

Code-switching and Identity Constructions in Taiwan TV Commercials*

Chiu, Miao-chin

Chinese Instructor, Language Center, National Chiayi University

Ph.D. Student, Institute of Linguistics, National Chung Cheng University

miaochin2000@yahoo.com

Abstract

The current study investigated code-switching phenomenon in Taiwan TV commercials advocated by two females from distinct classes, i.e. Elite vs. Non-Elite. Ten commercials released during 2005-2011 with code-switching features were chosen as the samples of this study. Our analysis found a polyglossic continuum of different codes in contemporary Taiwan commercial domain: Taiwan Southern Min (Taiwanese) is ranked the lowest variety, followed by the intermediate Mandarin, and dominant foreign languages as the highest. The result confirms that codes used by distinctive class members reveal their basic identity constructions. Furthermore, code-switching strategies adopted by them further reinforce the stereotyping of the classes they belong to.

Keywords: code-switching, TV commercials, social stratification, stereotype, identity construction

◎ 收稿日期：2011年10月23日；審查通過日期：2012年1月19日。

* I am truly grateful to Prof. Rau, D. Victoria, who has carefully read the manuscript and made many valuable suggestions on this study. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers and Prof. Myers, J., whose thoughtful comments have helped me improve this paper greatly. All remaining errors are mine.

1. Introduction

Language variation is an important cultural symbol for the potential market segments. Grammar, phonology, and vocabulary vary across ethnic groups, regional groups, economic class structure, gender and age. As shown in Labov's (1972) survey on the use of (r) of salespeople in three department stores in New York City, there is a clear and consistent stratification of r-pronunciation in his three subgroups. And these systematically differentiated linguistic forms are ranked in status or prestige by general agreement of the members in the community. In other words, language is often used as a symbolic tool for social identity construction.

Forms do carry social meanings. Studies on linguistic factors and social factors of language variation of certain subgroups can shed light on how linguistic variants are associated with social meanings in certain domains. For instance, languages used in a TV commercial are not simply the carrier of merchandise information; more importantly they also play a crucial role in constructing the ideological image associated with the product, as well as the product possessor. According to Piller (2001: 173), "The messages of advertising usually support the hierarchy of bourgeois values by defining desirability as attached to social status and prestige." To a certain degree, TV commercials are designed to "brain-wash" the audience to believe that consuming commodities will probably lead to desirable identities.

Assuming that patterns of code selection in TV commercials are strongly associated with the socio-culture connotations in a linguistic community, this paper aims to investigate how linguistic variations, code-switching utterances in particular, contribute to the identity construction of different classes in Taiwan TV commercials.

2. Definitions of Terms

TV commercial producers have various options when they choose specific linguistic forms in promoting their products, as Taiwan has a rich repertoire of various Chinese varieties, Austronesian languages, along with popular foreign languages like English and Japanese. Which code is chosen and which is not does carry social implications.

2.1 Code-switching

There is a long debate on the distinction between code-switching (CS), code-mixing (CM) and borrowing. Many scholars use the terms Code Switching (CS) and Code-Mixing (CM) interchangeably while some distinguish between them (Auer, 1999; Kachru, 1978); in addition, based on Van Coetsem's (1988) loan phonology framework, Rau (1992) reclassified code-switching, borrowing and imposition in her study on language contact in the Philippines. This paper does not intend to join the debate. What we concern more is the implicature of diverse code selection strategies used by different classes in a multilingual society, i.e. Taiwan. We will adopt the concept of code-switching (CS) defined by Myers-Scotton (1993: 3) in this paper, "code-switching is the selection by bilinguals or multilinguals of forms from an embedded variety (or varieties) in utterances of a matrix variety during the same conversation." In addition, since morphosyntactic analysis is not the main focus of this study, both inter-sentential CS and intra-sentential CS utterances will be included in our discussion.

Code-switching is a social phenomenon, and its occurrences have a psycholinguistic/sociolinguistic basis (Myers-Scotton, 1992). According to Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model (1993), the language which sets the morphosyntactic frame for code-switching utterances is the Matrix Language (ML), while the other (or others) is the Embedded Language (EL). Based on her assumption, there are some conventionalized norms of code choice and code use shared by most of the speakers in each community, and these codes are called the "unmarked" codes. Using an unmarked code carries less weight of social implication and attitudinal inference. However, when speakers use codes other than the unmarked ones, they may intend to convey certain social message, such as social identity, solidarity or redefining the interpersonal relationship, whether consciously or unconsciously.

2.2 Social Classes

Members from different classes of a society occupy power and resources unevenly. Social stratification refers to the division of individuals into various hierarchies of status, wealth and power in a society. Various criteria are adopted by sociolinguists to label different social classes. Labov (1966) gives a score to each respondent in his survey according to the person's years of education, the occupation of the family breadwinner, as well as family income. Rau's (2000) study on phonological variation and sound change in Atayal also provides a good example of how classes can be assigned. In her study, the speakers' social classes are assigned

according to their occupation, income, education, and even style of housing. Similar criterions among others are adopted to define two distinct classes in this study, i.e. Elite and Non-Elite.

