

Can We Establish Consumer Cultural Positioning Through Print Advertising in the Developing Markets? A Content Analysis of Advertising in Chinese Women's Magazines

DONG-XIN LI^{*}

*Sejong University
Seoul, Korea*

DONG IL LEE^{**}

*Sejong University
Seoul, Korea*

YONG-KI LEE^{***}

*Sejong University
Seoul, Korea*

MITCH GRIFFIN^{****}

*Bradley University
Peoria, Illinois, USA*

Abstract

This paper conducts a content analysis of a total of 480 advertisements from three popular Chinese women's magazines—*Rayli*, *Fashion Cosmo*, and *Bazaar*—to assess the Consumer Cultural Positioning (CCP) of the ads. The results show that Global CCP is more commonly utilized for brand positioning strategies than Foreign CCP or Local CCP. Five elements of the advertisements—the language used for brand name, the pronunciation of brand name, the intended meaning rooted in original foreign country for brand name, the product's appearance of either utilitarian or symbolic,

* Doctoral Student, Sejong University (lidongxinabc@gmail.com)

** Associate Professor, Sejong University (donlee@sejong.ac.kr)

*** Corresponding Author, Professor, Sejong University (yongki2@sejong.ac.kr)

**** Professor, Bradley University (mg@bradley.edu)

and a modern or westernized advertising appeal for brand positioning—are found to be indeed differentially related to GCCP and FCCP compared to LCCP.

Keywords: Consumer Cultural Positioning (CCP), Brand Name, Product Appearance, Advertising Appeal

INTRODUCTION

Advertisers constantly pursue strategies designed to attract attention to their communication efforts to distinguish their product from competing products with the hope of influencing purchases and brand positioning. In recent years, a wealth of literature has increased our understanding of cross-cultural differences in advertising content (Abernethy and Franke 1996). The cultural context of an ad may reflect several issues, including lifestyles, demographic characteristics, and/or values. One particularly compelling method of distinguishing a product is through the consumer cultural positioning for marketing communications. Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra (1999) recognize consumer culture positioning as an accepted marketing strategy and identified three classifications: GCCP (Global Consumer Cultural Positioning), FCCP (Foreign Consumer Cultural Positioning), and LCCP (Local Consumer Culture Positioning). This conceptualization of GCCP should not be confused with globally standardized advertising (cf. Duncan and Ramaprasad 1995), which entails the use of similar content around the world. While GCCP and FCCP can both be employed in a standardized advertising campaign, it is also possible that a manager may position the brand using GCCP in one national market, FCCP in a second, and LCCP in a third. Thus, while GCCP may be used in standardized advertising, we view it as a distinct construct. In other words, a GCCP may be communicated somewhat differently in each market (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 1999).

In addition to strategic orientation, advertising may differ across cultural contexts due to implementation issues. For example, the media selection and media habits differ from country to country and limitations exist due to the technical quality or capability of delivery to the required audience (Jones 2000). Based on the China Advertising Yearbook (1996), advertising media in China are conventionally divided into five categories: newspapers, magazines,

radio, television, and outdoors. In most countries, television is the most important medium for emotional communication, since it combines visual and verbal stimuli. However, while Bradley et al. (2004) report 75% of respondents feel television is an important and influential form of media, 61% feel magazines are also relatively important. As Schudson (1984: 13) puts it, the promotional culture of magazine advertising has worked its way into “what we read, what we care about, the ways we raise our children, our ideas of right and wrong conduct, our attribution of significance to ‘image’ in both public and private life.” Thus, magazine advertising offers a significant opportunity for marketers, as this is highly accepted by consumers and provides substantial influence. At the same time, this medium also requires fewer financial resources.

Due to the large market size in China and the high cost associated with advertising, magazines are a particularly effective media to reach certain target markets. To target Chinese women through magazine advertising, global companies should consider not only the gender aspects of advertising, but also the design of specific campaigns in a particular cultural context (Yin 1999). In other words, international companies may need to investigate how to advertise in a more effective way within a Chinese cultural context and, in particular, what kinds of effective elements should be considered to explore market dynamics when designing advertisements to appeal to Chinese consumers.

This study is intended to bring these issues together and to provide an initial look into the cultural aspects of magazine advertising in China. Specifically, we examine the three classifications of cultural positioning across the top three famous Chinese women magazines, *Rayli*, *Fashion Cosmo*, and *Bazaar*, in a content analysis. The study is designed to provide background regarding the characteristics of Chinese women and print advertising and a basic understanding of global, foreign, and local customer cultural positioning. We offer a general model of the relationship among five advertisement elements and the three cultural positions. In the end, we draw a conclusion about the effectiveness of the five elements in establishing the CCPs and offer implications for marketing practitioners and discuss the limitations of the study and the opportunities for future research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Since late 1979, the “opening door policy” has been carried out in the east-southern cities of China and was widely promoted in the eastern coastal regions as an economic development strategy beginning in 1984. To a certain extent, such a policy appears to be an effective strategy for developing relations with the outside world and a boost to economic development (Lull 1991). In China, this policy has lured more foreign capital into the region and helped to create a prosperous economy in recent years. In fact, China has been allowing a large number of direct imports of western technology and managerial skills into China and places a high priority on foreign investments, mainly through joint ventures in the country. With the economic expansion and growing presence of foreign businesses, advertising in China has experienced a corresponding sustained growth in the past decade. Just as many consumers take their lead from advertisements in regard to their consumption preferences (Britt 1974); Chinese consumers are positive and optimistic about advertising’s economic and social advantages and consequences (Pollay, Tse, and Wang 1990). U.S. and Japanese advertising agencies, therefore, have tried to enter the Chinese market either to serve their present clients that have expanded into China, or to pursue new opportunities with local firms. However, they have sometimes struggled to develop effective advertising campaigns due to the large cultural differences between America or other developed countries and China.

