

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO

“Behind every great  
Christmas there’s  
mum”

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Gender in food advertising in modern  
Britain

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## 1 Introduction

Despite all the effort, work, progress and passing of time, gender inequality still exists today. Women and men face different social expectations from the day they are born. The society around us creates the rules and norms for women and men on how to behave, act and speak. The characteristics of femininity and masculinity vary from one culture to another but what remains as a constant is that women and men are seen as different and usually as opposites.

Gender differences in language have been studied by scholars from the mid eighteenth century but the field started to blossom when Robin Lakoff published her controversial study *Language and Woman's place* in 1975. It supported the general claims about female inferiority in language: the language men use is the norm and women are the deviants. These claims got feminists fuming and they lead to numerous following sociolinguistic studies about the gender differences in language. But even long before these scholarly works folk-linguistic proverbs about women's verbosity and inferiority have existed in different cultures and languages around the world. Generalisations of gender differences in language have even become stereotypes, which people recognise and feel familiar with.

In 2011 it was estimated that in Britain the average viewer sees approximately 47 television advertisements per day, with the number constantly growing (Daily Mail online, 2011). Many of us find advertisements annoying and do not pay much attention to them. Despite of this, television reaches vast audiences and is watched by all kinds of people. Television advertisements combine sight, sound and motion and are therefore said to be the most effective type of advertising (Hermerén, 1999: 14). Advertising industry uses language very creatively and provides an excellent discourse to study.

Both, the concepts of femininity and masculinity and language in general, have been studied in the context of advertising but not much focus has been put on in the combination of these two i.e. in studying how gendered the advertising language is. For example, Aronovsky and Furnham (2008) and Furnham and Bitar (1993) have studied gender stereotypes in advertisements exhaustively from various aspects but

have not analysed the language used in them. Hence, in this thesis I will investigate whether the stereotypical gender differences appear in the language used in modern day British food related supermarket advertising. Or more precisely analyse if the characters in advertisements use the characteristic “women’s talk” and “men’s talk”.

Food related advertisements offer a good test-case for gendered language in advertisements since food is a somewhat neutral subject: everyone needs to eat. Despite the seeming neutrality, the domestic duties related to food, all the way from purchasing the food to preparing it, have been highly stereotyped regarding to gender. Each gender is assigned with roles that are stereotypically suitable for them.

We are currently living in the times where gender equality is a hot topic. It might feel like we are in a turning point where men seem to participate more in the household chores such as cooking and grocery shopping but a recent Global Trends Survey shows that 70 per cent of British women in relationships are still the ones in charge of kitchen and food shopping (The Independent, 2014). Therefore, it is intriguing to investigate whether this stereotypical gender role division in the domestic kitchen duties exists in the messages the advertising industry wants to send us.

My data comprises a total of 36 video advertisements of four of the biggest supermarket chains in Britain (Asda, The Co-Operative food, Morrison’s and Tesco). All the advertisements promote food and all show real people talking. I will present some scholarly studies done on gender differences in English language and introduce the most occurring, analysed and debated characteristics of gendered language: the generalisations of the so called “women’s talk” and “men’s talk”. Then, I will investigate whether these characteristics can be found in the language the characters use in the advertisements. My study is done from a multimodal point of view where I will not only analyse the discourses in the advertisements but also take the contextual features, such as settings, characters and topics, into account when investigating whether the traditional gender roles are applicable.

The data is approached and analysed by answering the following research questions:

1. How does the language women and men use in modern day British supermarket food advertising differ?
2. Can the language in them be analysed by using gender characteristics?

3. Are women and men portrayed in different settings and do they talk about different topics?
4. How are the stereotypically traditional gender roles visible in the advertisements?

In the analysis I will discuss my main research questions by analysing four linguistic and four contextual gender generalisations more closely. The linguistic features include the claims that men use more humour than women, women ask more questions, women give non-scientific arguments whereas men give scientific ones and finally that women and men talk about different topics. The four contextual stereotypes studied are as follows: women are portrayed in dependant roles, men are pictured as being independent, women are responsible for domestic duties and children, and they are often mostly pictured at home whereas men are seen in leisure, and lastly that it is women who also do the grocery shopping.

Chapter two focuses on advertising with a weight on demonstrating how and what kind of gender role stereotypes advertisements portray and how marketers influence our perception of genders. In chapter three I will summarise some of the studies done on gender differences in language and list the most common generalisations which will be analysed from the data. In chapter four I will introduce the data used in this study and what kind of methods were used to analyse it. Chapter five presents all the findings and they will be further discussed in chapter six. Chapter seven will conclude this study by summarising the major findings and give suggestions for further studies.

## **2 Advertising**

Advertising is ubiquitous. Yet, many do not willingly pay attention to it: it is considered as a “peripheral creation” (Cook, 2001: 1). Television reaches the biggest audience out of all the mass media vehicles and it is watched by all kinds of people (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 297). Television advertisements combine sight, sound and motion and are therefore said to be the most effective type of advertising (Hermerén, 1999: 14). In Britain people watched television just over four hours a day in 2013 (BBC News, 2013). In 2011 it was estimated that during these four hours the average viewer sees approximately 47 advertisements, with the number constantly growing

(Daily Mail online, 2011). The purpose of advertisements is to attract attention and persuade (Rossi, 2003: 30). Advertisements often provoke controversy (Cook, 2001: 200). The aim of one particular brand is to appear as superior in comparison to its competitors (Hermerén, 1999: 158). Advertising is the most efficient tool for making products known to a large consumer audience (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 170).

This chapter will give an introduction to the world of advertising in the light of advertising language. First, an account of how advertisements are understood is given followed by an introduction of the nature of the language used in advertisements. The rest of the chapter will discuss how gender and gender stereotypes appear in advertising with an emphasis on food advertisements.

Advertising industry is known for strengthening and reproducing gender stereotypes (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 297). Advertisements tell us what kind of representations of female and male figures attract attention during certain times in the history. They show us other people and make us wonder how we present ourselves to others and how we are seen from the outside. In other words, advertisements make us mirror our own gender identities to the ones we see onscreen (Rossi, 2003: 47). Researchers have had a special interest in children's acquisition of understanding what gender is from advertisements and television in general (Mackinnon, 2003: 88, Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 298). The consensus seems to be that heavy television watching increases sexist attitudes (Mackinnon, 2003: 88). But also, conversely, the media can teach children gender-neutral attitudes and behaviour (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 308).

## **2.1 Interpreting advertisements**

Advertisements are all about "reading between the lines" (Hermerén, 1999: 150). On the surface, they are said to carry three kinds of messages: "the linguistic message, the coded iconic message and the non-coded iconic message" (Barthes, 1984b cited in Tanaka, 2001: 1-2). The coded message means the symbolic and cultural connotations and the non-coded messages are the perceptual and literal messages the advertisement has. The distinction of these two is not always clear and often the messages overlap (Tanaka, 2001: 2).

Television advertising is not just about investigating the words but everything that is visible to the eye. Visual studies focus on how advertisements are outcoded by



consumers (Rossi, 2003: 15). Outcoding means how consumers understand what the advertisement is trying to say or what its meaning is. The job of the creators of advertisements is to incode the intended message in the advertisement. However, it is no longer assumed that consumers automatically outcode the exact same meaning from the advertisements that has been incoded in them. But instead, modern advertisements tend to have more and more multiple messages in them as well as multiple ways to interpret them (Rossi, 2003: 15). To understand the meaning or the message of an advertisement is not only about simply incoding but also about inferencing it (Cameron, 2006: 35). Incoding advertisements is highly culture-bind. The viewer is also a creator, forming their own meanings and ways to interpret advertisements according to their own personal history, view of the world and attitudes (Rossi, 2003: 15).

## **2.2 Language and advertising**

Allan Bell's (1991: 1) opening credits in his work are: "People in Western countries probably hear more language from the media than they do directly from the lips of their fellow humans in conversation". Media are the main forum which generates and presents language to societies and it is widely and easily accessible (Bell, 1991: 3). Together with news, advertising industry are the biggest genres of the mass media (Bell, 1991: 135). While some argue that advertisements are only a cultural phenomenon, careful preparation and crafting is put into creating a piece of advertisement. The language in them has even been said to be as skilful as a sonnet or a poem (Bell, 1991: 135). Many of us find it easier to recall the words of advertisements than those of literature (Cook, 2001: 3). Advertising is its own genre that mixes and employs many other genres, and it also has its own peculiar way to use language (Cook, 2001: 9-12).

Researchers agree that the goal of advertisers is to persuade and influence (Tanaka, 2001: 36). In television advertisements they need to do this in a short time. The language advertisers use enforces these aims. In order to engage the audience, the language that appears in advertisements has to include something that needs a little extra processing and thus, more focused attention on the advertisement (Tanaka, 2001: 82). Metaphors, figures of speech, puns, jokes, ambiguity and humour in general all require this extra work from the hearer. Therefore, advertisers heavily

favour them. Hermerén adds proverbs, sayings, aphorisms, maxims, catchphrases, clichés and allusions to the previous list (1999: 97). The advantage of these ambiguous linguistic devices is that they are able to carry multiple meanings within a single word or phrase (Tanaka, 2001: 104). In return, the audience feels pleasure and satisfaction after solving the ambiguous message in an advertisement and hence might link positive feelings with what is being advertised (Tanaka, 2001: 82). Sometimes the advertisers want to give the audience a tough nut to crack and require a vast “encyclopaedic knowledge, extension on context and considerable imaginative effort” from them (Tanaka, 2001: 106). Using hypertextuality is another way to challenge the viewers (Hermerén, 1999: 102).

Television advertisements usually combine pictures, music, writing and speech (Cook, 2001: 42). One of the striking linguistic tools advertisers use, is the use of foreign language and different dialects (Bell, 1991: 136). Pronouns are highly favoured by advertisers, especially the use of second person pronoun ‘you’ which is used ubiquitously, usually to address the person behind the television screen (Cook, 2001: 157). Analogies compare things and hence make concepts easier to comprehend. Advertisers use analogies to convey messages which might be otherwise difficult or abstract to understand (Hermerén, 1999: 141). The same could be said about metaphors. The use of connotations, “the vague association which a word may have for a whole speech community or for groups or individuals within it”, is a much-exploited strategy in advertisements (Cook, 2001: 105). Connotations add something to the literal meaning of the message or distract from it. Various patternings of sounds, rhymes, rhythms and prosodies, are another tool which attract attention (Hermerén, 1999: 119, Cook, 2001: 125). They make advertisements sound pleasant and catchy and make them easier to stick in the viewer’s mind.