“Elite” is generally defined as a class of persons or a member of such a group, enjoying superior intellectual, social, or economic status. Aimee Sun (孫芸芸), born in 1978, is the representative protagonist chosen for Elite category in our study. As a co-founder of Breeze Center (微風廣場, a luxurious shopping mall located in Taipei), Sun is one of the most famous celebrities in Taiwan. In addition of being awarded as the Top 1 fashionable celebrities in Taiwan according to a survey conducted by *Apple Daily* (蘋果日報) in 2006, Sun is also ranked Top 1 female celebrity with best taste according to *Global Views* magazine (林奇伯, 2008). She served as the leading character of several TV commercials, mainly high-tech consumer electronics and skin care products. Images presented by her in all of the commercials are always young, elegant, fashionable, rich and, high class.

“Non-Elite” refers to common, ordinary and approachable images in our discussion. Lin Mei-hsiu (林美秀), born in 1967, is the representative protagonist. As the best supporting actress of the 40th Golden Horse Award in 2003 and best supporting actress of the 49th Asia Pacific Film Festival, Lin has participated in more than 30 TV shows and movies since 2003. With her “neighbor-like” friendly feature and amusing acting, she has also served as the leading character of diverse Taiwan TV commercials, including kitchen cleaners, dish soap, toothbrushes, throat drops, instant noodles and even virility supplement. Her most-mentioned work is the series commercial of Nin Jiom Medicine Manufactory (京都念慈菴), in which she has been the most representative advertising star for 10 years. Talkative, friendly, enthusiastic and even gossipy middle-aged women, housewives with middle or lower economic background in particular, are the typical images presented by Lin in her commercials.

According to an on-line survey on the most popular commercial protagonists in the first quarter of 2010, Sun is ranked Top 20 and Lin is ranked Top 17 respectively (錢祐達, 2010). Therefore, we believe both of their images and styles can be easily identified by most people in the speech community of Taiwan.

Social stratification often leads to linguistic stratification. TV commercials advocated by females representing distinctive social classes are chosen as the base of this study. In order to concentrate on the interaction between social stratification and code selection, variables such as gender difference and certain speech domains, such as working place, are excluded, since

both of them might have great impact on language use (Myers-Scotton, 1993; Holmes, 2001). Therefore, 10 TV commercials chosen for our study were advocated by the two females in non-working domains. In other words, none of the female characters in these 10 commercials is career woman and the key difference between these two types of female is their social class, i.e. Elite and Non-Elite.

3. Purpose of this Study

“Switching and mixing are routine practices in everyday conversation.” (Rampton, 2009: 295) Shih & Su (施玉惠、蘇正造) (1995) survey the code-switching behavior in Taiwan among speakers who constantly mix Taiwanese, Mandarin and English in daily conversations. They discuss the issue from socio-pragmatic perspective and reveal that people code-switch to different languages for distinct pragmatic purposes, such as showing humor, expressiveness, solidarity, authority, eruditeness and professionalism.

As claimed by Escalas (1994), language variation can evoke strong reactions, from covert prestige to negative stereotypes. As far as we know, mass media is a mirror of society, and language codes used by protagonists representing distinct social classes can be associated with language attitude held by different classes in the real speech community. Moreover, codes used by stereotypical Elite and Non-Elite might further influence and even reshape the audience’s language attitude. As Gal (1978) observes in Oberwart, a Hungarian-German bilingual town in Austria, young women’s language choice directly influences the language usage pattern in this community and even triggers language shift, i.e. from Hungarian to German.

More importantly, language attitude held by the speakers in a speech community directly effects the language’s development and future survival. According to Chen (陳麗君)’s (2011) survey on Taiwanese students’ language consciousness of their mother tongues and their language ability, 40% of the Taiwanese-speaking ethnic group learn their mother tongue first; while only 4.5% of the Hakka-speaking ethnic group and 0% of the aboriginal peoples do. The practical usage of the mother tongues had been overtaken by Mandarin Chinese significantly. Both studies mentioned above reveal a crucial issue: language choice and language attitude do matter in a multilingual society.

This paper will address the following issues in order to portray the interaction between social stratification and linguistic stratification:

- (1) What linguistic codes do the two stylistic protagonists use in these commercials?
- (2) How does language variation help to construct the identity of the protagonists' representing two distinctive social classes?
- (3) How is code-switching associated with social meanings or stereotyping in Taiwan?

4. Methodology: Data Collection

A linguistic market is generally defined as a symbolic market, constituted by diverse social domains within which linguistic exchanges take place (Bourdieu, 1977). In order to provide a more focused discussion on the code-switching phenomenon of the contemporary linguistic market in Taiwan, 10 TV commercials (5 for Aimee Sun and 5 for Lin Mei-hsiu, released during 2005-2011) with code-switching features are chosen as the samples in this study. Table 1 and Table 2 present the brand names, types of product as well as codes of the selected commercials.