Cross-cultural research has highlighted the importance of culture in understanding consumer responses to advertising and identified key cultural dimensions discerning differences across countries (Taylor, Miracle, and Wilson 1997). Mahima and Puja (2008) consider culture difference is an important factor influencing the buying behavior. As McCracken (1986: 75) notes, “Advertising is a conduit through which meaning constantly pours from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods.” To bring the cultural world and goods together in a “special harmony” is an important goal of advertising. Hofstede (1983) provides perhaps the best known classification schema illustrating how national cultures can be differentiated on several dimensions. Of particular relevance to effectiveness of advertising, Western cultures are often said to

reflect low-context communication patterns, while Eastern cultures exhibit high-context styles (Kim, Pan and Park 1998). China, the context under investigation here, is categorized as a collectivist culture with a high-context communication style, while the United States, home of many of the advertising agencies, represents an individualistic culture with a low context communication pattern (De Mooij 1998; Hofstede 1984).

Chinese Women and Advertising

Along with the rapid changes in the social and economic environment, the Chinese government has progressively implemented policies to encourage equality between sexes. With the help of government reform policies in employment, education, and social activities, the role of women in China has changed drastically in the past two decades. Women now pursue their own value in society and responsibility in the economics of family life. As Barnes et al. (2004) suggest, Chinese women experience a mixture of features—some are the result of the adherence to traditional cultural traits, while others stem from modern-world tendencies. Today, they stand at the crossroad of the old moral standard and the changes brought by modern thinking. On the one hand, they obtain great pleasure from their new power to make decisions regarding their appearance and roles; while on the other hand, they experience great anxiety and a pressure to maintain the status quo (Afshar 1991).

McDermott and Choi (1997) discuss interesting psychographic characteristics of urban Chinese consumers, claiming they are optimistic about the future, positively disposed to trying new products, and represent sophisticated consumers who make well-informed purchases. The researchers also suggested that such characteristics highlight choices that must be made and their implications for international marketers working in China. They argue that advertisers not only need to develop advertisements that can provide customers with sufficient information concerning the product or service, but also that they need to portray through their advertisements how Chinese customers will obtain value in terms of their purchases. Despite recent western influences, Chinese advertisements often retain characteristics of the consensual, gentle, and family-oriented tradition (Yan 2000).

As a result, global companies offering products and services targeted toward Chinese women should consider not only the gender aspects of advertising, but also the design of the specific brand positioning in the particular cultural context. Thus, advertisers need to consider not only the psychology of Chinese women, their current social surroundings, and the styles they are more likely to consume, but also try to find out what modern Chinese women desire in their daily life. They must consider which elements of their promotional effort in different mediums influence consumer cultural positioning. Magazine advertising is clearly one of the important marketing elements, and arguably an effective one, that can be used by companies to make their brands known to the market (Barnes et al. 2004). In the current study, we limit our focus to this format as represented in Chinese women's magazines.

Global, Foreign, and Local Consumer Cultural Positioning

Regardless of the location, consumers grow up in a particular culture and become accustomed to that culture's value system, beliefs, and perception processes. The value of relationships with customers is emphasized in the area of either brand assets or brand equity for the important role in brand promotion (Lim 1995). Consequently, consumers often respond best to advertising messages that are congruent with their culture (Boddewyn, Soehl, and Picard 1986; Buzzell 1968; Harris 1984; Hornik 1980). Thus a thorough understanding of cultural differences is often considered a prerequisite for successful international advertising, and those that best understand and can reflect the values of that culture are rewarded (Keegan 1989).

While consumer cultural positioning is not a new concept for market managers, the issue of what constitutes a local and a foreign product category or brand from a consumer's perspective is complex. Recent trends in globalization afford marketing managers new opportunities (Roth 1995) as well as exposing them to related threats. One such opportunity is the emergence of global consumer segments (Dawar and Parker 1994; Hassan and Katsanis 1994) that associate similar meanings with across places, people, and things (Caudle 1994). Paralleling the growth of global segments is the identification of global consumer cultures—shared sets of consumption-related symbols (product categories, brands,

consumption activities, and so forth) that are meaningful to segment members (Terpstra and David 1991). Building on the emergence of globally shared meanings, this study presents a branding positioning strategy designed to assist international managers who seek to strengthen their brand's equity in an increasingly competitive marketplace (Aaker 1991; Kapferer 1992).