Advertisements often include narrative voices or voice-overs, to use the correct jargon. In Britain there has been a tendency to use male voice-overs more often than females. Furnham and Farragher (2001, cited in Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 172) showed that voice-overs were male in 81% of the time. Mackinnon (2003: 92) offers an explanation that lies in the general male authoritativeness and convincingness. This cultural construction helps to understand why male voices are used as an authoritative figure even in advertisements clearly addressed to women. In

comparison, whereas men are usually heard, women are shown visually (Furnham & Mak, 1999: 431).

Advertisers always have a target market they want to reach. By acknowledging their audience they can design and assimilate their speech for their hearers. This stylistic choice is called *audience design* (Bell, 1991: 105). Advertisers are hence communicating to the consumers with their own language and shifting their linguistic style to fit the consumer's style. This could provide an explanation for why gendered language choices are made and that advertisers are conscious about their decisions when creating dialogues to advertisements. By using typical "women's talk" and "men's talk" advertisers can influence on the consumers by using the language that is familiar to them, if assumed that women and men do speak differently. *Synthetic personalisation* is a similar technique used in advertisements and it works by addressing the consumers as if the character in the advertisements was their "old friend", a celebrity or a fellow consumer (Hermerén, 1999: 40). Synthetic personalisation is visible in the data and will be discussed in chapter 6.6

One way which advertisers try to make advertisements seem more interactive is by asking questions (Hermerén, 1999: 49). The types of questions have been categorised in three groups: yes/no-questions, rhetorical questions and tag questions (Hermerén, 1999: 49-51). The answer may be told in the advertisement or it may be left to answer by the viewer. Either or, questions engage the viewer, arouse their curiosity or try to manipulate their attitudes and beliefs (Hermerén, 1999: 51-69). Questions are one of the linguistic features studied in this thesis by using Hermerén's method.

The nature of the relationship between an advertiser and the audience is often characterised as being weak: they have low level of trust and little co-operation (Tanaka, 2001: 36). Because the addresser and the addressee are usually physically apart, advertising tends to be one-way communication (Hermerén, 1999: 31). This lack of trust leads to a problematic situation from the advertisers point of view: it is hard for them to be convincing when the consumer knows that the marketer is saying something only because they want them to buy their product (Tanaka, 2001: 40). Marketers therefore need to make the consumers try to ignore and forget the fact that they are trying to sell them something (Tanaka, 2001: 43). In order to influence their audience despite their distrust, advertisers use various communication strategies. One

of these strategies is 'covert communication': "a case of communication where the intention of the speaker is to alter the cognitive environment of the hearer" (Tanaka, 2001: 41). This strategy, where the communicator uses various non-linguistic features, often creates reactions and boosts sales, and is therefore regularly employed by advertisers (Tanaka, 2001: 36). Sex and food are typical examples of these features which arouse the audience's curiosity and are widely seen in advertisements (Tanaka, 2001: 41). By using covert communication advertisers avoid taking responsibility from what the audience might interpret from their message (Tanaka, 2001: 44). Sometimes advertisers even use features that have nothing to do with their overt message only to draw consumers' attention (Cook, 1992: 225).

### **2.2.1 Humour**

Humour is one of the most used strategies when the advertisers try to overcome their audience's distrust (Tanaka, 2001: 59). Humour forces the audience to do more processing when seeing an advertisement and therefore engages their attention effectively (Tanaka, 2001:64). Drawing and holding consumers' attention is the main intention of advertising. It has been suggested that humour is used British advertising more often than in any other European countries (Tanaka, 2001: 62). The Oxford English Dictionary Online (2014) defines humour as follows: "with reference to action, speech, writing, etc.: the quality of being amusing, the capacity to elicit laughter or amusement. Also: comical or amusing writing, performance, etc.". Ambiguity, irony and sarcasm are essential parts of jokes, metaphors, puns and word plays. But a joke or a pun is successful only if the audience can interpret the advertiser's intended communication (Tanaka, 2001: 61). Context and cultural knowledge play significant roles in incoding humour. Tanaka (2001: 65-81) elaborates that puns are used in advertising in four different ways: (1) nonsense puns, where the initial meaning has to be rejected in order to find another interpretation for it, (2) puns that require understanding the context it is showed in in order to incode the humour, (3) the use of puns to covertly communicate sexual innuendo and lastly (4) puns that carry more than one meaning.

Eisend, Plagemann and Sollwedel (2014) conducted a study investigating the link between humour and gender stereotypes in German advertisements. They found that advertisers use stereotypes at least in two ways as a source of humour: depicting

women and men in non-traditional gender roles and exaggerating traditional ones (2014: 257). Their findings also strengthen previous findings, which have demonstrated that “traditional female stereotyping occurs in nonhumorous ads, whereas traditional male stereotyping occurs more often in humorous ads” (2014: 260). Another study found that advertisers portray reversal gender roles only through humour (Furnham & Mak, 1999: 434). Humour, when used together with stereotypes, draws consumers attention away from the negative connotations stereotypes might have and leads them to focus on the positive feelings humour invokes (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 262).

Consumers themselves want advertisements to be entertaining and amusing (Cook, 1992: 225). Humour creates positive associations towards a brand or a product (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 268). In advertisements humour is produced more often by men than women, but humour has been shown to attract women more than men (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 269). This has been explained with evolutionary biology: men need to need impress women in order to mate and one way to achieve this is by being amusing (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 263). Women like men who make them laugh and men like women who laugh at their jokes (Bressler, Martin & Balshine, 2006, cited in Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 262). Humour requires verbal creativity and implies of good conversational skills (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 263). Humour plays a major role in advertisements and at the same time it is also a highly gendered quality. Bearing in mind these previous findings, humour will be analysed extensively in this study.

### **2.3 Gendered advertising**

Advertisements that use human characters are always gendered advertising. It has been suggested that advertisements are as influential as they are because of easily recognisable gender portrayals (Rossi, 2003: 11). This again demonstrates how patterned and well established traditional gender roles are. Although some studies have proven that there has been a reduction in the volume that advertisements portray gender stereotypes it cannot be said for them to have completely disappeared at all (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 170). In an essay for *The Guardian*, Judith Williamson (2003) explains that people should not expect advertisements to portray

an accurate picture of reality. She argues that sexism still exists in advertisements but it is veiled with irony, humour and metaphors. Advertisements “still keep women in their place” (Williamson, 2003).

Aronovsky and Furnham (2008: 186) criticise that when analysing stereotypes in advertisements it is precarious to say which one, the advertisement industry or the consumers, has the power over gender stereotypes. It may be that that the media’s power over consumers is overemphasised and as a consequence people’s ability to understand and judge gender stereotypes in advertisements is underestimated. They continue to say that it is still obscure whether marketers continue to portray stereotypic gender roles because they want to maintain the male dominance in societies or because stereotypical characters are “used to communicate a highly condensed message” (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 187). They conclude their study by stating that only by investigating advertisements it is not possible to define a causal relationship between advertisements and social behaviour.

Advertisements go through strict regulations before they can be aired to the public. In Britain this organisation is called the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). The ASA analyses advertisements before releasing them and also deal with complaints from the public and demand the producers to adjust or even delete their advertisements if they have breached the national code of practice (Cameron, 2006: 32). The ASA has a category called “Portrayal of women and men” which receives annually about 500 complaints. Studies have shown that women find advertisements sexist more often than men (Wolin, 2003: 117). “Portrayal of women and men” carries out large-scale surveys to ask the public what they find appropriate and inappropriate when portraying women and men and then create their censorship standards according to the surveys. Cameron (2006: 33-34) adds that “portrayal of women and men” category deals with a vast number of other things than only gender issues, mainly sex and ‘taste and decency’. And therefore the lines between gender, sex and sexism have become blurred. Since the mid 1990’s there has been a considerable growth in the complaints about men being portrayed as sexual objects and also about homosexuals.

### 2.3.1 Gender role stereotypes

Like language, the visual aspect of television advertising is responsible for the ideological representation of female and male (Rossi, 2003: 19). Advertising has been studied vastly from gender and feminist aspects. It has been said that advertising is a vital part of our social reality and a part of the process where we learn to understand and define gender (Rossi, 2003: 22). In that sense, advertising plays an immense part in how the society wants us to perceive genders and furthermore our own gender identities. The feminist studies have criticised advertising industry for exaggerating and over sexualising genders (Rossi, 2003: 23).

Throughout the times women have been seen as physical, sexual objects. But these days advertisements intimidate not only women's but men's self-images too. Being masculine now creates the same kind of pressures and anxieties than aiming to be feminine has created for centuries (Talbot, 2010: 157). Before, masculinity was considered as a natural extension of being male: so predictable and biologically given that men did not need to be aware of 'performing masculinity' (Mackinnon, 2003: 14). Now, however, boys learn from a young age that masculinity is something desirable and highly valued and should therefore be achieved (Talbot, 2010: 159).

A typical masculine man is dominant, both at home and in the workplace, the "breadwinner". He is work-oriented, protective (uses violence if needed), brave and in control (Talbot, 2010: 159-63). He has big muscles and a strong jaw, he is tall, athletic and charismatic. He is firm, outspoken and does not show emotions. But most of all, a masculine man is a hetero (Talbot, 2010: 169). Gendered advertising usually portrays heterosexualism as the desirable and natural state. Advertisements often display 'hypermasculinity' where all these masculine features are taken to extreme resulting in machismo (Mackinnon, 2003: 5).