Table 1: Brand Names and Codes in Elite Type TV Commercials

Product's Name (Elite)	Type of Product	Code(s)
Yakult 300 LIGHT (養樂多 300 LIGHT)	yogurt drink	Mandarin English
Palmer's Cocoa Butter Formula (帕瑪氏可可脂乳液)	skin care	Mandarin English
Hitachi RSF62AMJ Refrigerator (日立家電：機能美冰箱)	consumer electronics	Mandarin Japanese
Škoda Yeti (斯克達 Yeti 汽車)	SUV car	Mandarin English, German
Hitachi RS3T Vacuum (日立家電：RS3T 吸塵器)	consumer electronics	Mandarin Japanese

Table 2: Brand Names and Codes in Non-Elite Type TV Commercials

Product's Name (Non-Elite)	Type of Product	Code(s)
Yungshing Voren Patch (永信非炎酸痛貼布)	pain-relieving patch	Mandarin, Taiwanese, English
Shallop Soft Toothbrush (刷樂纖柔毛牙刷)	tooth-brush	Mandarin, Taiwanese, English
Farcent Household Cleaner (花仙子潔霜清潔系列)	kitchen cleaner	Mandarin, Taiwanese, English
PAOS dishwashing liquid (泡舒天然洗潔精)	dish soap	Mandarin, Taiwanese, English
Nin Jiom Herbal Candy (京都念慈菴喉糖)	throat drops	Mandarin, Taiwanese, English

As pointed out by Bell (1984: 268), “...mass communicators are under considerable pressure to win the approval of their audience in order to maintain their audience size or market share.” We assume that TV commercial producers are under similar or even more pressure to “win the approval” of their target audience when they design and stylize the characters in these commercials. It is definitely their priority concern to impress the audience. Assuming that code-switching is a strategic operation adopted by commercial producers to construct two images from distinctive classes, code-switching patterns of Sun (Elite) and Lin (Non-Elite) can reflect different stereo-types associated with certain classes. In the following section, we will discuss observations on code-switching discourses in these commercials from a critical perspective.

5. Results and Discussion

After the code-switching utterances in the 10 commercials were examined and compared, three themes have emerged as follows:

- (1) Taiwanese is missing in an Elite repertoire
- (2) Foreign languages are not necessarily prestigious
- (3) Mandarin is dominant but diverse

In the following sections, we will discuss what social factors are behind these phenomena.

5.1 Taiwanese is Missing in Elite Repertoire

When we refer to Table 1 and Table 2, the most distinctive reality is that Taiwanese is definitely not the code used by the Elite (Sun). On the contrary, it is the essential code for the Non-Elite (Lin).

According to the communication accommodation theory (CAT), "...in most instances, it is desirable - even necessary - to converge, to adjust our language patterns towards those of our conversational partners" (Giles, 2009: 277). We may assume that the Elite commercials are not targeting audience who use Taiwanese frequently. What attributes to the absence of Taiwanese in Elite codes?

A closer look at the data shows that most of Sun's Mandarin utterances in the commercials are not interactive or conversational; instead, they are more like statements about her elitism. Some frequently occurring words that are linked to taste and prestige further make her "stay away" from the common people. For instance, expressions such as fashion (時尚 *shishang*), supreme (頂級 *dingji*), the ultimate attainment (極致 *jizhi*), sense of design (設計感 *shejigān*), taste (品味 *pinwei*), and aesthetic qualities of life (生活美學 *shenghuo meixue*) are frequently found in Sun's utterances.

As Bell (1984) proposes in his Audience Design Framework, "speakers design their style primarily for and in response to their audience." We assume that Sun has no intention to "talk" to the audience who use Taiwanese frequently in particular. The audience is not addressed as a member of the elite group in which she belongs to; instead, all the messages composed in her commercials, verbally and non-verbally (including her elegant appearance, luxurious lifestyle, graceful movement, being dressed in evening gowns all the time...etc.) construct a dazzling model of young and mid-aged urban white-collar population in particular for the audience to admire and follow. Based on these observations, our conclusion is that Taiwanese is not the preferred code associating with "high class" in Taiwan, at least stereotypically.

On the other hand, commercials presented by Non-Elite (Lin) are targeting audience who use Taiwanese frequently since it is the Matrix Language (ML) in most of Lin's utterances. According to Huang (黃宣範) (1993), Taiwan's population is mainly composed of four major

ethnolinguistic groups: the Southern Min (73.3%), the Mainlanders (13%), the Hakka (12%) and the native Austronesian (1.7%). *The Republic of China Yearbook 2010* also indicates that the Holo people¹, whose mother tongue is Southern Min account for approximately 70 percent of the population in Taiwan. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect Taiwanese (Taiwan Southern Min) to be used as the main repertoire in TV commercials since it is still the most widely spoken regional language in Taiwan. As shown in the Non-Elite commercials, the frequent use of Taiwanese as ML not only constructs the fundamental identity of Lin, it also makes Lin sound very “local” and “approachable” to many audiences in Taiwan. For instance:²

- (1) *Setting*: Lin comes to a pharmacy to buy the pain-relieving patch. She has a conversation with the male pharmacist. The pharmacist only uses Mandarin while Lin code-switches between Taiwanese and Mandarin.

1 Lin: 我 欲 買 永信非炎 貼 布。

Gua beh be *Yongxinfeiyan tie bu.*

(I want to buy Yongxinfeiyan patch.)

[ML: Taiwanese; EL: Mandarin]

2 Man: 酸痛 啊?

Suan tong a?

(Sore muscle?)

[Mandarin]

3 Lin: 哎喲! 我就 昨 昏 跳 舞。

Ai-io! Gua tio tsa-hng thiau-bu.

(Ouch! I went dancing yesterday.)

[Taiwanese]

4 Man: 你 會 跳舞?

Ni hui tiaowu?

¹ Holo people refer to the largest Han people in Taiwan, whose ancestors mainly came from Fujian Province before 1895.