With the development of globalization and the rapid diffusion of technology, international marketers and advertisers have come to different conclusions about the best way to achieve success in terms of advertising campaigns. Here, we focus on the three strategies of consumer cultural positioning originally proposed by Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra (1999). The first strategy is Global Consumer Culture Positioning (GCCP), in which the brand is associated with a global culture. For example, the Chinese corporation Haier uses spokespeople who are both Chinese and foreign to emphasize its global competitiveness. The second is Foreign Consumer Culture Positioning (FCCP), defined as a strategy that positions the brand as symbolic of a specific foreign consumer culture. That is, a brand whose personality, use occasion, and/or user group are associated with a culture outside of the marketing context. For example, Gucci is positioned in the United States as a prestigious and fashionable Italian product. The third is Local Consumer Culture Positioning (LCCP), defined as a strategy that associates the brand with local cultural meanings, reflects the local culture's norms, is portrayed as consumed by local people in the national culture, and/or is depicted as locally produced for local people. An example of this is one of the most famous Chinese wines, Wuliangye, promoting its original small-town Chinese culture in Chinese magazine advertising.

In this study, we adopt a content analysis (e.g., Al-Olayan and Karande 2000; Nelson and Paek 2007; Strickland, Finn, and Lambert 1982) to investigate the effectiveness of five advertising elements on establishing the global-foreign-local positioning. More specifically, we examine the relationship between the (1) language used for the brand name, (2) pronunciation of the brand name, (3) intended meaning of the brand name, (4) product's appearance in the ad (e.g., Creusen and Schoormans 2005), and (5) advertising appeal (e.g., Zhang and Gelb 1996) and the three culture positioning approaches. The empirical approach of a content analysis enables the researcher to test the effectiveness of every element across the approaches to positioning. The proposed model is as follows:

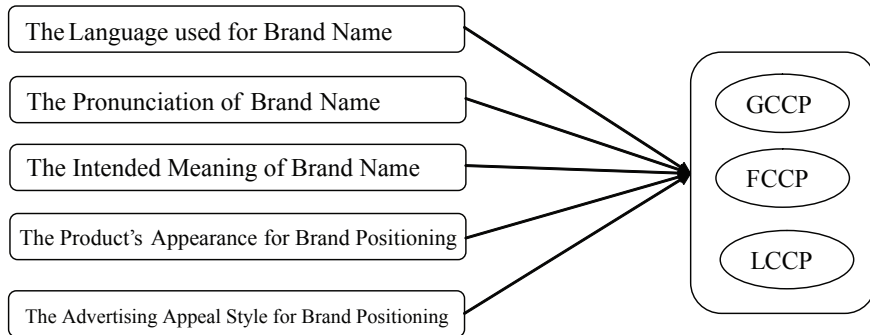


Figure 1. Hypothesized Model of the Effectiveness of Five Elements to GCCP, FCCP AND LCCP

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Language Used for Brand Name and CCP

Strong brand-self connections can create autobiographical memories, personalized meanings, and consumer trust to brand (Park, Macinnis, and Priester 2006). Viewing advertising as information to be processed by the consumer recognizes the fact that, like any source of information, ads are a very complex stimulus. Although pictorial stimuli are a major component of much print advertising, print ads are often heavily verbal with substantial copy (Harris et al. 1986). The language(s) selected for the headings and copy of a global magazine advertisement varies according to the extent to which it is localized. In many cases, it is mostly translated directly from the original copy into the local language without regard for local nuance. Since English is the most spoken second language and is also considered the standard for global advertisers (De Mooij 2005), it is the most frequently used language for global consumer cultural positioning. Language translation and adaptation has been widely discussed in most international marketing textbooks (e.g., Terpstra and Sarathy 1997). Aside from the translation errors that may occur, a change of the original brand name into a localized name, which may be more suitable for the target market, could improve communication with customers. As a result, changing the name may enable product attributes to blend in with local culture

(Hite and Fraser 1988).

Despite its prevalence, in countries where English is not the first language print advertisements are rarely completely written in English. While the consumers may speak English as a second language, their knowledge of English is often only superficial in many countries (De Mooij 2005). As a result, certain prominent parts (e.g. headlines, subheads, and slogans) of an advertisement are likely to employ English language, while other parts (e.g. body copy) are often written in the local language (Nelson and Paek 2007). Mueller (1987) found that the brand name in a global magazine standardized form most often occurred in English. This is the case in China, as print ads commonly present the brand name in English with Chinese translation mixed in. In the case of some French brands, the brand name is written in French, while the central theme is communicated in Chinese, English, or both. Therefore, it may be the case that some countries are more accepting of English than other languages and a review of possible country-level factors is presented next.

Applying this research and observations to the three approaches to consumer culture positioning in China, we can conclude that an advertisement that is completely in Chinese shows the advertiser's attempt to accommodate for localization. Certainly they are aware that such an advertisement will have only a limited impact on people who do not understand the Chinese language. To use a combination of English or another foreign language along with Chinese, may be perceived as an attempt at globalization, but less so than the first case. In this case, the ad may be considered an attempt at foreign global positioning. Even within the set of mixed-language ads, there may be variation based on the actual application of the differing languages. For example, advertisements primarily in English with Chinese translation following may be perceived as a stronger attempt to globalize the brand than advertisements primarily in Chinese with English translation following. In this case, casual reader may focus mainly on the large print rather than the translated section following. Finally, an advertisement that is completely in English (or another foreign language), all other factors held constant, should be perceived as the least possible accommodating effort on the part of the advertiser, or a global positioning approach (Koslow, Shamdasani, and Touchstone 1994). We propose the first hypothesis as follows:

H1: Compared to Chinese language, using the original foreign language in an ad has more positive effectiveness to GCCP and FCCP than LCCP.

