message is ever completely transparent.]*

Television companies ‘deliver’ audiences to advertisers via scheduling so that viewer demographics are better defined and persuaders are able to home in on their potential consumers. Just as there exists an ‘*intimate ongoing relationship*’ (Ibid., p.21) between effective persuaders and their audience, there also exists a close relationship between the viewer and the television. John Ellis comments on this remarkable bond in his book *Visible Fictions*,

*“ Viewers will tend to see themselves in the terms used by the television. Viewers will tend to see themselves in the places addressed by television’s notion of ‘family’ in the position of ‘you’ the viewer, ‘you’ at home. (Ellis 1982:165)*

This intimate, consensual relationship between viewer and television, has the ability to ‘naturalize’ what appears on television, so that the messages it emits appear to be real. Ellis talks of the ‘*immediacy created by image and sound*’, which in turn produces ‘*a kind of complicity between the viewer and the television institution.*’ (Ellis 1982:144)

This is powerful and at the same time a dangerous ground to tread in that this form of ‘consensus’ tends to define the television and its images and voices as a kind of ‘norm’ against which things from the outside world are to be measured against. The implications of this are far-reaching in that the images and sounds that are broadcast by TV companies, and therefore those in power, tend to define what is ‘acceptable’ and ‘normal’. By the same means, their ideological beliefs are also used as a standard against which others must be measured, for example the ideology of ‘patriarchy’. The findings in this study tend to provide evidence to endorse this claim. For instance, although over

70% of the females in this study expressed a preference for the female voice in an ad which they were exposed to, the presence of the female voice in Mexico is still very scarce when compared to that of its UK counterpart. Furthermore, the 'endorsing function', which is lent solely to the male voice at the end of ads which I observed in both the UK and Mexico, leads me to believe that both television and advertising play active accomplices in this 'naturalization' of patriarchy.

Television messages consist of images and sound, the latter having a more central role. While the image has a more descriptive function, the sound carries the details or facts. John Ellis (1982: 129) refers to the '*anchoring*' function of sound on television. All the elements used by persuaders have denotative as well as connotative meanings and it is in the latter that the social dimensions of meanings are buried (Turner 1994). Images are culturally charged and it would seem that voices are too. In the same way that images use camera angle to communicate a power and status (Borchers 2002:153), so too are words delivered in such a way as to give them superiority. The findings from this study seem to suggest that advertisers in Mexico use the male voice in female gendered ads to exploit its 'dominant' or 'authoritative' qualities which they presume will appeal to the female viewer. However, I argue that they are ignoring, either by fault or by deliberate choice, the female voice and the appeal it offers to the female viewer. This omission of the female voice in Mexican TV ads, is indicative of the asymmetrical division of power between the genders and the falsely presumed persuasive power, authority and appeal of the male voice over the female voice.

#### **4c. Comparing advertising in Mexico and the UK: similarities**

From the findings in this study, it would seem that approaches to television advertising in the UK and Mexico differ greatly, but there are some similarities worth mentioning. For instance, in both countries the male voice, when paired with a female voice in an ad aimed at females, is invariably used at the end of the ad. In this study, the ads which featured pairs of voices, both male and female, were consistent in the fact that in both the UK and Mexico, the male voice was consistently used at the end of the ad. On no single occasion, in either culture, was the female voice, when coupled with the male voice, used to 'anchor' the ad at the end. Indeed, this presence of the omnipresent male voice is similarly echoed not only in Mexico and the UK, but in many other cultures too. In a similar Spanish study on some fifty television ads it was found that,

*'Los anunciantes prefieren ser representados por voces masculinas. Es decir, que eligen mayoritariamente voces de varón para expresar los argumentos y los beneficios con los que recomiendan a su público, la oferta de su producto.'* (González-Solaz, García-Cubells 1999:191)

[*'Advertisers prefer to be represented by male voices. That is, they usually elect male voices to express their arguments and the benefits that they recommend to their public, when offering their product.'*]

Guy Cook (1992:95) talks of the '*ubiquity of the male voice in the final voice over*' in ads. For the ads in this study it would seem that the male voice was used at the end of the ad to 'anchor' the meaning or to '*factualize*' or '*documentalize*' the copy. On no occasions, in either the UK or Mexico, is the female used to anchor meaning at the end, if a male voice is also present in the ad.