² In the following discussion, all the examples are presented as:

- a. Matrix language (ML) is transcribed unmarked while the embedded language (EL) is transcribed in *Italics* showing its “markedness” in the first and second lines.
- b. First line of each utterance other than English (or other foreign languages) is transcribed with Chinese characters for both Mandarin and Taiwanese. (Characters representing Taiwanese are based on the on-line Dictionary of Frequently-Used Taiwan Minnan Words provided by Taiwan’s Ministry of Education.)
- c. Second line of each utterance is transcribed with Pinyin (for Mandarin) and the Taiwanese Romanization System (for Taiwanese) in addition to English (or other foreign languages).
- d. English translation for each utterance is provided in parentheses on the third line.
- e. Codes used in each utterance are indicated in square brackets lastly.

(You can dance?)

[Mandarin]

5 Lin: 沒 禮貌，我 以前 也是 *dancer* 呢。

Mei limao, wo yiqian yeshi *dancer neh*.

(You're so rude. I was a dancer before!)

[ML: Mandarin; EL: English (*dancer*) & Taiwanese (*neh*)]

As shown in (1), Taiwanese is the ML (Matrix Language) in 1 and 3, and then Lin switched to Mandarin as the ML in 5. This brief commercial reveals a variety of social functions in code-switching: Firstly, Lin's code-switching feature triggers a notion of familiarity to many bilingual contemporaries who regularly mix these two languages in their daily linguistic practice in Taiwan. And we think this is the main reason contributes to her "local favor" and approachable feature in the Non-Elite commercials. This perfectly fits in the main merit of convergence in CAT, i.e. accommodation is an approval seeking process where speakers accommodate their speech style to their hearers in order to win approval (Giles, 2009). Secondly, when Lin's character was questioned by the male pharmacist in 4, i.e. "You can dance?"(你會跳舞?) Her response with a switch to Mandarin in 5 as the ML is definitely a marked choice. As point out by Shih & Su (施玉惠、蘇正造) (1995), speakers switch from Taiwanese to Mandarin mostly for the functional effects of message qualification and authority. This perfectly explains Lin's intension to make a more powerful response to the male pharmacist questioning her ability of dancing in this context. Thirdly, as shown in 5, an English lexicon "dancer" is embedded in the Mandarin ML. According to Shih & Su (施玉惠、蘇正造) (1995), people switch from Mandarin or Taiwanese to English mostly for the sake of professionalism or lack of proper vocabulary. Since the English lexicon "dancer" has a very close corresponding equivalent in Mandarin, i.e. *wuzhe* (舞者), we argue that Lin's switch to English code here is not due to the lack of vocabulary in the ML; instead, she used the code as EL to hold her proud experience as being a professional dancer in high esteem.

Other than the above observations on example (1), we also notice an interesting pattern in the Non-Elite commercials: The arguments in most of Lin's commercials were Taiwanese dominant; however, their brand names or slogans were constantly expressed in Mandarin. For instance:

(2) 貼 永信非炎， 輕鬆 敢若咧飛咧~

Tie Yongxinfeiyuan, khin-sang kan-na teh pue leh

(Use Yongxinfeiyuan patch and you can be as relaxed as if you were flying.)

[ML: Taiwanese; EL: Mandarin]

(3) 時代上進步，軟綿綿 刷樂 纖柔毛

Si-tai siong tsin-poo, ruan mianmian Shuale xianroumao

(In modern time, use super soft Shallop toothbrush)

[ML: Taiwanese; EL: Mandarin]

As shown in (2) and (3), no matter how “local” the female protagonist is, as long as the brand name or slogan is involved, Mandarin constantly outranks Taiwanese and becomes the chosen code. According to Piller (2001: 160), “the language used in the slogan of an advertisement becomes the language of the advertisement’s ‘master voice,’ the voice that expresses authority and expertise.” From this perspective, we conclude that Mandarin is still the “central voice” in these Non-Elite commercials. In addition to its prestigious status, its association with the widely practiced written system can also explain why Mandarin is used for brand names, i.e. consumers can find the products on the shelves more easily according to the written brand names printed on the packs.

As long as Mandarin is still the dominant language in education and official governmental system, its high position will remain unchanged in most of the domains. This phenomenon reminds us of Ferguson’s diglossia (2009). The functional distributions of Mandarin and Taiwanese directly contribute to the diglossic situation in TV commercials domain, in which Mandarin is often the H (high) variety and Taiwanese is the L (low) variety.

5.2 Foreign Languages are not Necessarily Prestigious

“English is the most frequently used language in advertising messages in non-English speaking countries.” (Piller, 2003: 175) Moreover, Pennycook (2011) also stressed that globalization is not only about economic processes; it is also political, technological and cultural. English, as the dominant international language in our time, is constantly promoted over other languages.

5.2.1 Foreign languages in elite commercials

Haarmann’s (1989) study on foreign languages used in Japanese TV commercials reveals

that, stereotypes typically associated with English include international appreciation, reliability, high quality, confidence, and practical use. With so many merits, English is expected to be part of the repertoire of the Elite (Sun):

- (4) 光芒四射 的 *light* 來自 內在 的 *light*，養樂多 的 新 選擇，300 *light*。
Guangmang sishe de *light* laizi neizai de *light*, Yangleduo de xin xuanze, sanbai *light*.
(Splendid light comes from the internal light, the new choice of Yakult, 300 light.)
[ML: Mandarin; EL: English]

- (5) 極致美肌，我 最美 的 外衣，Palmer's。
Jizhi meiji, wo zuimei de waiyi. *Palmer's*.
(The ultimate beauty of skin, my most gorgeous outfit, Palmer's.)
[ML: Mandarin; EL: English]

English lexicons used in (4) and (5), i.e. *light* and *Palmer's*, are typical EL (Embedded Language) material, since they only occur in ML (Matrix Language) morphosyntactic frames during code-switching discourse (Myers-Scotton, 1992). What “marked” functions do these English words illustrate? According to Chen’s study on English used in magazine advertisements in Taiwan, some ads targeting Elite with good education and high social status might use certain English words to convey a sense of sophistication and distinctiveness (Chen, 2006). And this is the main impression we get from Sun’s code-switching into English.