Pronunciation and Intended Meaning of Brand Name and CCP

Aaker (1991) stresses the importance of selecting a brand name for a new product, as an effective brand name can enhance awareness and create a favorable image of the product. Klink (2000) extends this idea by suggesting that marketers also need to pay attention to the way a brand name sounds, especially when introducing products in foreign markets. This linguistic component of the brand name directly affects the function of brand names (Chan and Huang 1997). Previous research suggests the concept of sound symbolism – in this case, that the sounds comprising a brand name infer qualities of the product or service. However, academic research has largely neglected to empirically investigate the application of sound symbolism in the marketing field. It is apparent that sound symbolism may prove especially valuable when creating brand names for international products and directly affect the brand's cultural positioning. In Klink's work, the "suggestiveness" of a brand name is contingent on the customers' language abilities. For example, customers with little or no proficiency in English will not appreciate the intended meaning from brand names used in the battery market such as Energizer, Eveready, or Die Hard. Conversely, the ability to project meaning through the brand sound may be less bound by language and more effective in establishing a global consumer cultural position. Research has shown the impact of a brand name's pronunciation on cultural stereotypes and that brand names with easy pronunciation may be more effective in foreign markets (Bao, Shao, and Rivers 2008).

Klink (2000) traces the idea of linking sound with meaning back to ancient Greek philosophy. While China is a country with a language and sounds that differ substantially from that spoken in western countries, translating brand names into Chinese is often essential. In addition, advertisers in China are constantly trying to select words and names with certain meanings (Chan and Huang 1997), but often struggle due to the complexities of the local language. For Chinese-speaking markets, meaningful names that are easy-to-pronounce are vital for generating awareness and

attention. Separate from the linguistic aspect of the brand name, the perceived origin and respect derived from world-famous names can strongly influence Chinese consumers (Bradley et al. 2004). As the Chinese marketplace evolves, organizations need to determine if a translation is appropriate for marketing international brands, such as the luxury cosmetics brands that try to appeal to Chinese women consumers.

While the Chinese language is substantially different from most languages, research indicates Chinese women may prefer original brand names to a localized one (Bradley et al. 2004). The use of the original pronunciation of the brand in magazine ads may teach customers how to pronounce the original name and promote global consistency. Conversely, a company could decide to utilize the literal translation of the name if it provides a strong positive meaning and the pronunciation is suitable for the Chinese language and customs. In this case, the translation process could focus more on the sound than on the meaning. The more convenient and pleasant the pronunciation, the more often consumers will say the word, increasing awareness and brand recognition (Bradley et al. 2004).

In the current study, the pronunciation and the intended meaning of a brand name can relate directly to the consumer cultural positioning strategy. In general, if the local country language is used for the brand name, it is likely to be perceived as local consumer cultural positioning. On the other hand, if a foreign language name is used the brand will be considered a foreign or global consumer cultural language positioning. We propose the second and third hypotheses as follows:

H2: Compared to using the Chinese pronunciation of brand name, using the original foreign language pronunciation of brand name for brand positioning in an ad has a more positive effectiveness to FCCP than GCCP and LCCP.

H3: Compared to using a brand name with local Chinese meaning, using a brand name with meaning rooted in the original foreign country has more positive effect to FCCP than GCCP and LCCP.

The Product Appearance and CCP

Meaning can be attached to a product or brand on based on

many elements. Commonly recognized influences include country of origin, image of the brand or manufacturer, and characteristics of the user (i.e., age, education, social status, etc.). However, physical characteristics of the product itself also communicate symbolic value in a more direct manner—by the products physical appearance. Creusen and Schoormans (2005) propose product appearance, rather than product design, as an important attribute since the design of a product also refers to product parts that consumers cannot see (i.e., the interior of the product). The appearance of a product influences consumer preference and product choice (Bloch 1995), and appearance has been recognized as an opportunity for differential advantage in the marketplace (Pilditch 1976). Thus the current research considers the appearance of the product in advertisements, such as shape color, or size of product appearance in ads, and the relationship with consumer cultural positioning.

Creusen and Schoormans (2005) propose six roles of products, but here we focus on two—the utilitarian and symbolic value for brand positioning in ads. The utilitarian function of a product can often be directly observed from its appearance and usually refers to the quality of product. Knowledgeable and interested consumers will be able assess the value of most technical product functions. The symbolic meaning can be attached not only to the physical aspects, but also to the peripheral aspects, such as country of origin, the brand image, or characteristics of the target market. The appearance of a product may have differing importance and yield different impressions based on the cultural perspective of the consumer. For example, in America and Europe, the color white generally stands for cleanliness and purity, and brides traditionally dress in white. Therefore white is a common color for many products and is found to be appealing to consumers. In contrast, Chinese people do not usually prefer white for product appearance, instead displaying a preference for red or gold due to the associated meanings of nobility and luck.