In the 1970's a new concept of a more feminine, domesticated man, the "new man", was first introduced as an alternative version of masculinity (Mackinnon, 2003: 13, Rossi, 2003: 88). Softer, more passive men started to appear in advertisements whereas before a feminine man was a taboo (Rossi, 2003: 88). Qualities that traditionally were only linked to women were now visible in men. The new man is less sexist and less dominant. He pays attention to his appearance. He shows

emotions and is nurturing (Mackinnon, 2003: 14, Rossi: 89). The importance of fatherhood started to be in the focus. Men were now being put in the "women's classical roles" (Rossi, 2003: 88). Alongside with these positive qualities the new man has said to be "manipulative, submissive and an object" (Rossi, 2003: 88) as well as "passive, dependent, and weak" (Rossi, 2003: 89). When stepping into the domestic side, a man is stripped down of his independence and power. The nurturing man is seen as stupid and emasculated (Mackinnon, 2003: 90). With the new man comes the concept of "masculinity in crisis" where the stereotypical male role is under assault (Coates, 2003: 193-194).

The ideal feminine woman has been somewhat same since the 1960's (Rossi, 2003: 36-42). Talbot (2010: 159) elaborates femininity is something that has to be worked at. "It is not just a natural consequence of being female". In order to be feminine a woman should be beautiful, thin, have long legs and a long hair, but be otherwise almost hairless. She should take great care of her appearance, apply make-up and smile all the time. She should act modest, coy and have an interest to please others. A feminine woman should most of all be sexy, curvy and have big breasts. A feminine woman is flawless. She is not ordinary because being ordinary is the same as being ugly and unattractive (Rossi, 2003: 43). A feminine woman is also a mother and a wife who enjoys being in the kitchen and doing all the household duties. She cares for the children as well as for her husband. It has even been argued that caring for home and family is an innate quality in women, but rarely in men (Parkin, 2007: 16). Consumption of some form is also highly linked with being feminine (Talbot, 2010: 137).

Women who manifest masculine features are usually viewed in a negative way and can be described in offensive terms like "domineering", "aggressive", "witch" (Fishman, 1983 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 109), whereas men with feminine features are viewed positively. Men who present 'soft' versions of masculinity are considered less oppressive (Mackinnon, 2003: 14). They are said to be gentle, caring, sympathetic and approachable.

The previous descriptions portray the stereotypical, or even clichéd, conceptions of women and men. They represent the opposite ends of the scale. These are not, as it has been proven, applicable in real life. Men work as nurses and stay-at-home dads



and women are heads of corporations. Not to even talk about the individuality of our appearances. Women are not always smaller in size than men, or less hairy. Changes towards equality and tolerance happen constantly.

Advertising research has found some tendencies in depicting genders that reappear in advertisements (Manstead & McCulloch, 1981, Furnham & Voli, 1989, Furnham & Bitar, 1993, Furnham & Mak, 1999, Rossi, 2003, Wolin, 2003, Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008, Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014). The findings are surprisingly similar all over the world (Furnham & Mak, 1999). Women are usually portrayed as being younger than men and they play the role of a married person more often than men (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 298). Men are depicted more in professional contexts whereas women are seen at home unemployed or having traditional feminine occupations. Even though women are indicated as being in sole charge of cooking they are hardly ever seen as professional chefs in advertisements, but men are (Parkin, 2007: 131). Men are also depicted as independent, intelligent product experts whereas women are dependent product buyers who are worried about the social aspects of purchasing a product (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 299). Furthermore, women and men advertise different types of products; women advertise mainly domestic products (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 300). Women are seen alone or with the company of children more often than men, who are portrayed often in all-male or mixed group of people (Furnham & Bitar, 1993: 308). On the grounds of these findings it could be hypothesised that also language in advertisements follows gender stereotypical conventions.

Advertising does not only portray how we should act as an individual representing either of the genders but also how we should position ourselves with other people. One category that has remained in advertisements for long is the portrait of the ideal family (Rossi, 2003: 130). It is the natural institution that we should all aim to be part of and admire. The ideal family is not just any family but a white family that represents the natural, biological, heterosexual entity – a household in which everyone has their predetermined gender positions (Rossi, 2003: 131). Throughout the times, it has been the white, elite men who have had the control of the advertising industry and the images and ideologies they want people to adopt (Parkin, 2007: 12).

In 1990's a shift towards breaking the gender stereotypes can be seen in advertising (Mackinnon, 2003: 88). Advertisements started to ridicule traditional gender roles and use provocation and paradoxicality as a strategic marketing scheme. Men were no longer presented only as authoritative, dominant and untouchable: they were now being made fun of and pictured as sexual objects. Mackinnon (2003: 98) argues that this change of roles is perhaps not because women have gained more power and equality, both social and economic, but because men have joined women in powerlessness.

Today, advertisements can turn the stereotypical gender roles upside down: women are successful and their husbands are stay-at-home dads (Williamson, 2003). Researchers have found that advertisements portray more and more women and men in non-stereotyped gender roles with both being professionals and sharing household duties (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 171). Wolin's (2003) large-scale overview of advertising research also indicates a decrease in stereotyping. The term 'superwoman' (Jaffe & Berger, 1994 cited in Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 171) was introduced to portray the women in advertisements who juggle both the traditional and modern roles. These findings will be reflected when analysing the data to see if they are evident here.

However, despite the changes in gender equality, women are still portrayed comparatively more in dependant roles (mothers, wives) in advertisements than men (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 171). Williamson (2003) has introduced the term "retro-sexism" which is a stylistic phenomenon where the advertising industry masks overtly sexist settings using the 1960's nostalgic style where the traditional gender roles prevail. "The grosser the sexism, the more "retro" it now seems" (Williamson, 2003). Moreover, "even when women are doing exactly the same jobs as men, it may not be acceptable for women to do them in the same ways" (Cameron, 2007a: 131).

### **2.3.2 Gender in food advertising**

"Food is not inherently 'masculine' or 'feminine' yet it is historically promoted in distinctly gendered terms" (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 173). Health, and therefore nutritional matters or more simply food, is linked with femininity even if eating as such is not gendered (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 173). Bordo (1993,

cited in Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 173) demonstrated that advertisements convey that food is a “female offering of love” and therefore in order to be well-fed, a man should have a woman who cooks and nurtures for him. Parkin’s entire book (2007) is dedicated to how women, food and love are entangled together. Advertisements have always shown women trying to satisfy their husband’s needs while men have judged their efforts (Parkin, 2007: 128). Other studies have found food to be considered as gendered: tea is perceived as feminine and coffee masculine, and meat is male-related while cakes are connected to women (Parkin, 2007: 188).

Studies have documented that women are shown with children in television advertisements more often than men (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 174). Evidence has also been found that children can powerfully affect their parents’ buying habits (Zuppa, Morton and Mehta, 2003 cited in Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008). In addition, advertisers constantly address young girls in their advertisements to ensure loyal customers in the future (Parkin, 2007: 10).

Aronovsky and Furnham (2008) conducted a study on gender in British food advertising where many of their findings supported previous claims about gender stereotypes. Overall, women are the characters in food-related advertisements more frequently than men. Their results indicate that women are seen in the domestic setting with children or at the supermarket more often, and men are usually pictured in leisure settings. They also noticed the same as previous researchers: women are pictured in advertisements as product-users or buyers whereas men are shown as product experts with factual knowledge and authority (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 172). This can indicate that men are still cooking and buying food less frequently than women. Men are more likely to give factual or ‘scientific’ arguments of the products in the advertisements and women express their preferences and give ‘non’scientific’ arguments or no arguments of any sort.

The advertising industry needs to attract the attention of a vast amount of heterogeneous public. Therefore, they need to portray many varieties of femininities and masculinities depending on their target audience and their conceptions of gender representations (Mackinnon, 2003: 93). In food advertising this means that marketers may have to work with existing gender stereotypes by taking them to the extremities since food does not exhibit clear gender bias (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 173). It

has also been claimed that advertisers use stereotypes in order target and interest either female or male audiences (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 173). Aronovsky and Furnham (2008) have studied the effect of the time of the day in how food-related advertisements are being targeted in Britain. They documented that food advertisements are more often targeted to women during daytime since that is the time when an average housewife stays at home.

Aronovsky and Furnham's (2008) findings lay the foundation for the claims about the stereotypical gender portrayals in advertising that are studied in this data set. The findings from the data will be paralleled with previous findings in advertising research, and similarities and differences will be analysed.

### **2.3.3 Gender targeted advertising**

Audience, i.e., consumers is the most researched component of mass communication (Bell, 1991: 84). Ironically, the communicators still do not have a clear picture of what kind of audience they actually reach (Bell, 1991: 88). Advertisers do, however, have a target audience they aim and want to reach and please. Gender is one of the biggest segment markets that advertisers use. Gender, however, should only be the first cut and then re-segmented again (Moss, 2009: 187).

In the UK the income of women has increased drastically in the recent decades (Moss, 2009: 9). In 2006 it was estimated that women spend 83 pence out of every pound spent by consumers (Moss, 2009: 10). Studies have shown that women are the primary decision makers when purchasing household products such as food (Moss, 2009: 12). It has even been predicted that "women will be the primary purchasers of almost every good and service" (Tingley & Robert, 1999: 111, cited in Moss, 2009: 21). However, many studies have indicated that women themselves feel that advertisers do not understand their needs and are disappointed with how women are portrayed (Moss, 2009: 39). This is a straight reflection of the people employed by the UK's advertising industry: only 15% of the executives and art directors etc. i.e., the people on top, are women (Moss, 2009: 194). This creates a paradox between the fact that advertising industry, who try to sell products, is male-dominated and the consumers, who buy the products, are female-dominated. In many studies it has been noticed that stereotyping exist more in advertisements targeted to male-audience than

female (Wolin, 2003: 113). “Women in female-targeted advertisements have usually not achieved the physical attractiveness that is part of the male fantasy of female” (Mackinnon, 2006: 98).

Women and consumerism have a long mutual history. As wives and mothers women have been, and still are, in charge of the shopping for the family (Talbot, 2010: 138, The Independent, 2014). Women are responsible for the domestic duties and taking care (feeding and clothing) of their men and children (Talbot, 2010: 160). The most earliest types of “magazines” in the early nineteenth century were aimed at aristocratic women and they contained advice on managing the household. For financial reasons these magazines quickly came filled with advertisements. And from there gendered advertising has rapidly grown (Talbot, 2010: 139-140). Women today still make the largest segment market (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 170) and they buy products easier than men and are therefore an easier target market (Parkin, 2004 cited in Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008).