In addition to English, both Japanese and Czech are also part of the codes used by the Elite (Sun):

- (6) 我 用 日本 原裝 進口，*Hitachi* 冰箱。
Wo yong Riben yuanzhuang jinkou, *Hitachi* bingxiang.
(I use Hitachi fridge, made in Japan.)
[ML: Mandarin; EL: Japanese]
- (7) 我 喜歡 歐洲 精品，*SUV*，*Škoda Yeti*，驚喜 上市。
Wo xihuan Ouzhou jingpin, *SUV*, *Škoda Yeti*, jingxi shangshi.
(I like European quality goods, SUV, Škoda Yeti, pleasantly available now.)
[ML: Mandarin; EL: English (*SUV*) & Czech (*Škoda Yeti*)]

Both the Japanese word and the Czech word, i.e. *Hitachi* and *Škoda Yeti*, are brand's names and were pronounced very similar to the original languages. In other words, the Elite (Sun) did not show any phonological adaptation to the ML (Mandarin) in pronouncing the Japanese and Czech brand names. According to Myers-Scotton (1992: 31), one form of elite closure is for bilingual elites to pronounce loans as close to the originals as possible. Hence, Sun's way of pronunciation of the brand's names, whether in English (*Palmer's*), Japanese (*Hitachi*) or Czech (*Škoda Yeti*), further highlights her Elite feature and also strengthens the symbolic function of these foreign language codes. The brands' names can be associated with stereotypical cultural values coping with their original languages, i.e. international appreciation for English and good quality or sophistication for Japanese and European language like Czech.

Once again, we observed a linguistic stratification indicating that in the Elite commercial domain, Mandarin might lose its original prestige and become the Low language while other foreign languages, those used by highly developed countries in particular, take over the High language position in the diglossic situation. Figure 1 can illustrate the polyglossic situation:

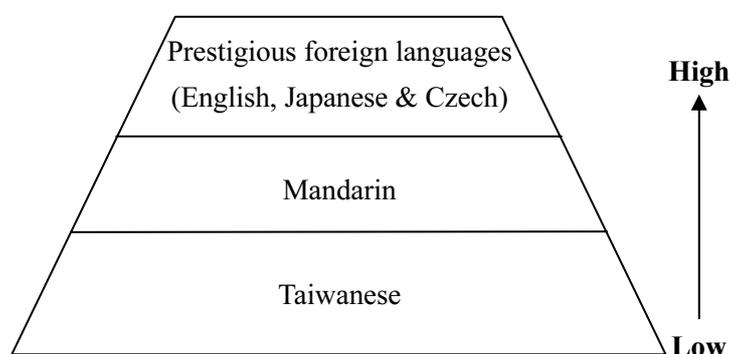


Figure 1: Polyglossic Situation in Taiwan TV Commercials

5.2.2 Foreign languages in non-elite commercials

At first glance, we were quite surprised to see that the Non-Elite (Lin) used English lexicons as part of her codes in all of the five commercials in our data:

- (8) 沒 禮貌，我 以前 也是 *dancer* 呢。
Mei limao, wo yiqian yeshi *dancer neh*.

(You're so rude. You know I was a dancer before!)

[ML: Mandarin; EL: English (*dancer*) & Taiwanese (*neh*)]

- (9) 保養 要做全套 的，喉嚨 也該做做 SPA 了。

Baoyang yao zuo quantao de, houlong ye gai zuozuo SPA le.

(Beauty care should be done completely; my throat also needs a SPA.)

[ML: Mandarin; EL: English]

- (10) 我 攞 揀 這粒 上 天然 的, PAOS。

Gua long king tsit liap siong thian-jian e, PAOS.

(I always choose the most natural one, PAOS.)

[ML: Taiwanese; EL: English]

- (11) 予 你 以柔克剛，喙齒 嬌噹噹，哎啲 *bling bling*。

Hoo li *yiroukegang*, tshui-khi sui-tang-tang, ai-iou *bling bling*.

(Help you combat the hardness with soft tactics, keep your teeth attractive, wow~ bling bling.)

[ML: Taiwanese; EL: Mandarin (*yiroukegang*) & English (*bling bling*)]

- (12) *One* 抹, 油垢 攞 無。 *Two* 抹, 細菌 嘛 無。

One mo, *yougou* long bo. *Two mo*, *xijun* ma bo.

(Wipe once, the grease is gone. Wipe twice, so is gone the bacteria.)

[ML: Taiwanese; EL: English (*one, two*) & Mandarin (*mo, yougou, xijun*)]

Instead of simply associating Lin's English code with "high culture" or "international appreciation", code-mixing strategies adopted in (8)-(12) are quite interesting and puzzling, which deserve a more in-depth analysis.