I suggest that these findings are merely a reflection of the asymmetrical division of power that exists in society between the genders. The greater prestige of the male voice and the meanings, which are attached to it, are held in evidence here. This is an example of '*greater rewards*', as mentioned by Sattel (1983) being '*attached*' to male rather than to female activities. The findings in this study seem to align with these ideas, and are case in point of the perpetuation of dominant ideologies via ISA's that Althusser alludes to. (Althusser 1970)

#### **4d. Anchoring of meaning in the male voice: new and real**

I suggest that in the same way that the bottom right hand corner of pages in the press often refer to the 'new' and the 'real' (Kress & van Leeuwen 1998), so the ending in these television advertisements are framed to give them salience and an anchor in reality. As with written material, this is where the viewer is addressed as a consumer and it is here that they are 'told' what to do. I argue, what better way than to 'tell' the female what to do in a patriarchal society than through the use of the dominant male voice of the referent class? In ads where a female voice and image are used, but the male voice is used at the end to 'anchor' the meaning, the use of the male voice undermines the presence of the female in the ad. It might be argued that the female is rendered somewhat insignificant in comparison to the male. Sound has a more centrally defining role than image, and Ellis describes sound as carrying the '*fiction*' or the '*documentary*' while the image has a more '*illustrative function*'. (Ellis 1982: 129). Ellis goes on to describe how sound '*anchors*' the

meaning in TV. By using the male voice at the end of the ad, more ‘weight’ or importance is lent to it. Fajula and Roca (1999) in their analysis of the role of females in Aspirin’s™ advertising campaign speak of the limited roles played by women,

*“Así pues, la figura femenina empezó a usarse como simple reclamo publicitario en un gran número de anuncios hasta el punto que, en algunos de ellos, ni tan siquiera su presencia estaba justificada; actuaba como mero adorno.”*

*[And so, the feminine figure was used as a simple publicity adornment in a large number of ads until the point where, in some of them, her presence was not even justifiable; she was a mere decoration.]*

It may be argued then that although the UK might like to consider itself more tolerant and liberal than Mexico, the data from this study would suggest that male voices, not female voices, are used in both countries to give weight and meaning to persuasive messages where both the male and the female voice appear. It might be argued that this is an indication of the omnipresent utilization of the male voice to render power, status and dominance. Moreover, it undermines the authoritative role of the female in the world of advertising and society at large. As such, I would argue that this particular finding on the use of male voices at the end of ads in both the UK and Mexico is indicative of the mass asymmetrical dominance of gender and prestige which is lent to males in society.

#### **4e. Implications of the results found in this study**

The results of the present study suggest that an announcer’s sex can affect advertising evaluations for a gender specific product. From the findings here, I argue that when presented with the choice, most young Mexican females (around 76% in this study) do prefer to hear the female voice in ads directed towards them, this in spite of the fact that the original ads appeared with male voices. These findings are in line with those of Whipple and McManamon in their 2002 study on the use of male and female voices in advertising who also found this female preference for the female voice in ads directed at the female. The persuasive qualities in the female voice that seem to appeal to the audience are friendliness, trustworthiness, sincerity and emotional appeal. These same qualities are

not evaluated as highly for the voice of the male counterpart, and his persuasiveness is not deemed as favorable.

Moreover, the findings suggest the female audience in Mexico may be attracted more to a 'believable' or 'more logical' female voice in ads directed towards her than a male voice. The question is, why then are male voices in Mexico so recurrent in ads aimed at a female audience?

I suggest that this frequent occurrence of the male voice may be because advertisers are making false assumptions about the preferences of the female viewer/consumer. They are assuming: (a) that the female does not care which voice she hears in the ads and therefore a male voice will do, and/or (b) that the Mexican female prefers to hear the male voice authoritatively 'telling' her what to buy, and/or (c) that the female voice cannot 'hold its own' against the male counterpart.