Men have been increasingly taken part in consumerism in the past few decades. In Britain the first lifestyle magazines aimed for men were published in the 1980’s and opened up the mass advertising targeted for men (Talbot, 2010: 155). Earlier on the magazines aimed for men were either pornographic or hobby-related. Advertising industry has spent an enormous amount of effort into targeting “feminine” commodities to men (Talbot, 2010: 156). Food and household product advertising, which started as only focused for women, is now trying to appeal to men as well.

Aronovsky & Furnham (2008) found that that the three most dominating reasons why consumers buy certain products are pleasure, money and quality, in respective order. Marketers know that women appreciate aesthetics and men technicality and therefore they take different approaches when advertising to women and men (Moss, 2009: 38-39). Women prefer bright colours and patterns and men dark shades and geometrical shapes (Moss, 2009: 121). Marketers also know to portray men in competitive situations and women surrounded with harmonious relationships (Moss, 2009: 88). Other studies have shown that women can process more verbal and non-verbal cues in advertisements whereas men prefer simpler advertisements that have one or two features (Moss, 2009: 88). Because women and men use different processing strategies also when processing advertisements with stereotypes, they

react to them differently (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014). Stereotypes usually portray women less favourably and therefore they notice them and respond to them easier than men.

With numerous studies done on gender and marketing, advertisers could potentially fully reflect their customer's individual preferences, in theory at least (Moss, 2009: 173). The failure to respond to customer's needs is said to derive from not understanding the demographics of their target market and ignoring all the scholarly studies done on the matter. Keeping all the previously mentioned details in mind, it would seem that marketers do have a clear picture on how they want to advertise to women and men and how they want to portray them. Wolin (2003: 124-125) raised questions about the marketers' perception of gender and how they make the decisions on how they choose to portray gender. She speculated what is the effect of the gender of the advertisement producer (or producing team) on the outcome and questioned whether the producers are aware of what they are creating or if they are just replicating. It has been suggested that marketers should completely disregard their own identities when advertising and fully become their customers: emotionally and mentally (Moss, 2009: 185).

Another notion of gender in advertisements is gendering of products (Mackinnon, 2006: 97-98). Not only the characters in them portray gender but also the products being advertised can be 'gendered': they are exclusive to one sex only. However, with many products now being targeted for both women and men, the advertisers need to find a balance to widen their targeting (Mackinnon, 2006: 98). Also, what should be strongly emphasised about gender-targeted advertising is that women and men in their own groups are very heterogenous and motivation for buying something is a more complex concept than gender (Moss, 2009: 186). A forty-year-old childless career woman probably does not have the same consumer behaviour than a twenty-year-old stay-at-home mother, despite them both being women.

### **3 Language and gender**

Human beings create understandings of the world by categorising and opposing concepts: black and white, day and night, female and male. The boundaries of our experiences can be quite vague and unclear (Talbot, 2010: 12). When does a day end

and night start? In reality, they actually form a continuum and language is a tool to bipolarise them. The same applies for gender. Through language they form two opposing concepts when sometimes in reality it is hard to say where the boundaries are. What is feminine and what is masculine? Gender too is more of a continuum than clear-cut opposites (Talbot, 2010: 12). Yet, all known societies make a distinction between women and men and provide them models of behaviour suitable for their genders (Mackinnon, 2003: 3).

In this chapter I will first explore some of the early studies conducted in language and gender and give an account where the field is currently at. Then I will introduce the terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ and explain their meanings and discuss reasons behind gender differences. Finally, I will present the characteristics of “women’s talk” and “men’s talk” and list the major generalisations of gendered language that have been studied by various researchers. These generalisations make the base for what is analysed in the data.

### **3.1 Historical overview of language and gender**

Early scholars were interested in showing that women’s verbal skills were somehow lacking (Sunderland, 2006: 5). Danish linguist’s Otto Jespersen’s well-known work *Language: its nature, development and origin* (1922) discusses women’s language in a demeaning and dismissive manner (cited in Sunderland, 2006: 5 and Talbot, 2010: 34-35). This and various other early publications done on language and gender already claimed that whatever language women use deviates from the norm (“the men’s language”).

In the early 1970’s Robin Lakoff published her widely acknowledged study *Language and Woman’s place*. The study aroused much debate and it has said to be the start of language and gender studies. Her book broke ground for investigating whether women and men really spoke differently and how their use of language varies. Lakoff argued that language itself was a way of oppressing women and yet another tool of showing male dominance. These claims ignited numerous feminist studies and divided language and gender studies into two categories: difference and dominance studies (McConnell-Ginet & Eckert, 2003: 1, Sunderland, 2006: 21). Cameron has described both of these approaches from a feminist point of view.

“Both dominance and difference represented particular moments in feminism: dominance was the moment of feminist outrage, or bearing witness to oppression in all aspects of women’s lives, while difference was the moment of feminist celebration, reclaiming and revaluing women’s distinctive cultural traditions” (Cameron, 1995: 39).

In that spirit, this study will adopt the difference point of view. I will find out if there are differences in the languages women and men use in the context of advertising. For this reason, I will not discuss extensively what has been done in dominance studies.

Mostly these early 1970’s and 1980’s studies were thought-provoking because they demonstrated what women lacked as language users and how they faced many obstacles in verbal expression because of their gender (Cameron, 2003: 458). Many of these early studies have faced much criticism, in particular Lakoff’s and Spender’s. Dale Spender’s *Man Made Language* (1980) showcases the sexism in the English language. She further reinforced the notion of male dominance in the language as she argued that English has literally been man-made. Men have constructed and compiled dictionaries and historically been the dominant gender in the public domain (Spender, 1980). Her bold claims about women’s suppression and subordination reached the attention of a wide audience on the state of women’s affairs (Talbot, 2010:43-44). Talbot (2010: 42) encapsulated Spender’s work by saying “Women have to use meanings that are not their own”. Spender’s claims were an extension of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of social constructionism according to which language shapes how people see the world. Since men have been in charge of the creation of language, it reinforces the gender-biased system.

The dominance approach has been criticised for portraying women as passive victims (Sunderland, 2006: 19, Cameron 1992). Talbot (2010: 98) continued this criticism by saying “...women are disadvantaged as language users”. They present themselves as uncertain, as lacking authority. The other approach, *difference* approach, has kept feminists, linguists, anthropologists and other researchers preoccupied. Both the differences between the two genders and why and where the differences emerge from have resulted in numerous empirical studies with numerous conclusions. The two genders are usually represented as being “bipolar, fixed and static” or even as natural



complementary pairs (Talbot, 2010: 109). This categorisation is appealing to people. It helps individuals to position themselves in discourse (Talbot, 2010: 124). The differences offer a solution and an understanding of the “opposite” gender and explain why gender miscommunication happens. Reinforcing the stereotypes is a big problem since it “undermines the emancipatory aim of feminism” (Talbot, 2010: 110).

Language in general is in a constant flux. Recently the research of language and gender has shifted towards “advancing feminism in a broad sense” by using the approach of constructive criticism (Sunderland, 2006: 28). Researches have strongly criticised the bipolar heteronormative approach to gender (e.g. Cameron 1992, 1995, 2003, Sunderland 2004 and Rossi 2003). The claim, that differences appear only because of gender, has started to become out-dated. Instead, the poststructuralist focus has been turned towards individual identities (Talbot, 2010: 110). With this scholarly shift language has become an interest to researchers from other disciplines (such as psychologists, geographers, philosophers) than just linguists. The challenge today is how to comprehend gender without dichotomous polarisation (Talbot, 2010: 112).

Today women are said to excel in verbal expression. They are even said to be “the model language users” (Cameron, 2003: 458) and innovators of linguistic change (Labov, 1972a: 301-304, cited in Coates, 1993: 172). Girls statistically develop speech earlier than boys and numerous studies have proven that girls outscore boys on verbal competence (Coates, 1993: 144-145). Cameron (2007b: 17) explains that this claim of female verbal superiority has its roots in the prehistoric division of labour where women have been the primary language teachers for their descendants. In her article *Unanswered questions and unquestioned assumptions in the study of language and gender: Female verbal superiority* (2007b) she, however, questions and criticises some studies which are behind the modern belief of women to have more advanced verbal skills than men: “the most obvious weakness of the Darwinian account is that it cannot meet the basic scientific criterion of accounting for the relevant evidence”. A growing body of research has now also paid focus on male inexpressivity and found it problematic (Coates, 1993: 194).

### 3.2 Sex and gender

Since the moment a baby is born their life will be somewhat determined by their biological sex. From the way we dress, think, act and decide our career options to the way we express ourselves and talk, it is all affected by our notions of gender roles. A baby is usually raised up to be either a girl or a boy. Whether we like it or not our lives are constantly affected by our gender. It influences our behaviour and how the world around us treats us (Talbot, 2010: 3). Many of these gender ideologies are so deeply rooted that they seem and feel true and natural. It is the fact that gender is so fundamentally embedded in our attitudes and social structures that makes it an interesting subject for researchers to study (McConnell-Ginet & Eckert, 2003: 9).

The words 'sex' and 'gender' are used somewhat interchangeably but if looked closely, they do, however, hide two kinds of meaning behind them. Sex marks our biological qualities, the ones we are born with whereas gender is something that is learned, performed and constantly reconstructed. Society around us keeps mixing the two notions together and make it seem like gender is as set as biological sex even though gendered performances are available for everyone, in theory at least (McConnell-Ginet & Eckert, 2003: 10, Talbot, 2010: 7). People learn, acquire and imitate attributes that are considered either feminine or masculine. A boy looks up to his father and tries to imitate his behaviour and language use and a girl takes example from her mother. From this derives the idea of *doing gender* that has become a focal concept in gender studies (Talbot, 2010: 7-8). According to this idea there are 'proper' ways of behaving as a woman or a man in every culture. And because the variance is so vast from one culture to another it demonstrates the fact that sex and gender are in fact separate concepts and should not be conflated (Talbot, 2010: 8). Another emphasis in this idea is on the word *doing*. It has been argued that gender is not something that comes naturally, but femininity and masculinity is something that has to be worked at (Talbot, 2010: 159). Girls and boys put an enormous amount of effort into becoming feminine or masculine. Yet, there are no biological reasons why women are the ones who wear make-up and men ties. Or why women tend to have longer hair than men.