In (8) to (10), English words, i.e. *dancer*, *SPA* and *PAOS* are pronounced like [ˈdɛnsə], [sɪˈbɑ] and [ˈphau-sɪ], showing a high degree of phonological integration with the ML (Taiwanese or Mandarin). According to Myers-Scotton, the basic difference between CS and borrowing is that the latter tends to become part of the speaker's lexicon which is more readily accessible and tends to be used more frequently. Therefore, frequently used words like *dancer*

and *SPA* in (8)-(9) can be labeled as borrowing since both frequency criterion³ and phonological adaptation criterion are met (Myers-Scotton, 1992).

According to Van Coetsem (1988), the phonological loan may start as an individual usage, and then become more or less generalized, possibly even institutionalized as a group or class-related mannerism. Compared with Sun's authentic-oriented pronunciation of foreign EL forms, Lin's "localized" English EL forms carry extra functions besides its symbolic function associating with the high English culture. As we observed from the data, Lin's stylized English as EL creates a sense of ironic humor in the commercials. With the dramatic inconsistency between her local stance, audience can easily find the sarcasm interpretation of Lin's use of English words such as *SPA* and *dancer*. For instance, in example (9), Lin's character constructed in the commercial is *Yang Guifei*, (楊貴妃, AD 719-756), an imperial concubine in Tang Dynasty. In reality, this character didn't seem to know any English or could be so "globalized"; as a result, Lin's use of the English word *SPA* with her ancient Tang costume and strong local accent create a mismatching but amusing impact of the commercial. According to an on-line marketing analysis of Brainsearch.com (行銷商機網) in 2010, Lin's unique and stylistic performance in the series commercial of Nin Jiom Medicine Manufactory (京都念慈菴) does play a critical role in impressing the audience as well as promoting the products.

Example (11) is a multi-code-mixing case, while Taiwanese is the ML, Mandarin idiomatic expression *yiroukegang* (以柔克剛) and English *bling-bling* are used as EL in this utterance. Here, *bling-bling* belongs to the word category called "ideophone" which is often used to dramatize action or state, and heighten effect (Voeltz & Kilian-Hatz, 2001: 241). It is a new loan word used in mass media in Taiwan recently, means shining and dazzling. Once again, phonological adaptation is shown in Lin's pronunciation of the English lexicon, i.e. [bulɿŋ bulɿŋ] replaced the more authentic [blɿŋ blɿŋ], creating a vivid, amusing and local flavor of Lin's character. With Lin's dramatic acting and the setting in the commercial, most audience have no difficulty in understanding the message conveyed by the code-switched utterances, i.e. the soft toothbrush can effectively make your teeth shining and dazzling.

In (12), Taiwanese is still the ML, providing the syntactic structure in the code-switched utterance while Mandarin and English are used as the EL. According to Shih & Su's (施玉

³ According to Chen (2006), *SPA* is the most frequently used English expression in magazine in Taiwan. In addition, noun phrases such as *SPA*, *pose* and *VIP* are the most common syntactic categorization found in these magazines.

惠、蘇正造) (1995) study on the code mixing of Mandarin in spoken Taiwanese, speakers switch from Taiwanese to Mandarin most often for the sake of effective communication or due to the lack of expressions in the ML. As shown in (12), both *yougou* (grease:油垢) and *xijun* (bacteria:細菌) are pronounced in Mandarin, indicating their association with scientific related message or knowledge, which can be easily inferred by the reality that Mandarin is the predominant language used in schooling for a long period of time.⁴

As for the other EL in (12), i.e. English, *One more* and *two more* underwent an apparent phonological adaptation, along with a morphosyntactic reconstruction based on the intended mapping between the similar sounds of *more* [mɔr] in English and “wipe” [mǒ] in Mandarin.

All in all, in addition to the most addressed function of code-switching, i.e. attention-grabbing, Lin’s unique and stylish way of using English as EL is not as “global” or “prestigious” as generally expected, in fact, according to our observation, her code-switching with English code is strongly humor-oriented and is presented by strategic operations through local accent.

In short, discussions in 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 show that foreign language codes function diversely in Elite and Non-Elite commercials. Their degree of phonological adaptation plays an important role in the interpretation of their social meanings in different contexts. While Sun’s (the Elite) use of foreign languages is prestige-oriented, Lin’s motivation of using English codes is more humor and irony-oriented. As illustrated in Coupland’s discussion on the performance of the Pantomime Dame, “Stylistic operations around accent and dialect are the basic means by which people express class-relevant distinctiveness and relations in their talk.”(Coupland, 2009: 312) In the comparison of Elite and Non-Elite commercials, we found that “How you say it” clearly outranks “What you say” in the use of foreign linguistic codes within the code-switching utterances.

5.3 Mandarin is Dominant but Diverse

Since Mandarin is the official language and the main language of education in Taiwan, it is quite reasonable to be used in all of the commercials discussed in this study. As we observed,

⁴ From 1945 until 1987, the KMT (Nationalist) government enforced its strict Mandarin Language Policy in schools throughout Taiwan, local languages or dialects such as Taiwanese, Hakka and the Aboriginal tongues were banned in educational setting for more than 40 years (李勤岸, 1996).

it is the dominant code used by the Elite (Sun) and frequently code-switched with Taiwanese by the Non-Elite (Lin). However, we also observed that Mandarin is spoken in distinctive ways by the Elite (Sun) and the Non-Elite (Lin).