The findings here in this study would suggest that all of these assumptions are false: In ads aimed at them, the female audience expresses a preference for the female voice, she rejects male 'authority' for female 'intimacy', 'friendliness' and 'trustworthiness', and the persuasive power of the female voice is evaluated as stronger than that of the male counterpart.

I argue that advertisers in Mexico are relying on 'hard sell' when they should be taking into account the preferences of their more contemporary female viewer who has her preferences and reasons for them. There is a missed opportunity here that advertisers should examine. They should modify their advertising techniques to reflect the more sophisticated likes of their present day audience members. I suggest that the modern Mexican female is finding a voice for herself in her predominantly paternalist society; she is no longer willing to 'take it sitting down' and feels a need and desire to express herself and have herself heard. Advertisers in Latin America are evidently way outdated in their market research and investigation. The findings in this study suggest that they are pitching off course at half of their potential customers. In commercial terms, the findings here may be hugely significant for corporate advertising, not only in Mexico, but in all of Latin America. I would argue that persuaders ought to take note of these findings in their commercials if they want to appeal to their audience more effectively.

Also, employing more female actors to do the voices in ads would help towards equal job opportunities for female actors in the job market since there are limited employment opportunities for female presenters. This research should encourage advertisers to begin to hire more women for voiceover and announcer work which would go to some extent towards tipping the balance in favor of the female in the asymmetrical division of power.

#### **4f. Limitations of the findings**

The findings here should be kept in perspective to the limitations of the study. Advertisements for only two products were evaluated. Subjects were from a small privileged, educated sector of society and their viewpoint may not be indicative of the general female population. I suggest that the study should be replicated with a sample from the general female population to gain better insight.

Being an experiment, some of the natural realistic elements that come into play on viewing TV advertising were sacrificed. Subjects were not exposed to the ads in a natural 'viewing' environment. This may or may not have affected the trials and produced false positives from the subjects. Indeed the match guised technique itself has not remained free of its critics over the years. Questions as regards MGT's sterility and legitimacy are constantly being raised. (Giles & Coupland 1991:53). These same two linguists have also questioned the legitimacy of the texts used in MGT experiments since texts are never '*neutral*' even though in this technique they are taken to be so. (*Ibid.*, p.54)

In the same vein, the legitimacy of using the experimental technique does have the disadvantage that what one is measuring is 'laboratory behavior' and not 'natural behavior'. This experimental effect, sometimes known as the 'Hawthorne Effect' is described by McNeil as,

*'the way in which a particular experimenter may influence different subjects, or to the effect that different experimenters may have on the same subject. These must influence the outcome of the experiment.'* (McNeil 1990:56)

It may well be that for some reason subjects were guessing that I was doing a study on gender and were eager to give the 'right' answers. Moreover, there are also those sceptics who might object that

the correlation between studies and actual behaviour is actually very low, so that attitudes are often poor predictors (see La Piere's study 1934).

As regards the problems which may arise from using a semantic differential technique, the mechanics do not allow for differentiating beyond a continuum, with bipolar adjectives at either end of the scale. It might be suggested that the scale does not actually classify any individual emotion. Furthermore, the bipolar adjectives that I chose in the semantic differential scale might not necessarily mean the same thing to everyone in spite of the fact that with a technique of this sort that is the assumption being made. How can one know whether or not the pairing 'dominant/weak' means the same to everyone of the subjects in the experiment?

There is of course the age-old argument that if we want the experimental situation to be as realistic as possible, we have to accept that all the variables cannot be controlled, and therefore one cannot be sure that the cause and effect relationship being identified is in fact what is actually being identified. However, having said that, it would also be unwise to dismiss all experiments in social science since they can indeed '*provide some very important insights*'. (McNeil 1990:58)

#### **4g. Areas for further study**

The findings from this study are in no way conclusive and much more work needs to be done into the study of gender and advertising. Possible areas for subsequent study might include the world of not only television but also radio. Both would seem to me to be areas which would equally have much to offer. For instance, what roles and spaces are afforded to the female voice in radio? As in television, are there 'restrictions' placed on the voice? Do these same limitations apply cross-culturally? Furthermore, gender and its role in print advertising is also a potential area for further investigation. How does print advertising directed at females in one culture compare to that of another culture? How do ads in women's magazines differ cross-culturally? What meanings and values arise from them? What mistaken assumptions, if any, are present? How can this help toward better cross-cultural understanding?