There are, however, so many people who do not fit or want to fit in either of these two genders. Not everyone is born either a female or male, some are indeterminate

(Talbot, 2010: 13). In the western societies babies are surgically and hormonally ‘corrected’ towards either of the sexes. And even with a clear biological sex it is not always set in stone that the person will represent that consequent gender. Sex reassignment surgeries and other hormonal treatments happen every day. There are also women who possess more ‘masculine’ features and men who have more ‘feminine’ features. People are brought into this world in the belief that their gender identities are self-evident to them (Talbot, 2010: 125).

The dichotomous approach to gender has urged the need for a whole new field of study, *queer studies*. Queer studies is an umbrella term to address the groups of people who do not fit in the socially dominant heteronormative bipolar setting of two genders (Nelson, 2002 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 129-131). What is interesting about these groups that instead of being homogenous they represent identities that are “not only diverse but in some cases conflicting” (Nelson, 2002 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 130). Queer studies emphasise also the notion of doing gender. Sexual identities are not innate characteristics but culturally constructed acts that are created through social interactions. The dichotomous heteronormative view of gender will be analysed in the data to see if advertisements acknowledge other gender identities at all.

### **3.3 The explanations of gender differences**

Gender roles are highly cultural and time related. The prototypical woman and man have changed during history and can vary drastically from one country, social class and ethnicity to another. Within the last 40 years, the notion of language and gender has been studied in various disciplines, such as psychology, sociolinguistics and gender studies. It has been studied by using multiple frameworks, methods and points of view.

What usually stays the same is the notion of difference. Women and men are opposites and complementarities: what men possess, women usually do not. Same has been said about language use. This distinction of being ‘opposites’ seems to be the societies way to organise and position the two genders and people, consequently. It demonstrates each gender’s abilities and social responsibilities and even creates space for gender hierarchies. (Cameron, 2003: 452). Another dichotomy in the

language and gender studies is where the gender differences derive from. The two opposing views represent the biological and the cultural aspect.

The biological aspect has tried to explain the gender differences with the differences in female and male brains. It has been said that men are more “rational” because they use the left side of the brain more and because women present more bilateral use they are more “emotional” (McConnell-Ginet & Eckert, 2003: 12). The different use of the brain has also been claimed to be the reason why girls tend to go through language development a little earlier than boys and girls seem to experience less language related difficulties (Talbot, 2010: 10). However, there seems to be no evidence that this lateralisation of the brain is innate. Here we have again the influence of environment on gender development (Talbot, 2010: 11). Others have also claimed that women and men have different linguistic skills because of the influence of sex-hormones (Cameron, 2007a: 102). These and multiple other findings are complex and ambiguous and still far from conclusive. And furthermore the link between brain physiology and behaviour is not simple (McConnell-Ginet & Eckert, 2003: 12).

One biological difference between women and men is in the voice quality. Anatomically men have longer tracts than women so therefore the sound they produce is in lower frequencies than women’s (Talbot, 2010: 30). Stereotypically a woman has a high-pitched, soft and gentle voice and a man’s voice is deep, loud and husky (Talbot, 2010: 29). Testosterone also plays a part in lowering men’s voice as well as high levels of it has been linked to aggression.

When talking about innate qualities, linguistic interaction is definitely not one of them. Language is completely a learned and imitated ability and that makes it a psycho-social matter (Talbot, 2010: 11-12). Maltz and Borker (1982) offer a cultural approach why women and men speak differently. In their paper, they have re-examined existing scholarly data and come up to a difference conclusion on the reasons behind the gender differences. They argue that because girls and boys grow up in different sociolinguistic subcultures, they therefore learn different manners from an early age (Malzt & Borker, 1982: 200). When entering school children spend most of their time in homogenous groups and consciously work on differentiating themselves from the other sex by emphasising or even exaggerating the gender

differences (Malzt & Borker, 1982: 203). Much examination with similar results has been done on children's behaviour in school and during spare time. Girls' and boys' games and plays differentiate from one another so it is no wonder that the communication is different too. These observances have pointed out three gender-peculiar characteristics that children illustrate. Girls learn to use language to: "(1) create and maintain relationships of closeness and equality (2) criticise others in acceptable ways and (3) interpret accurately the speech of other girls" (Malzt & Borker, 1982: 205). Whereas boys use language to: "(1) assert one's position of dominance, (2) attract and maintain an audience and (3) to assert oneself when other speakers have the floor" (Malzt & Borker, 1982: 207).

These are the reasons why women and men develop differing ways of using language and become members of different 'speech cultures'. In mixed-sex conversations this often leads to the well-known female-male miscommunication and misunderstanding (Malzt & Borker, 1982: 202-204). Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet also made their important remarks on the cultural aspect of language and gender. In 1992 they coined the well-known term 'Community of Practice (CofP). CofP extends the notion of 'speech community' by saying that one person can belong to many speech communities and thus vary their linguistic identity from one community to another (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 45). Further on, gender is produced and reproduced within these communities and one individual can manifest various gender identities depending on which membership they are engaging. For example, if interaction takes place in their workplace, home or hobby (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 157). Linguistic identities are not fixed. They can change within the course of an hour (Talbot, 2010: 124). Here we come back to the nature/nurture aspect and can ask which one comes first: sex or gender? And answer: "neither" as Talbot (2010: 14) put it. It is also difficult to say, "when gender is being constructed as opposed to ethnicity, or sexuality or another identity" (Sunderland, 2004: 172).

### **3.4 "Women's talk" and "Men's talk"**

Even long before language and gender has been considered as a field of study, folk-linguistic beliefs about how women and men speak have existed, already in the

ancient Greek (Sunderland, 2006: 2). Proverbs about women's verbosity and inferiority can be found in cultures from the east to the west.

Linguists have argued that gender affects the language we use but also the language that is used about us (Talbot, 2010: 3). The notion of gender has been studied in various languages all around the world. And many researches have come to very similar conclusions: gender differences do exist. Whether the difference is phonological or lexicogrammatical women and men tend to use languages in different ways (Talbot, 2010: 4-7). Gender differences are visible already in the early stages of language learning (Coates, 1993: 144-145). Parents also reportedly talk differently to their children according to their gender and have different preconceptions of their children's linguistic behaviour (e.g. parents expect girls to be more verbally skilled than boys) (Coates, 1993: 166). In this study I will only focus on the differences in the English language.

In publications like Lakoff (1975), Tannen (1991), Spender (1980), Malzt & Borker. (1982), Coates (1993; 1996; 2003) and Cameron (1992) language differences between women and men have been studied, reasoned, compiled, criticised and questioned. Summaries, conclusions and lists of characteristic talk styles have been made. Many of these studies have come to similar conclusions and therefore many generalisations about gendered language have been made. Lists of characteristics of "women's talk" and "men's talk" are still being reproduced. Even if the characteristics overlap between genders or are not found in some studies the generalisations keep on living. Cameron (2007: 16) and Talbot (2010: 109) point out that empirical studies done on discourse that do not find any differences but instead similarities are not of interest and rarely see the light of day. When already established that 'men talk like this and women talk like that' it is easier to confirm than to challenge the differences. It is probably one of the reasons why the field has been so vastly preoccupied with studying them (Talbot, 2010: 109).

Many of these studies have been challenged and readdressed but certain gender attributes keep on reoccurring as results of academic studies but even more importantly in the minds of laypersons. Probably everyone has a picture in their mind of how women and men talk or should talk. The characteristic man uses language to assert his power and status and he usually does this in the public domain. A man uses

words to solve problems, lecture and report. A woman's talk happens in the private sector and she uses her voice to create and retain a connection. She shows sympathy, listens and gossips. The stereotypical woman is polite and talks too much – both at the same time. Self-help books, articles and other guides for women on how to talk appropriately (to men) have existed from the mid twentieth century (Cameron, 1992: 78-80, Sunderland 2004: 126). “Women must talk like a female” was the advice given. (Fishman, 1983 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 109). Many of these publications instruct women on how to speak and what to avoid when talking in the public domain, such as the workplace, so that they would be taken seriously. The same advice keeps on reappearing in popular women's magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Glamour* today (Cameron, 1992: 78-80). Many of these popularising self-help books explaining the gender differences have faced a hostile reception from feminist linguists (Talbot, 2010: 92). On the other hand, some schools have now started to teach boys how to communicate better and talk about themselves and their feelings (Coates, 1993: 194).

These portrayals of women's and men's 'talk' reoccur constantly and participate in producing gender roles and even social standings. “Women make poor leaders and high-pressure salespersons because of their lack of assertiveness whereas they make good carers (nurses, home helps and so on) because of their sensitivity to the needs of other people in conversation” (Cameron, 1992, cited in Sunderland 2006: 125). It is argued that gender differences occur because both women and men consciously pursue different interactive styles (Coates 1993: 139). Talk is doing gender; people perform and constitute gender constantly in conversation (Cameron, 1997: 59).

What should be noted in gender differences, like any other language differences, that they can be highly contextual and subjective and should therefore be approached with criticism and caution. People talk differently, for example, depending on their interlocutor or audience (Sunderland, 2006: 18). Cameron highlights that meaning is ‘*radically* contextual’ (Cameron, 1992: 192, her italics). “Different types of interaction lead to different ways of speaking” (Malzt and Borker, 1982: 215) and “different discourses give us access to different femininities” and masculinities (Coates, 1996: 261). Many scholars have also noticed that the differences are not dependant on the speaker's gender but more on their social class (Coates, 1993: 137).

Different conversational styles are said to have social consequences. Gender differences can lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding. Popular culture has been interested in studying and guiding how women and men should talk to each other so that they would be “on the same wave length”. Tannen has studied female-male miscommunications throughout her career and her bestseller *You just don't understand - Women and Men in Conversation* (1991) is a good example of the systematic misunderstanding and differences. She has said that women and men speak different languages: different *genderlects*.

### **3.5 Generalisations of gendered language**

In this section I will introduce the most prevailing generalisations about the language women and men use. Many of the stereotypical characteristics have been studied and tested by scholars by analysing speech and identifying how frequently certain patterns occur in conversations (Cameron, 1992: 56). But before listing any generalisations I will have a look at the word ‘stereotype’. Stereotypes are generalised representations of what certain groups of people are like. We all produce them. They help us to process information about people by compressing a vast amount of complex information into a manageable size (Cameron, 2007a: 14). Although stereotypes help people to categorise the world around them, they can have negative consequences and “produce oversimplified conceptions and misapplied knowledge evaluations, thereby generating misleading evaluations of subjects from a particular social category” (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 257).