According to “dialect styling” concept addressed by Coupland & Bishop (2007), accent and dialect are one of the semiotic resources for constructing personal identities, relational configurations and group-level associations. In other words, protagonists in TV commercials can express class-relevant distinctiveness and relations with their strategic operations through accent.

Sun uses standard Mandarin pronunciation all the time to portray an image of graceful, elegant and high-class Elite. Stigmatized features such as de-retroflex sounds like [zh], [ch], [sh] and [r], as shown in Li’s study on Taiwan Mandarin (Li, 1994), were not found in her utterances at all. Contrarily, Lin’s Mandarin with strong local accent is so vivid and interactive, just as if she were chatting or gossiping with the audience as a close friend or a neighbor. If we merely refer to Bourdieu’s argument (1991), “standard” language forms are largely accepted as being “correct” and “authoritative” and they also have high capital value in the linguistic marketplace, we may jump into a rough conclusion that Sun’s “standard Mandarin” must be favored while Lin’s “vernacular Mandarin” must be downgraded. Similarly, if we take CAT (Giles, 2009) into consideration, we may assume that Lin’s local accent is preferred since it can build the solidarity with most of the audience who do not use “standard Mandarin” in their daily practice in Taiwan.

However, as shown in Coupland and Bishop’s large scale survey on British accents (2007), it is true that accent labeled “standard English” was strongly favored by most of the participants, for both prestige and attractiveness. Interestingly, they also found that a voice-type that was labeled as “an accent similar to my own” also attracted an extremely positive profile. Therefore, whether Sun’s “standard accent” or Lin’s “vernacular accent” is favored might largely depend on the audience’s subjective attitude and their habitual language practice. This phenomenon is often discussed in studies on folk linguistics. According to Niedzielski & Preston (1999), folk linguistics can be innocent misunderstandings of language or the bases of prejudice, leading to the development of a variety of social injustices.

In addition, it is also important to know that accommodation can either diminish or enhance social and communicative differences between the interactants. Sometimes,

divergence and non-accommodation can be a positive means of maintaining or even accentuating one's social identity (Giles, 2009). According to Scollon & Scollon (2001), ideologies are largely based on stereotypical thinking and stereotypes are largely ideological. Both Sun's standard Mandarin and Lin's vernacular Mandarin do not necessarily "accommodate" to the speaking ways of the target audience. Instead, we'd rather say that their styles were designed to fit the expectations of the so-called "Elite" and "Non-Elite" stereotypes. In other words, both the Elite (Sun) the Non-Elite (Lin) are "doing" styles when they use certain Mandarin accents in these commercials.

6. Conclusion

In this study, we provide the possible explanations for the code-switching phenomenon in Elite and Non-Elite commercials presented by Aimee Sun and Lin Mei-hsiu. We found a continuum hierarchy of different codes used in contemporary Taiwan commercial domain: Taiwanese as the lowest code followed by Mandarin the intermediate and foreign languages as the highest. Different language codes function diversely in TV commercials, and code-switching practices of the Elite (Sun) and Non-Elite (Lin) illustrate the unequal hierarchy of the diglossic situation in commercial domain, where some codes are highly valued and others are downgraded.

This study also illustrates how linguistic mechanism related to social identity shaping. According to Audience Design Framework (Bell, 1984), "Variation on the style dimension within the speech of a single speaker derives from and echoes the variation which exists between speakers on the 'social' dimension." In other words, just like different products at a certain market are labeled and valued differently, codes used by protagonists representing two distinctive classes also reflect and reinforce the stereotyping of the classes they belong to.

As proposed by Piller (2001: 155), "Contemporary cultural identities are hybrid, complex, and often contradictory, and the media play a crucial role in their reconfiguration." TV commercials, as a powerful tool of identity construction and ideology reproduction, play a crucial role in reinforcing the stereotypes associated with the unequal social stratification, e.g. Elite vs. Non-Elite in this study.

Due to time limitation, only the code-switched utterances of the two protagonists are discussed in this paper. In addition to the code-switching phenomenon, some interesting

puzzles also surfaced in our data without enough investigation. For instance, male voice-overs are found in six out of the 10 commercials functioning as the “master voice”, reading either brand’s name or slogan of the products. Why is only male voice-over found in these commercials? It seems that factors related to gender play an important role in this puzzle.

Besides, written scripts shown in the commercials also illustrate a complicated code-switching phenomenon. How various written symbols are mixed together in certain commercials and what social meanings are associated with them is another question.

Finally, one may wonder why only Taiwanese and Mandarin were represented in our commercial samples, how about other local languages used in Taiwan? Why is it that Hakka and Austronesian languages are completely absent in our data? Does it mean that these commercials are not targeting the audience with Hakka or Austronesian background? Or is it the case that languages other than Mandarin and Taiwanese simply do not occupy enough linguistic capital so as to be heard in this market? This reminds us of the “erasure” process proposed by Irvine & Gal (2000), in which ideology might render some “not-so-fit-in” persons or activities invisible or totally ignored in a community.

Since mass media serves as both mirror and shaper of a society, data collected from TV commercials can provide us with enormous cues for answering these questions.