In magazine advertisements, the picture of the product is very important. One practical example is the Kiss-Kiss lipstick advertisements that appeared on Rayli May 2007. This ad features a very beautiful image of the face of a sexually appealing western girl with a magic smile, who is wearing a simple white silk dress. In the advertisement, the white dress and red lipstick is prominently contrasted, which yields a strong symbolic message. We propose the

fourth hypothesis as follows:

H4: Compared to using product appearance to create utilitarian value, using product appearance to create symbolic value for brand positioning in an ad has more positive effect to GCCP and FCCP than LCCP.

The Advertising Appeal and CCP

In a broad sense, the advertising appeal is any message designed to motivate the consumer to purchase. Risk-relatedness products such as tobacco are promoted in ads with an appeal directly related to its risk (e.g., teenage smoking prevention, cancer) (Kim, Kim, and Han 2005). To motivate a consumer's action, the appeal needs to establish a connection with the consumer's interests, wants, goals, or problems. In magazine advertisements, the appeal(s) is typically presented in the headline and illustration. An advertisement may contain more than one appeal; however, the majority of advertisements tend to contain a single dominant appeal.

Different cultures seem to emphasize different advertising appeals. Mueller (1987) specifies that cultural values, norms, and characteristics are typically embedded in advertising appeals, but are used in differing degrees in various cultures. For example, Hong, Muderisoglu, and Zinkhan (1987) report Japanese ads contain more emotional appeals and fewer comparative appeals than American ads. In China, advertisements have been found to contain more utilitarian appeals and focus on state of being and the promise of a better life (Tse, Belk, and Zhou 1989).

Mueller (1987), reflecting on prevalent Chinese values and norms, suggests two common advertising appeals - traditional and modern (westernized). The traditional appeal generally includes a reference to group consensus, a soft-sell approach, respect for the elderly, and status. Such appeals connect with the Chinese conception of social status and the concept of being at one with nature. The soft-sell appeal projects a specific mood or atmosphere through a beautiful scene, complemented with an emotional story. The veneration of the elderly stresses the honor and wisdom of the elderly and an appreciation for tradition. Models in such advertisements tend to be older. Status appeal refers to the use of a particular product in an ad to improve some inherent quality of the user in the eyes of others. This

approach may use foreign status as an appeal, represented by foreign words, phrases, models, and foreign celebrity endorsement.

As for a westernized appeal, one would expect to find individualism and independence, hard-sell appeals, the attraction of youth and modernity, appeals to a product's merit, and themes revolving around the manipulation of nature. Individualism and independence appeals emphasize the distinctiveness of the advertisement's subject; that he or she is unlike anyone else. Hard-sell appeals have a sales orientation emphasizing the brand name and its associated product recommendations. Youth and modernity appeals include examples of the deification of the youth and feature younger models. They stress the contemporary and suggest the youthful benefits of the products. Product merit appeals focus on the product and its characteristics, stressing features of the product in depth. The benefit to the consumer is secondary or implied. We propose the fifth hypothesis as follows:

H5: Compared to using the advertising copies with traditional appeal, using a modern or westernized appeal for brand positioning in an ad has more positive effect to GCCP than FCCP and LCCP.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

To conduct the content analysis, advertisements from *Rayli*, *Fashion Cosmo*, and *Bazaar*, the three most popular comprehensive women magazines in China were examined (Baidu 2007). These magazines target mainly Chinese women from ages 18 to 45. Each magazine contained at least twenty types of advertisements to women, featuring fashion clothing, make-up and cosmetics, perfume, handbags, wristwatches, shoes, belts, sunglasses, diamonds, necklaces, earrings, rings, mobile phones, cameras, computers, food, and tourist destinations.

The magazines used in the study were widely distributed and were purchased in small, local retail shops. We chose monthly publications for a period of one year (May 2007 to May 2008) for this study, and the unit of analysis was restricted to full-page

print ads. Duplicate advertisements for the same brand were discarded from the database of this study. Advertisements for the same brand, but differing in content by over 50%, remained in the sample. To guarantee the diversity of advertisements, brands, product origin, and product category were referenced while selecting the advertisements. In total, 480 ads were chosen for analysis, consisting of 178 ads from Rayli, 164 from Fashion Cosmo, and 138 from Bazaar.

Coding Procedures and Measures

Following the procedure used by Cheng (1994), three Chinese graduate students, majoring in marketing management and knowledgeable in cross-cultural issues and consumer-cultural positioning, were selected and trained as coders to perform the content research. The coders are native Chinese individuals studying in Korea and each is proficient in English, Korean, and/or Japanese in addition to their native language. The multilingual skills are useful for an understanding of the pronunciation and the spelling of the brand name and to correctly identify the foreign culture.

Before commencing the research, the coders received extensive training about the purpose of this study, the latest information regarding the Chinese women magazine market, and instructions on how to identify the characteristics of the three different CCP. Following the training, 20 advertisements were chosen for a practice exercise where the coders performed the contextual analysis. The results of this practice exercise were reviewed by the research principals and to insure the advertisements were correctly categorized according to the three cultural positions and the real meaning of every element. The results indicated a high level of inter-rater reliability and provided evidence that the coders were qualified to conduct the larger study.