Below are presented the most studied and debated generalisations of the characteristics of gendered language. The generalisations have mainly been round up from the collective works of Cameron (1992, 1995, 1997, 2003, 2006, 2007a, 2007b), Coates (1993, 1996, 2003) and Tannen (1991, 1994) who have compiled and introduced various studies done by different scholars in the field of language and gender.

#### a) Maintaining the conversation

Fishman (1983 cited in Sunderland, 2006: 102-109) argues that in the dynamics of conversation women work harder. According to her empirical study women start and maintain more conversations than men do. They do most of the interactional work, or



in Fishman's words the 'shitwork'. She noticed that topics women introduce are more likely to be dropped from the conversations than the ones men choose. This again reinforces the notion of male dominance and power. Cameron (1992: 72) parallels shitwork to housework duties: "if women want to eat and live in pleasant surroundings they have to cook and clean[...] because men are unwilling and refuse to do their share". DeFrancisco (1991, cited in Coates 1993: 113) extended and further investigated Fishman's theory and came to similar conclusions. It has been observed that women have no trouble in finding topics to discuss whereas men struggle with finding something to say (Tannen, 1994: 99). This has been explained by the behaviour of children: boys often choose to play games and girls enjoy talking as self-selected activities (Tannen, 1994: 128).

#### b) Accents and dialects

Dialects have been studied with numerous frameworks and methodologies and by plenty of researchers even before the study of language and gender started in the early 1970's. One of the best-known surveys was done by American linguist William Labov. Like Labov, many of these studies came to the conclusion that women tend to use more 'Standard' or higher prestige forms of English than men (Talbot, 2010: 19). Women are even prone hypercorrection (Coates, 1993: 68). One offered explanation for this result is that because women tend to be the main caretakers for children, they therefore are responsible for providing them a correct model of speech (Cameron, 1992: 63). Cameron also adds that men themselves associate working-class speech to masculinity (1992: 62).

#### c) Questions and tag questions

The research of language and gender has generally regarded women and question-asking in a negative way (Coates, 1996: 200). This all started when Lakoff (1975: 16-17) suggested that women use tag questions to express their insecurity and approval. Lakoff's (1975) one claim was that women use more tag questions than men. However, many following studies have come to the conclusion that women and men use nearly the same amount of them and some studies have even found men using more tag questions than women (Cameron, 1992: 44). Despite of this, several studies have shown that English speakers link women and tag questions together

without it actually being accurate in practice (Coates, 1993: 119). Later studies have, however, demonstrated that women do not use tag question to express insecurity but instead they carry multiple functions (Coates, 1996: 191). Women use tag questions to start a conversation and to give someone else an opportunity to speak (Cameron, 2007a: 47). Coates (1993: 191-201) adds that they are being used to check the shared knowledge, to establish connectedness and solidarity, and they are also used as hedges.

When extending tag questions to questions in general, studies like Fishman's (1980a) and Cameron et al. (1989) (both cited in Coates, 1993: 122-124) found that in conversation women do ask more questions than men do. Women use questions as a device of conversational sequencing and topic initiation (Coates, 1993: 189). They also ask more rhetorical questions to invite people to join to the conversation and men see questions as requests for information (Coates 1993: 189). Questions can be also seen as part of being polite: they can protect the addressee's face (Coates, 1996: 191).

#### d) Minimal responses

Minimal responses (such as *mhm*, *yeah*) are a way to indicate that the listener is paying attention to the speaker (Coates: 1993: 111). Coates (1989a; 1991a&b, cited in Coates 1993:138), Zimmermann and West (1977) and Fishman (1980) (both cited in Coates 1993: 110-114) all came to the conclusion in their speech observation studies that women use minimal responses more than men. Coates (1993: 138) noticed that women use minimal responses also to inform that they have recognised the different stages of the conversation flow (for example, where one topic ends and the next one starts) and to express that they are waiting for their turn to talk. Men use minimal responses to signal agreement with their interlocutor (Coates, 1993: 189). The different style to use minimal responses can lead to miscommunication between women and men (Coates, 1993: 189). Women do not use minimal responses only when interacting with men but also with women to promote closeness and sisterhood (Cameron, 1992: 72). Fishman (1980b, cited in Coates, 1993: 116) includes minimal responses as part of interactional shitwork.

e) Range of intonation

Because anatomically men have longer vocal tracts than women the sound they produce is in lower frequencies than women's (Talbot, 2010: 30). Graddol and Swan (1990 cited in Cameron 1992: 75) argue that high-pitched voices are linked to children and low pitched voices to growling dogs. Therefore higher pitched voices naturally lack authority. Women also are more likely to speak at lower volume than men (Tannen, 1991: 239). Cameron (1992: 74) mentions that women who need to speak frequently in public are faced with prejudice against their "shrill or tinny voices". She maintains that women are often recommended in various assertiveness training courses to consciously adjust their voices: to lower their pitch and moderate the range of their intonation.

f) Interruptions

Interruption, or more precisely overlap, has been studied as a mark of power and dominance (Tannen, 1994: 35). Therefore, it has been linked as a characteristic of male talk. One of the most known studies was done by Zimmermann and West (1975 cited in Coates, 1993: 108-112), who found in their research that men interrupt the speech of their interlocutor more often than women do. This links to the politeness theory: women do not want to violate their interlocutor's turn but wait until they are finished. Deborah Tannen has studied interruption exhaustively for decades. She has also drawn upon numerous of her colleagues' studies. Tannen does not deny that men interrupt speech more than women but she wants to point out that the definition of 'interruption' is not straightforward and that "apparent interruption is not necessarily a display of dominance" (Tannen, 1994: 54). Overlaps can happen in a positive manner and they are not always disruptive (Tannen, 1991: 196). Women obey more the turn-taking rules in conversation and usually progress from the current topic whereas men more often ignore the topic discussed and move on to making their own point (Coates, 1993: 189-190).

g) Topics/topic control

Many studies have proven that women and men discuss different topics (Coates, 1993: 115). Men tend to talk about sports, politics and cars and women about personal relationships and children. The topics men discuss are viewed as serious and

women's topics are trivial, which is a reflection of our social values (Coates, 1993: 115). When talking in mixed-gender groups, men tend to control and dominate the conversation topics. To this conclusion have come Fishman (1980a), Leet-Pellegrini (1980) and DeFrancisco (1991) (all cited in Coates 1993: 112-114). Coates (1993: 138) has also noticed that whereas men talk more about things, women talk about people, feelings and personal matters. Men fear that talking about interpersonal matters or feelings will link them to femininity or being 'gay' (Coates: 2003: 104). Men jump between many topics whereas women discuss few topics densely (Coates, 1993: 188). Coates also found that nearly half of the topics women talk about are home-related while men talk about things outside of home (Coates, 2003: 117). This supports the claim that women's talk happens in the private setting and men's in the public setting. Coates also recorded that men talk about women only less than 30% of the time whereas women include men in their conversation almost 90% of the time (Coates, 2003: 121).

A part of men's conversational behaviour is to seize a turn as often as possible and to try to keep it for as long as possible. Their aim is to be the speaker. Women see listening as a part of conversation and value it highly whereas men do not give much credit to listening (Coates, 1993: 192).

#### h) Verbosity

Numerous quantitative studies have tried to either confirm or revoke the age-old belief that women speak more than men: and not just more but too much. The derogatory word 'chatter' is used almost exclusively to describe women's talk (Coates, 1993: 115). Men have been observed to use more pauses and silence in conversation than women (Coates, 1993: 114). Women have also been observed to apologise for talking too much (Coates, 1993: 188). Depending on context, scholars have come to both conclusions: in some cases women talk more and in some cases men (Coates, 1993: 115). Today, however, women's 'articulacy' is recognised to make women better communicators (Cameron, 2007a: 29). Silence is no longer considered golden. Coates has recorded and studied numerous conversations between women and men and she has come to the conclusion that women tell more stories (any narrative reports) than men: more precisely she counted that on average men

discuss 11 stories and women 17 stories within the course of an hour (Coates, 2003: 115).

i) Hedges

Women's speech is often described as being tentative and therefore they use more hedges, like for example, *I think, you know, sort of*. This was claimed by Lakoff (1975) and many studies after her (Coates 1987b; 1989a and Holmes 1984; 1987, all cited in Coates 1993: 116-118) have further investigated whether this is true. Holmes found that women and men use roughly the same amount of them but Coates came to the conclusion that women do actually use hedges more than men. However, they both found hedges to be multi-functional rather than as an expressions of the speaker's uncertainty or lack of confidence. Different functions of hedges is to help interlocutor in the "struggle for words", to be sensitive to other's feelings and to avoid playing the expert (Coates, 1996: 152-161). Hedges help to disclose personal information: to soften utterances that include confident intimate information (Coates, 1996: 165). Hedges are also used to "establish a collaborative rather than a single floor" which is a characteristic that is highly linked with women (Coates, 1996: 171-172).

j) Directives and commands

Directives and commands are defined as speech acts "which tries to get someone to do something" (Coates, 1993: 124). Assertiveness is a characteristic strongly linked with masculinity. Goodwin (1980; 1988; 1990, cited in Coates 1993: 124-126) has studied the use of directives in various contexts. She argues that in all of her findings men and boys are more directive than women and girls are.

k) Swearing and aggressiveness

The folklinguistic belief that men use swear words more than women has had some scholarly evidence to support it (Coates, 1993: 126-128). Already Shakespeare joked about this stereotype of men being coarse (Coates, 1993: 22). Swearing and taboo language has been widely considered as a sign of manhood and being tough (Coates, 2003: 46). By using aggressive linguistic strategies, such as swearing and insults, men achieve solidarity (Coates, 2003: 105). Some studies have proven that the

stereotype of men swearing lives strongly in the minds of people, but not much data is available to show that it is actually true in practice. Gomm (1981, cited in Coates 1993: 127-128) found that both women and men use more swear words in single sex than in mixed sex conversations.