References

- Auer, P. (1999). *Code-switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Bell, Allan. (1984). Language Style as Audience Design. *Language in Society*, 13, 145-204. (Reprinted 2009 in Coupland, N. & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 265-275). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.)
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1977). The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges. *Social Science Information*, 16, 645-668.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Chen, W. Y. (2006). The Mixing of English in Magazine Advertisements in Taiwan. *World Englishes*, 25, 467-478.
- Coupland, Nikolas. (2009). Dialect Style, Social Class and Metacultural Performance: The Pantomime Dame. In Coupland, N. & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 311-325). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Coupland, Nikolas. & Bishop, Hywel. (2007). Ideologised Values for British Accents. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 11, 74-93.
- Escalas, Jennifer Edson. (1994). African American Vernacular English in Advertising: A Sociolinguistic Study. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 21, 304-309.
- Ferguson, Charles A. (2009). Diglossia. In Coupland, N. & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 447-456). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gal, Susan. (1978). Peasant Men Can't Get Wives: Language Change and Roles in a Bilingual Community. *Language in Society*, 7(1), 1-16.
- Giles, Howard. (2009). The Process of Communication Accommodation. In Coupland, N. & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 276-286). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Government Information Office. (Ed.). (2010). *The Republic of China Yearbook 2010*. (中華民國 2010 年英文年鑑) Taipei: Government Information Office, ROC (Taiwan).
- Haarmann, Harald. (1989). *Symbolic Values of Foreign Language Use: From the Japanese Case to a General Sociolinguistic Perspective*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Holmes, Janet. (1992). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. London: Longman.
- Irvine, Judith T. & Gal, Susan. (2000). Language-Ideological Processes. In P.V. Kroskrity (Ed.), *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities* (pp. 35-79). Santa Fe, New Mexico: School for American Research Press. (Reprinted 2009 in Coupland, N.

- & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 374-377). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.)
- Kachru, B. (1978). Code-mixing as a Communicative Strategy in India. In James E. Alatis (Ed.), *International Dimensions of Bilingual Education* (pp. 107-124). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Labov, William. (1966). *The Social Stratification of New York City*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Labov, William. (1972). The Social Stratification of (r) in New York City Department Stores. In William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (pp. 43-54). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. (Reprinted 2009 in Coupland, N. & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 49-59). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.)
- Li, Ming-chieh. (1994). *A Sociolinguistic Variation Study of Chinese Retroflex Initials /TS/, /TS'/, /S/ in Taiwan*. Master's thesis, Providence University, Taichung.
- Myers-Scotton, Carol. (1992). Comparing Codeswitching and Borrowing. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 13, 19-39.
- Myers-Scotton, Carol. (1993). *Social Motivations for Codeswitching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Niedzielski, Nancy. & Preston, Dennis. (1999). *Folk Linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Pennycook, A. (2011). Global Englishes. In Ruth Wodak, Barbara Johnstone & Paul Kerswill (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Sociolinguistics* (pp. 513-525). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Piller, Ingrid. (2001). Identity Constructions in Multilingual Advertising. *Language in Society*, 20, 153-186.
- Piller, Ingrid. (2003). Advertising as a Site of Language Contact. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 23, 170-183.
- Rau, D. Victoria. (1992). Language Contact in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*, 23, 91-109.
- Rau, D. Victoria. (2000). Phonological Variation and Sound Change in Atayal. *Oceanic Linguistics*, 39, 144-156.
- Rampton, Ben. (2009). Crossing, Ethnicity and Code-Switching. In Coupland, N. & Jaworski A. (Eds.), *The New Sociolinguistics Reader* (pp. 287-298). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scollon, Ron. & Scollon, Suzanne Wong. (2001). *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Van Coetsem, Frans. (1988). *Loan Phonology and the Two Transfer Types in Language Contact*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Voeltz, F. K. Erhard. & Kilian-Hatz, Christa. (Eds.). (2001). *Ideophones*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

林奇伯，2008，〈全台首度品味大調查～九成主管：好品味增加競爭力〉，《遠見雜誌》，第 260 期，頁 170-177。

李勤岸，1996，〈語言政策及台灣獨立(華文)〉，收錄於施正鋒主編，《語言政治與政策》，台北：前衛出版社，頁 135-157。

施玉惠、蘇正造，1995，〈台語說辭中夾用國語詞彙之現象分析〉，收錄於曹逢甫、蔡美慧編，《第一屆台灣語言國際學術研討會論文選集》，台北：文鶴出版社，頁 731-767。

陳麗君，2011，〈台灣大學生的語言意識〉，《台語研究》，第 3 卷第 5 期，頁 4-25。

黃宣範，1993，《語言、社會與族群意識——台灣語言社會學的研究》，台北：文鶴出版社。

錢祐達，2010，〈2010 第一季最夯廣告代言人〉，104 市調中心市調觀點，<http://www.104survey.com/faces/newportal/viewPointCtx.xhtml?researchId=260>，瀏覽日期：2011.06.06。

台灣電視廣告中的語言轉換與身份建構

邱妙津

國立嘉義大學語言中心專案華語講師

國立中正大學語言學研究所博士生

摘 要

本研究探討台灣電視廣告中的語言轉換現象如何反映社會階層差異。藉由分析並比較貴婦代言人（孫芸芸）與非貴婦代言人（林美秀）在廣告中所使用的語言轉換策略，發現廣告中的語言使用具有相當明顯的階級化特性：台語、華語以及強勢外語分別處於低、中、高三種階層。本研究還進一步驗證，廣告中分屬不同階層的代言人所使用的主要語言不但會反映出其自身的階層特性，其轉碼策略的運用更會進一步加深社會大眾對於不同階級的刻板印象。

關鍵字：語言轉換、電視廣告、社會階層、刻板印象、身份建構