During the actual coding task, scaled-response questions were used to measure the degree of each of the eight elements that contributed to the identification of CCP. The students were given prepared questionnaires with detailed definitions about consumer cultural positioning and instructed to identify the elements that will influence the determination of the ad's consumer cultural positioning. The first step required the coders to categorize every

advertisement, based on the entirety of the elements within the ad, as belonging to LCCP, FCCP, or GCCP. This task required providing a code of “L” for an advertisement if they reflected their own native culture by using Chinese to depict the brand name in China; an “F” if they represented another particular, identifiable culture (such as using an image of the French countryside) in the Chinese advertisement; or a “G” if they represented a cultural element that was not associated with a single country, being neither local nor foreign. The second step was to rate the 5 elements incorporated in the research hypotheses in regard to the degree to which each element contributed to the identification of each ad’s consumer cultural positioning. This section included six five-point semantic differential scales to measure the extent to the advertisement employed three classification of CCP. Specifically, these scales were captured “the language used for brand name,” “the degree the brand name used the language in item 1” (anchored by all Chinese or all foreign language), “the pronunciation of brand name” (anchored by Chinese pronunciation or foreign language pronunciation), “the intended meaning of brand name” (anchored by local Chinese meaning or original country meaning), “the product’s appearance in the ads” (anchored with utilitarian value or symbolic value), and “advertising appeal” (anchored by traditional or modern/westernized).

The 480 ads were shown to the coders at the same time, but they worked independently. In order to reduce the effects of fatigue, coding was restricted to six hours a day with breaks after every hour.

The Empirical Results

In the first procedure, crosstabs were conducted in order to test the English language usage in LCCP, FCCP, and GCCP (see Table 1). Table 1 shows that GCCP (278, 57.9%) is used most often, followed by LCCP (114, 23.8%) and then FCCP (88, 18.3%) in these Chinese women magazines. Overall, 277 ads of GCCP (99.6%), 88 ads of FCCP (100%), and 87 ads of LCCP (76.3%) use English or English mixed with translation in another language for the brand name in Chinese women magazine advertisements, supporting H1.

In the second procedure, to measure the influence of the five elements on the consumer cultural positioning of the

Table 1. Results of Crosstabs for English Language Using in LCCP, FCCP AND GCCP

			English		Total
			Not Used	Used	
CCP	LCCP	Frequency	27	87	114
		CCP (%)	23.7%	76.3%	100.0%
		English (%)	96.4%	19.2%	23.8%
		Total (%)	5.6%	18.1%	23.8%
	FCCP	Frequency	0	88	88
		CCP (%)	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		English (%)	.0%	19.5%	18.3%
		Total (%)	.0%	18.3%	18.3%
	GCCP	Frequency	1	277	278
		CCP (%)	.4%	99.6%	100.0%
		English (%)	3.6%	61.3%	57.9%
		Total (%)	.2%	57.7%	57.9%
Total		Frequency	28	452	480
		CCP (%)	5.8%	94.2%	100.0%
		English (%)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Total (%)	5.8%	94.2%	100.0%

Note: Here in this data matrix, the classification of LCCP, FCCP and GCCP are rows and the language used for brand name is column.

advertisements, we used logistic regression analysis for validation. Peng and So (2002) claim that logistic regression is well suited for establishing the relationship between a categorical or qualitative outcome variable and one or more predictor variables. In the current study, the logistic regression model¹⁾:

$$\text{Predicted logit (lfp} = 1) = \alpha + \beta_1 * bl + \beta_2 * bp + \beta_3 * bm + \beta_4 * pa + \beta_5 * ap + \epsilon$$

As shown in Table 2, the logistic regression model was fit to determine the predicted odds of the five elements influencing the advertisement classification as LCCP, FCCP and GCCP. All predictors are significant at the .05 level.

1) Note: bl = the language for brand name (average scale: 4.35); bp = the pronunciation of brand name (average scale: 4.19); bm = the intended meaning of brand name (average scale: 3.85); pa = the product’s appearance in the ads (average scale: 3.68); ap = advertising appeals (average scale: 2.85)

Table 2. Model Fitting Information in Logistic Regression Analysis

Model	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	721.365			
Final	451.538	269.827	10.000	0.000

Table 3. Results of FCCP and GCCP with LCCP being the Reference Category In Logistic Regression Analysis

		B	Wald	df	Sig.
FCCP	The language used for brand name	0.732	11.053	1	0.001
	The pronunciation of brand name	0.887	13.116	1	0.000
	The intended meaning of brand name	0.452	5.116	1	0.024
	The product's appearance for brand positioning	0.629	14.704	1	0.000
	The advertising appeal style for brand positioning	0.440	12.373	1	0.000
	Constant	-11.951	62.652	1	0.000
GCCP	The language used for brand name	0.648	18.689	1	0.000
	The pronunciation of brand name	0.618	12.147	1	0.000
	The intended meaning of brand name	0.331	4.043	1	0.044
	The product's appearance for brand positioning	0.821	33.500	1	0.000
	The advertising appeal style for brand positioning	0.324	8.614	1	0.003
	Constant	-9.044	75.064	1	0.000

a The reference category is: LCCP

Note: N = 480. LCCP ads sample = 114; FCCP ads sample = 88; GCCP ads sample = 278. B = parameter estimated. Wald = Wald chi-square, which suggests regression coefficient divided by standard error. df = degree of freedom. Sig. = level of significance.