Verbal aggressiveness, swearing, shouting, insulting and threats, is almost exclusively linked to masculinity (Coates, 1993: 191). Men see these features as structural parts of conversation. Women take verbal aggressiveness personally and try to avoid it.

#### l) Politeness

Women and politeness have had a long mutual history. Being polite is tightly linked with femininity. Lakoff (1975) discusses women and politeness exhaustively: how women should be, are expected to be, and are *ladies*. Many of the gender characteristics such as using more standard forms of English, questions, tag questions and hedges are all linked to being polite. Politeness has been explained with the concept of *face* (Coates, 1993: 85). “Respecting face is defined as showing consideration for people’s feelings. We show consideration by respecting two basic human needs: (1) the need not to be imposed on (negative face), (2) the need to be liked and admired (positive face)”. Some studies show that women are more concerned with the notion of face than men (Coates 1993: 130-132). Politeness in language has been studied from various angles and many have come to the conclusion that women are indeed more polite than men when using language in one way or another (Coates 1993: 128-132). Holmes’s (1988, cited in Coates 1993: 128-129) corpus study of compliments established that women give and receive compliments noticeably more frequently than men.

#### m) Gossip vs. declaration of facts

Some researchers have said that both genders gossip because it affirms group solidarity (Cameron, 1997: 60). Gossiping is, however, considered a feminine trait and linked almost exclusively to women’s talk. Women bond through lament and discussing troubles and worries (Tannen, 1991: 100). Gossip is often thought to have rather pejorative connotations: “women talk too freely and too much” (Tannen, 1991: 96). Gossip, as a linguistic data, has never really been taken seriously when

compared to men's talk, which is considered as serious "real talk" (Coates, 1993: 135-136). Men are thought to avoid gossip so that they would not be linked with femininity or homosexuality (Cameron, 1997: 61). Jones (1980, cited in Coates 1993: 135) has investigated gossiping and redefines it in a less derogative manner as "a way of talking between women in their roles as women, intimate in style, personal and domestic in topic and setting".

Women gossip about their personal lives, something that is thought to be trivial and unworthy. Men's gossip happens through discussing politics, news and sports: things that are going on in the outside world (Tannen, 1991: 111). These topics are factual details and therefore considered more important and of value.

#### n) Co-operation vs. competitiveness

One of Jones' (1980, cited in Coates 1993: 136) major findings is that whereas men ignore or disagree their interlocutor's utterances, women aim to be solidary and supportive. By talking people sustain friendships, something that are fundamentally important to women (Coates, 1996: 263). Stone (1983, cited in Coates 1993: 136-137) explains that of the reasons behind this collaborative behaviour is motherhood. The constant responsibility for the children creates the need for co-operation instead of competing with the person who they are talking with. Many other scholars have also come this same conclusion about women being more co-operative and men competitive (Coates, 1993: 137). When having a discussion women are concerned that everyone gets to say something in turn. Instead, men in conversation have a different hierarchy: there are some who talk more and some who talk little or say nothing at all (Coates, 1993: 188). It has also been noticed that men talk much more about personal achievement and women hardly ever boast about themselves (Coates, 2003: 116-117). When telling stories, women often tell them collaboratively whereas men tell stories as solo narratives (Coates, 2003: 132). Women also use more repetition; they repeat what the others and they themselves are saying, in order to signal solidarity and collaboration, and most of all to construct a coherent conversation (Coates, 1996: 230).

Tannen (1991: 77) describes the gender differences with the terms *rapport talk* and *report talk*. She argues that women's language "is a language of rapport: a way of

establishing connections and negotiating relationships” whereas men’s conversation is “more like giving a report than establishing rapport”.

Cameron has also found evidence that supports that in conversation men tend to be more competitive and respectful of the conversational hierarchy (Cameron, 1997: 57). Women favour egalitarianism and are more concerned of each other’s face i.e. being polite. However, she argues that in order for ‘talk’ to happen, it must always have some co-operation and further on that co-operation and competitiveness do not exclude one another (Cameron, 1997: 58).

o) Problem sharing vs. problem solving

When having a conversation, women often want reassurance, compassion and understanding from their interlocutor (Tannen, 1991: 50). Men, on the other hand, are problem-solvers and they find it difficult to comprehend why women are reluctant to act in order to solve the problems that trouble them. Women are said to wallow in their troubles and they want to talk about them forever with multiple interlocutors. This makes them problem sharers (Tannen, 1991: 52).

p) Humour

“Women don’t tell jokes” is a stereotype that strongly lives in the minds of people (Lakoff, 1975: 56 and Tannen, 1991: 89). Regardless of the fact the stereotype is not accurate, it is true that women tell less jokes in groups, especially in mixed-sex groups (Tannen, 1991: 89). It has been researched that women tell jokes to other women and to a small audience and men prefer to tell jokes if they have an audience (Tannen, 1991: 90). In conversation men aim to maintain status, create a hierarchical social order and to hold the centre stage by various verbal performances with humour and telling jokes being of the most distinguishable ones (Tannen, 1991: 77).

Linguistic research has suggested that humour can change the ways people process information and therefore people are less critical with offensive content when it is wrapped with humour (Eisend, Plagemann & Sollwedel, 2014: 262). Consequently, advertisers often add humour when presenting gender stereotypes they know might produce negative reactions. Humour was previously discussed more in the light of advertising in chapter 2.2.1.



All the previously mentioned gender differences are summarised in table 1 on the next page.

<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>MEN</b>
Maintain the conversation	Control the topic
Use more Standard English	Use more dialects
Ask more questions	Use more humour
Aim to be co-operative and create good relations	More competitive
Use more minimal responses	Interrupt speech of their interlocutor
Problem-sharing	Problem-solving
Use more polite forms	Use more swear words and aggressiveness
Use more hedges	Use more commands and directives
Gossip	Offer more declarations of fact
Talk about home-related topics, feelings and people	Talk about the outside world, avoid talking about personal matters
Talk more	
Wider range of intonation	

*Table 1: Characteristics of women and men's speech*

Overall, women and men employ different conversational strategies and rules. They have different “expectations of what constitutes a normal component of conversation, of how conversation should progress, of how important it is to respect the current

speaker's right to finish a turn and how important it is to actively support the current speaker" (Coates, 1993: 194). It should be noted, however, that masculinity and femininity seem to be exaggerated and overemphasised in same-sex conversations and mitigated in mixed-sex conversations (Coates, 2003: 144). This is explained with a theory called *audience design* (chapter 2.2) according to which every speaker constructs their speech according to their recipient. Besides these linguistic differences women and men use different paralinguistic strategies when engaging in conversation: women use more eye contact and touching, men face less their interlocutor and lean back (Coates, 1993: 188).

### **3.6 Limitations of previous research**

The researchers of language and gender tend to be divided into two groups with two points of view. Linguists, such as Lakoff (1975), Tannen (1991) and Coates (1993) have been focused on finding and categorising the gender differences in language and linguists like Cameron (2003, 2007) represent more of the 'continuum scale' aspect on the matter. Meaning, that women and men are not clear-cut opposites but rather they create a continuum with unclear borders. In her work (1992: 37), Cameron pointed out a valid question: "why does no-one study 'sex-similarity'?"

The study of language and gender has been an especial interest to feminists. The matter of 'women and language' has been studied in various frameworks but such extensive research has not been done with men and language (Sunderland, 2006: 4-9). This approach has been disadvantageous for women since many studies have come to the conclusion that the language women use is the deviant and some have even given advice on how women should adjust their speech.

However, many of these studies such as Lakoff's (1975) have failed to provide adequate empirical evidence and instead they have relied on their subjective remarks of gendered discourse behaviour. These studies have led to insufficient generalisations and have also been blamed to have created new linguistic myths (Sunderland, 2006: 18). Tannen (1991) has also faced much criticism for her work for it being too anecdotal and speculative (Talbot, 2010: 94). Cameron also points out that many of the studies have been done with small, homogeneous samples and are therefore they are not a representation of the wider community: "most researchers

are themselves white middle-class westerners working in settings where white middle-class speakers are the most readily available research subjects” (Cameron, 2007a: 57).

Many of the gender generalisations have been challenged by further studies and therefore in this survey I keep in mind that the generalisations I have chosen to study are not fully academically proven or considered to be accurate all of the time. Instead the generalisations are something that are recognised and reproduced by the public and especially the advertising industry (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 170). It should also be highly emphasised that neither women nor men are a homogenous group (Cameron, 1992: 78). Therefore, none of the generalisations are automatically applicable to either gender.

## **4 Data and methods**

The objective of this study is to analyse how gender appears in modern British food-related television advertisements. This is studied both from linguistic and contextual aspects with the help of the following research questions:

1. How does the language women and men use in modern day British supermarket food advertising differ?
2. Can the language in them be analysed by using gender characteristics?
3. Are women and men portrayed in different settings and do they talk about different topics?
4. How are the stereotypically traditional gender roles visible in the advertisements?

In this chapter, I will first present the advertisements included in the data for this study. Then, I will demonstrate the methods I have used to analyse the data in order to answer the research questions.

### **4.1 Data**

In this thesis I am studying food related television advertisements of four of the biggest supermarket chains (The Guardian, 2014) in the United Kingdom. The supermarkets are, in alphabetical order: Asda, The Co-Operative food (abbreviated

Co-Op), Morrisons and Tesco. I have chosen the sample advertisements randomly on the grounds that all of them must portray real people, and all of them must include conversation. All the advertisements with cartoon or other inhuman characters were excluded even if they seem to imitate human genders. For the sake of comparing adult women and men, advertisements where children are in the main part have also been left out.

Food related advertisements offer a good test case for gendered language in advertisements since food is a somewhat neutral subject: everyone needs to eat. But yet, it is still highly gendered and full of stereotypes. Many people will most likely link women with baking because it is feminine and men with barbequing because it is manly. We are also currently living in interesting times in regards to gender equality. Gender issues keep popping up in every sphere of life, also in the domestic sphere: gender roles are reversing and the line between “women’s jobs” and “men’s jobs” is slowly wavering. It might feel like we are in a turning point where men seem to participate more in the household chores such as cooking and grocery shopping but a recent Global Trends Survey shows that 70 per cent of British women in relationships are still the ones in charge of kitchen and food shopping (The Independent, 2014). Therefore it is meaningful to ask whether the traditional gender roles are present in the data sample I have chosen.