The study into the asymmetrical division of power in advertising has far reaching possibilities especially in Latin America, where the female and her role in society is far removed from that of the

female in many Western societies. More cross-cultural studies which would offer a space for contrast and comparison into the division and manifestations of gender roles would serve not only the area of cultural awareness, but might also serve to enlighten social education and knowledge.

To conclude, subsequent study by analytical approaches into the area of interpretation of documents, texts whether it be television, radio, or print which leads to the identification and interpretation of cultures can only but lead to better critical cultural awareness, political education, and enhanced intercultural competence.



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## APPENDIX 1

### TV ads in Mexico

product	I/ NI	image	voice
diet product	i	f	m
pampers	ni	b/f	f
shampoo	i	f	f
body tonic	i	f	f
pantene	i	f	f
petalo	ni	f/ch	m
nivea soft	i	f	f+m
scotchbrite	ni	f	m
huggies	ni	f/ch	m
kotex	i	f	f
deodrant	i	f	f
toothpaste	ni	m/f	m
touch me cream	i	f	m
facial cream	i	f	m
snuggle	ni	f/ch	m
walmart	ni	f/m/ch	m
pert plus	i	f	f
palmolive	i	f	f
downy	ni	f	f
suavitel	ni	f/ch	m
always	i	f	f
gracian lady	i	f	f
silka cream	i	f	m
ariel	ni	f/f/f	m
loreal cream	i	f	f
predictor	i	f	f
deodrant secret	i	f	f
dove cream	i	f	f
nail product	i	f	m
pato purific	ni	f	f+m
hinds cream	i	f	f+m
nutrisse	i	f	f
h+s shampoo	i	f	m
ajax	ni	f	m
maestro limpio	ni	f	f
nivea soft	i	f	f+m
elvive cream	i	f	f+m
wrinkle cream	i	f	f
salvo	ni	f/ch	f
organics shampoo	i	f	m

Total number of ads=	40
intimate ads=	26
non intimate ads=	16
Intimate ads	26
female voice	15
male voice	7
f+m voices	4
Non intimate ads	14
female voices	4
male voices	9
f+m voices	1

for intimate ads in UK m:f = 1:9, compared to Mexico where m:f = 1:2

for non-intimate ads in UK m:f = 1:2, compared to Mexico where m:f = 2:1

TV ads in the UK

product	I/NI	image	voice
radox	i	f	f
oli of ulay	i	f	f
pampers	ni	b	f
shampoo	i	f	f
lenor	i	f	f
harpic	ni	f	m
johnson's baby wipes	ni	b	m
baby wipes	ni	f/b	f
ariel	ni	m	m
anti-wrinkle cream	i	f	f+m
toiletries	i	products	f
dish washing powder	ni	products	f
toothpaste	ni	f/m	f
persil	ni	f/b	f+m
supermarket	ni	f/b	f
cream	i	products	f
sanitary towels	i	f/f	f
lenor	ni	f	f
supersoft shampoo	i	f	f
hair dye	i	f	f+m
shampoo	i	f	m
magazine	i	f/m	f+m
skin products	i	f	f
sanitary towels	i	f/f	f
boots products	i	products	f
shampoo	i	f	f+m
dove cream	i	products	f
various toiletries	i	f	f
baby milk	ni	f/b	f
nappies	ni	b/b	m
supermarket	ni	f/m	m
glade	ni	f/b	f
orange cleaner	ni	m/f	f
dove deodrant	i	products	f
domestos	ni	m	f
macroban	ni	m/ch	f
freshner	ni	m/f/f/m	f
feminine hygiene prod	i	f/m	f
domestos	ni	products	f
nappies	ni	b/b	f
dettol easy mop	ni	f	f
dove gel	i	products	f
baby wipes	ni	b	m
baby shampoo	ni	b/f	f
fairy liquid	ni	m	m
shampoo	i	f	f
herbal tablets	i	f	f
radox	i	f/m	f+m
shampoo	i	f/m	m
soap powder	ni	f/m	f
toothpaste	ni	f/m	m