Since the dependent measure (LCCP/FCCP/GCCP) is ternary, so we used multinomial logistic regression for further analysis. Two analyses were conducted, the first multinomial logistic regression used the five elements as covariates with "LCCP" designated as the reference group, while the second analysis used "FCCP" designated as the reference group. The results of these two analyses are presented in Table 3 and Table 4, respectively.

Table 4. Results of LCCP AND GCCP with FCCP being the Reference Category in Logistic Regression Analysis

		B	Wald	df	Sig.
LCCP	The language used for brand name	-0.732	11.053	1	0.001
	The pronunciation of brand name	-0.887	13.116	1	0.000
	The intended meaning of brand name	-0.452	5.116	1	0.024
	The product's appearance for brand positioning	-0.629	14.704	1	0.000
	The advertising appeal style for brand positioning	-0.440	12.373	1	0.000
	Constant	11.951	62.652	1	0.000
GCCP	The language used for brand name	-0.085	0.178	1	0.673
	The pronunciation of brand name	-0.269	1.699	1	0.192
	The intended meaning of brand name	-0.122	0.673	1	0.412
	The product's appearance for brand positioning	0.192	2.749	1	0.097
	The advertising appeal style for brand positioning	-0.117	2.196	1	0.138
	Constant	2.906	5.134	1	0.023

a The reference category is: FCCP

Note: N = 480. LCCP ads sample = 114; FCCP ads sample = 88; GCCP ads sample = 278. B = parameter estimated. Wald = Wald chi-square, which suggests regression coefficient divided by standard error. df = degree of freedom. Sig. = level of significance.

Table 3 displays the results of the multinomial logistic regression with “LCCP” designated as the reference group. This analysis shows that statistically significant differences exist both between LCCP and FCCP and between LCCP and GCCP. The results provide support that the five elements present in LCCP advertisements are significantly different from those in FCCP and in GCCP. The B value in the table represents the effectiveness of the five elements of advertisement employed in LCCP, FCCP, and GCCP. Comparing LCCP with FCCP, the pronunciation of brand name has the highest B value (0.887), which means that element most positively affects categorization of the ad as FCCP. Subsequently, the language used for brand name (B = 0.732), the product's appearance for brand positioning (B = 0.629), the intended meaning of brand name (B = 0.452), and the advertising appeal style for brand positioning (B = 0.440) all, in order of magnitude, significantly affect the

classification of advertisements as FCCP. Comparing LCCP with GCCP, the product's appearance for brand positioning in ads has the highest B value (0.821). Subsequently, the language used for brand name (B = 0.648), the pronunciation of brand name (B = 0.618), the intended meaning of brand name (B = 0.331) and the advertising appeal style for brand positioning (B = 0.324) effect the classification of advertisement as GCCP.

The results in Table 4 complement those in Table 3 by adding a comparison of classification between FCCP and GCCP (the comparison of FCCP with LCCP is the mirror image of the comparison of LCCP with FCCP presented in Table 3). However, no significant differences are found across the five elements and the classification as FCCP and GCCP. This infers that although the coders could distinguish among FCCP and GCCP advertisements, this distinction was not based on the five elements included in our study.

H1 states that compared to the native Chinese language, using the original foreign language (especially English), for the brand name results in a perception of GCCP and FCCP, rather than LCCP. According to the B values from Tables 3 and 4, the language used for brand name in LCCP (B = -0.732), FCCP (B = 0.732) and GCCP (B = 0.648), the result shows that English language is used most in GCCP and FCCP, while Chinese local language is used most for LCCP. Therefore, H1 has been supported by the data.

H2 proposes that using the original foreign language pronunciation of brand name (as compared to using a Chinese pronunciation) for brand positioning in an ad is more positively related to FCCP than either GCCP or LCCP. The relevant B values for LCCP (B = -0.887), FCCP (B = 0.887) and GCCP (B = 0.618) support this proposition. However, there is a minimal difference between the impact on FCCP and GCCP on this element. As to the intended meaning of brand name (H3), the B values for LCCP (B = -0.452), FCCP (B = 0.452) and GCCP (B = 0.331) tend to supported H3. So, compared to using a brand name with local Chinese meaning, using a brand name with meaning rooted in the original foreign country has more positive effect to FCCP than GCCP and LCCP. Again, however, there is no significant difference on this factor between FCCB and GCCB.

H4 states that compared to using the product appearance with utilitarian value, using the product appearance with symbolic value for brand positioning in an ad has more positive effect to GCCP and

FCCP than LCCP. We can see from the B value in LCCP ($B = -0.629$), FCCP ($B = 0.629$) and GCCP ($B=0.821$) that the data supports H4. In other words, advertisement that appears more local in China use product appearance with utilitarian value rather than symbolic value. Finally, H5 stated that as compared to using advertising copies with traditional appeal, using a modern or westernized appeal for brand positioning in an ad has more positive effect to GCCP than FCCP and LCCP. According to the B values in LCCP ($B = -0.440$), FCCP ($B = 0.440$) and GCCP ($B = 0.324$), this proposition is partially supported. GCCP is more responsive to western appeal than LCCP, but there is no difference between the impact on GCCP and FCCP.

DISCUSSION

The research has, for the most part, established that the elements of a magazine print ad examined here factors investigated here contribute to the perception of that add as creating a Global Consumer Cultural Position, a Foreign Consumer Cultural Position, or a Local Consumer Culture Position. First, the decision to use the Chinese language, English, another foreign language, or a mix of languages that is both Chinese and another foreign language for the brand name clearly has an impact on the cultural positioning (Lee 2006). To make a product perceived as localized in China, marketers are better served to use a local, unrelated Chinese name, rather than its original foreign name or a translated name. Ha (2009) suggested images relate to brand associations held in a customer's memory can enhance consumer's positive attitude and behavior to brand. To project the image of a global or foreign product, using the original or translated name is effective; that aims to increase Chinese consumers' satisfaction and brand loyalty. If a translated name is used, its original pronunciation should be used as well as information to guide audiences how to pronounce the original name, to promote global consistency. Marketers need to be aware that even when the pronunciation has been translated into Chinese, it still has a foreign meaning. This helps those exposed to the advertisement to know it is a global consumer positioning or foreign consumer positioning as distinguished from the local brand with the original Chinese meaning.

Second, the local pronunciation of a product name will be closely

related to perceptions of local consumer cultural positioning, while a foreign pronunciation of a brand name can designate foreign consumer cultural positioning or global consumer positioning. For example, DIOR uses a French pronunciation for foreign consumer cultural positioning; it gives consumers an impression that they are receiving the original France product when they purchase the DIOR brand. Mirabela (2008) claims that advertising language often uses the techniques similar to those in poetic texts, utilizing mnemonic devices (rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and assonance) so those exposed will better remember the text and recall it at the right time.

Third, the research shows that an advertisement featuring a brand name with a local Chinese meaning is more likely to create a perception of a local product. Conversely, one with a meaning rooted in the original country may be considered to be foreign consumer cultural positioning or global consumer cultural positioning. When creating a brand meaning, it is important to incorporate that product's own background and connotative meaning and associations (Mirabela 2008).

Fourth, when choosing the product's appearance, marketers must decide between the symbolic value for global and foreign cultural positioning and one with utilitarian value which represents a local product in China. As a result, a brand emphasizing great quality will be more likely to be considered local culture positioning, while a brand with extensive symbolism will be considered more global.

Fifth, if a westernized appeal is used for advertising positioning, a product is likely to be viewed as more global positioning. The desire for cosmopolitanism and the associated status created has a strong appeal to many younger consumers in China. Contrary to the westernized appeal, the traditional appeal is often used for local consumer cultural positioning. This approach is suitable for many highly desired goods such as medicines, health supplements, foods, and non-alcoholic beverages. This appeal also reflects the marketer's appreciation of Chinese consumers' deep-rooted cultural heritage and their conscious or unconscious efforts to maintain a collective Chinese identity in a rapidly changing market dominated by western consumer culture.

IMPLICATIONS and LIMITATIONS

The concept of global marketing, based on the assumption the same product can be sold everywhere with the same or similar promotion appeals, is supported by many researchers (Mueller 1986). Nonetheless, no matter how much and advertisers try, they cannot ignore the cultural difference rooted in a country that may affect consumer attitudes and behaviors in their daily life. This is certainly true in the culturally rich country of China. As an initial test of the culture-based brand-positioning concept grounded in semiotics theory, the results of this study are encouraging. As marketing activities globalize, most of the focus of the international marketing tends to be on strategies for global companies and brands at the expense of local companies and brands. However, a local appeal might better serve some products and markets. The results of this study may be useful to organizations needing to reach women consumers in a Chinese cultural context. Specifically, the study demonstrates the market dynamics associated with five elements in an advertisement intended to appeal to Chinese consumers. Therefore, market implications can be summarized in three points.

First, due to the high costs associated with advertising, the research findings should help international companies optimize their advertising spending in order to efficiently and effectively appeal to female consumers of women's magazines in China. Second, as the advertising standards and approaches in the Chinese market are changing, advertising of foreign products and foreign commercial techniques is becoming easier in terms of defining consumer cultural positioning. Third, at some future date, a marketing manager could determine whether a shift to GCCP/FCCP, or possibly to LCCP, is warranted. The results here can help with effectively deploying such a strategic change.

Certainly the research has certain limitations. First, perhaps the broadest issue revolves around the approach taken in the study. The current research used a deductive logic approach – assuming the overall impression of the advertisement leads to the assessment of the cultural positioning. Then, the relationship among the individual elements of the advertisement and the positioning categorization was determined. An inductive approach may be equally valid, whereby individual elements are evaluated and then the broader

cultural positioning determined. Certainly future research with this approach could prove fruitful. Second, the study is also somewhat restricted in terms of its sample size, the limited number of coders, and the number of elements considered. With limited ability to determine which individual advertising elements discriminate between GCCP and FCCP, it is apparent that a study incorporating different advertising elements is warranted. For example, elements such as the physical appearance of spokespersons, celebrity status of spokesperson, race of spokesperson, skin color of spokesperson, expression of spokesperson, symbol of the brand logo, background color used for advertisements, material used for product, style of background designed for advertisement, and so forth may all be worthy areas of investigation. Nonetheless, we believe the current study provides considerable insight and a solid foundation for further research regarding consumer cultural positioning.

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