Total number of ads =	53
Intimate ads =	25
Non intimate ads =	28
Intimate ads	25
female voice=	18
male voice=	2
female + male voices=	5
Non intimate ads	26
female voice =	17
male voice =	8
female + male voices =	1

for intimate ads in UK m:f = 1:9, compared to Mexico where m:f = 1:2

for non-intimate ads in UK m:f = 1:2, compared to Mexico where m:f = 2:1

## Comparing ratios

### Intimate ads

the ratio of female to male voices in UK is = 9:1

the ratio of female to male voices in Mexico is = 2:1

More than 4 times more female voices are used in ads in the UK when compared to their use in Mexico.

### Non intimate ads

the ratio of female to male voices in the UK is 2:1

the ratio of female to male voices in Mexico is 1:2

The statistic is completely inversed.

**APPENDIX 2**

Favor de indicar que numero corresponde a tu respuesta para la pregunta ...la voz en el anuncio me pareció....						
dominante	1	2	3	4	5	débil
No amistoso	1	2	3	4	5	amistoso
sincero	1	2	3	4	5	insincero
no persuasivo	1	2	3	4	5	persuasivo
joven	1	2	3	4	5	viejo
autoritario	1	2	3	4	5	no autoritario
no sabio	1	2	3	4	5	sabio
emocional	1	2	3	4	5	aburrido
intimo	1	2	3	4	5	no intimo
mexicano	1	2	3	4	5	foráneo
confiable	1	2	3	4	5	no confiable

*Translated to English...*

Please indicate the number that corresponds to your answer to the question ...the voice in the ad was.....						
dominant	1	2	3	4	5	weak
unfriendly	1	2	3	4	5	friendly
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	insincere
not persuasive	1	2	3	4	5	persuasive
young	1	2	3	4	5	old
authoritarian	1	2	3	4	5	not authoritarian
not wise	1	2	3	4	5	wise
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	boring
intimate	1	2	3	4	5	not intimate
Mexican	1	2	3	4	5	foreign
trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	not trustworthy

**¿Cuál de las dos voces era más persuasivo....la del hombre o la de la mujer?**

**¿Porque crees esto?**


*[Which of the two voices was more persuasive...the man's or the woman's?*

*Why do you think so?]*

### APPENDIX 3

<b><u>Snuggle</u></b>	
<b><u>ad</u></b>	<b><u>38 subjects</u></b>
28 prefer voice of female	<b>73.70%</b>
10 prefer voice of male	26.30%
18 permutations of snuggle male and then female	
20 permutations of snuggle female and then male	
	<b><u>41</u></b>
<b><u>Grisi shampoo ad 41 subjects (intimate product)</u></b>	<b><u>subjects</u></b>
32 prefer voice of female	<b>78.05%</b>
9 prefer voice of male	21.95%
23 permutations of female and then male	
18 permutations of male and then female	





Evaluation for male in ad for intimate product	Evaluation for female in ad for intimate product	Who comes out on top	
70	59	dominant (m)	<b>Qualities favoured by male voice:</b> dominant  <b>Qualities favoured by female voice:</b> friendly sincere wise emotional intimate Mexican trustworthy persuasive
63	79	friendly (f)	
56	68	sincere (f)	
47	62	persuasive (f)	
67	89	young (f)	
52	52	authoritarian (-)	
58	63	wise (f)	
41	52	emotional (f)	
55	58	intimate (f)	
69	83	Mexican (f)	
53	62	trustworthy (f)	

Evaluation for non-intimate product			
male	female	Who comes out on top	
52	53	dominant	(f)
43	72	friendly	(f)
45	64	sincere	(f)
45	48	persuasive	(f)
55	92	young	(f)
55	37	authoritarian	(m)
60	60	wise	(-)
28	52	emotional	(f)
36	54	intimate	(f)
77	68	Mexican	(m)
51	63	trustworthy	(f)

<b>Qualities favoured by male voice:</b> authoritarian Mexican  <b>Qualities favoured by female voice:</b> dominant friendly sincere persuasive young emotional intimate trustworthy
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