My data sample comprises a total of 36 video advertisements. In order to make straightforward comparisons between the genders, 18 (50%) of the advertisements have women in the main part and the other 18 (50%) have men as main characters. Some advertisements, however, have both men and women in them having a dialogue and therefore some overlapping will happen. In some advertisements there is only a voice-over, in others there is a dialogue between two or more people and in some there is a person whose thoughts are being spoken out. For the sake of categorisation, I have divided the advertisements under two categories: women and men, according to the gender of the dominant character in the advertisement. I have collected the advertisements from two Internet video sites: Youtube.com and Tellyads.com of which the latter is a site that stores different British television advertisements. The videos do not have any timestamps on them or any other

information on when they have been used in broadcasting but I have chosen only the advertisements that seem and look relatively new, most likely from the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The transcriptions and descriptions of the data can be found in appendix A and appendix B. Descriptions include short overviews of what is happening in the advertisements and who the main characters involved are. A transcript is also provided for each advertisement. In the transcriptions I have included the sex and status of the speaker (when obvious) and marked the length of each advertisement. In most of the advertisements there is also a voice-over present but I have left some of their parts out since they have no relevance to this study. Mostly, the voice-over only tells the promotion the advertisement is made for. I have marked the voice-over's parts with three dashes (---) but written out their parts if they have some significance. For example, if they talk about something else than just the promotion of the advertisement, or in other words, if they take part or comment on the discussion the main characters are having.

The advertisements will be addressed with letters 'F' and 'M' denoting female and male depending on who is in the main part, and then with a serial number. Thus, the data will have advertisements F1-F18 and M1-M18 denoting the order the advertisements are organised in the appendices. These abbreviations will be used from now on to simplify the presentation of the analysis.

In total the data has 18 advertisements that have women in the main part. Seven of them are Asda's advertisements, seven CO-Op's, two for Morrison's and two for Tesco. Table 2. below presents the offers the women-led advertisements advertise.

<b>Promotion (what the advertisements is for)</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Total</b>
Tea	F1	1
Casserole	F2	1
Steak	F3	1
Price drop	F4, F6, F7	3
Christmas	F5, F16, F18	3
Online shopping	F8	1

Truly irresistible range	F9	1
Fish	F10	1
Party essentials	F11	1
Dinner offer	F12	1
Halloween treats	F12	1
Milk	F14, F17	2
Fresh food	F15	1

Table 2: Promotions, women

In the data there are 18 advertisements where men are in the main part. This number is equal to women-led advertisements. Three of the advertisements which have men in the main part are done by Asda, five by CO-Op, six by Morrison's and four by Tesco, totalling to 18 advertisement pieces. Table 3. shows the kind of products and events the men-led advertisements promote.

Promotion (what the advertisements is for)	Advertisement	Total
Fish	M1, M10, M13	3
Milk	M2, M3	2
Online shopping	M4, M16	2
Bread	M5, M12	2
Valentine's day	M6, M8, M11	3
Mother's day	M7	1
Party food	M14	1
Barbeque meat, steak	M15, M18	2
Price drop	M9, M17	2

Table 3: Promotions, men

## 4.2 Limitations of the data

The data I have chosen for this study has met certain criteria. The advertisements include real people in them and also some spoken discourse. I have left out advertisements that have a famous person as the face of their advertising campaign

because I investigate people in “real life” situations. Therefore Britain’s third biggest supermarket chain Sainsbury’s has been left out since they use the celebrity chef Jamie Oliver in most of their advertisements. The selection criteria and the size of the data set can have an effect on how far the generalisations made from this study can be applied.

Another fact that can create some limitations to this study is the nature of the language used in the advertisements. To be precise, the language in them is not as natural as naturally occurring spontaneous speech. The advertisements are manuscripted and further on enacted. The concern with written texts is in the representations they produce (Sunderland, 2006: 78-79). However, from investigating the data it seems that the aim in them is to portray everyday spoken language on the account that they include colloquialisms such as “innit” and sounds, such as gasps, moans and expressions of excitement. Therefore it seems that the written text in them is trying to imitate naturally occurring speech.

Different marketing and advertising strategies used by the different supermarkets chosen for data can also set some limitations. The advertisements seem to follow the supermarket’s strategic guidelines and therefore they are identifiable and easily linked to the supermarket chain. The marketing campaigns are different from one another and therefore the advertisements show much variation. For example, what could be noticed from these advertisements is that, the CO-Op tends to use the same actress and Morrison relies on rational reasoning and assurance. Asda prefers to show everyday mothers and Tesco’s adverts are fast-paced and aim to get the viewer’s mouth to water by using delicious pictures of food and eating.

### **4.3 Methods**

This study is done by using content analysis and discourse analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are combined. The contextual and linguistic features are calculated, combined, presented in charts and then analysed thoroughly.

Content analysis is a popular method used when analysing mass media communication. In content analysis research relies on coding the data in question in various categories and then counting their frequency and further analysing the categories (Bell, 1991: 213). Furnham and Voli (1989) and Aronovsky and Furnham

(2008) have extended Manstead and McCulloch's (1981) content analytic coding system for analysing gender stereotypes in advertisements. The coding scheme classifies attributes of the characters and settings shown in advertisements as follows: sex, mode of presentation, relationship to product/credibility, role, location, arguments, rewards, product type, background, humour, product appeal, age and end comment. This coding scheme is employed partially in this study when analysing the visual and contextual aspects of the advertisements. The eight categories being studied here are:

1. sex
2. role
3. argument
4. location
5. humour
6. credibility
7. product type  
and
8. product appeal.

Central characters are being analysed on the basis of their sex and what their roles are in the advertisements: if they are dependant, independent or professionals, and if their arguments are scientific or non-scientific. Credibility divides the main characters into product users and product buyers or experts and authoritative figures. The location of the advertisements is also being analysed, whether it is home, occupational, leisure, supermarket or something else. Product appeal refers to how the advertisers want to appeal to the consumers: whether they want to promote health, value or quality. Product type categorises the products the advertisements promote. None of the categories is exclusive or exhaustive. Therefore many characteristics and qualities may fit to several categories. Categorisation can also be prone to subjectivity.

The linguistic features being studied are humour, questions and tag questions, argumentation and topics. Humour is approached by using the characteristics of humorous talk discussed in chapters 2.2.1 and 3.5. Everything that generates laughter in the characters has been analysed as being humour. Questions and tag questions are counted and questions are further grouped into four categories by their qualities. The four groups are yes/no-questions (abbreviated YN), open-ended questions



(abbreviated OE), rhetorical/speculative questions (abbreviated RH) and humorous questions (abbreviated HU). Argumentation is analysed by using Furnham and Voli's (1989) method of dividing the arguments the characters express in the advertisements in three categories: 'factual', 'opinion' and 'no argument'. The topics the characters are discussing in the advertisements have been categorised in various groups on the basis of their similarities. The groups are presented in table 13. in chapter 5.2.4. Many of the advertisements go through more than one topic and therefore the same advertisement can fall under many categories. The topics are then compared to the gender stereotypical topics and conclusions of whether the stereotypes reoccur on the data are made.

## **5 Findings**

The data is being studied on two different levels. Firstly, the visual and contextual features are approached by using Furnham and Voli's (1989) extended coding scheme introduced in chapter 4.3. The coding scheme will be used partially and other visual and contextual observations, besides the ones in the coding scheme, are also taken into account. The main focus is on the stereotypical gender roles which were discussed in chapters 2.3.1 and 2.3.1 to see if they appear in the advertisements. Because the spectrum of the stereotypes is vast, only the ones, which have the most potential to appear in the advertisements, are selected for deeper analysis. The stereotypes are:

1. Women are in dependant roles, men independent
2. Women are responsible for domestic duties and children
3. Women are pictured at home, men in leisure
4. Women do the grocery shopping (product buyers vs. experts).

Then, the linguistic aspects are being analysed by focusing on the generalisations of gendered language discussed in chapter 3.5. Many of the gender characteristics cannot be studied within this data due to the size of the data not being exhaustive enough and because many of the characteristics require dialogues in order for them to manifest in speech. Most of the advertisements in the data only have monologues or very short dialogues in them. However, many of the characteristics do have the

potential to surface in this data and on the grounds of that four characteristics are chosen for thorough examination. The four gender generalisations are:

1. Men use more humour
2. Women ask more questions
3. Women are emotional, men rational (give non-scientific vs. scientific arguments)
4. Women and men talk about different topics.

The findings are presented under these two categories in their own chapters 5.1 and 5.2.

## 5.1 Visual and contextual features

In this chapter the visual and contextual features found in the advertisements are being presented with the main focus on the gender stereotypes that were discussed in the previous chapter and reintroduced in table 4. below.

<b>The stereotypical gender roles</b>
1. Women are in dependant roles, men independent
2. Women are responsible for domestic duties and children
3. Women are pictured at home, men in leisure
4. Women do the grocery shopping (product buyers vs. experts)

*Table 4: The stereotypical gender roles being analysed*

### 5.1.1 Characters

Figure 1. displays the characters who appear in the advertisements where women are in the main part. The total of these advertisements is 18 pieces. In 78% of these advertisements (14) the main character is a mother. In nine of those advertisements it is visible that the mother is also someone's wife (50%). Children are seen or

mentioned in all of the advertisements where the mother is present. In 44% of the advertisements the father is also present so the whole family is seen together. In the advertisements where the father is present, he is active in 37% of them, which means that he takes part in domestic duties (helps with the children, cooks, goes grocery shopping etc.). In the majority of the cases (63%) the father is passive: he does nothing else but is visible. Previous studies (Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008: 174) have documented that women are portrayed with children in television advertisements more often than men and this is apparent also in this study. In this data, men appear with children almost three times less frequently than women: women are mothers in 14 advertisements and men are fathers in four advertisements.

Women are seen as wives but not mothers in only 11% of the advertisements. And in another 11% of the advertisements women are shown as independent, without the role of being a mother or a wife. In one of those advertisements single men are shown. Compared to the advertisements where men are in the main part, independent men are dominant in 61% of the cases. This finding supports what Aronovsky and Furnham (2008) found in their analysis of British advertising: women are portrayed in dependant roles considerably more often than men.

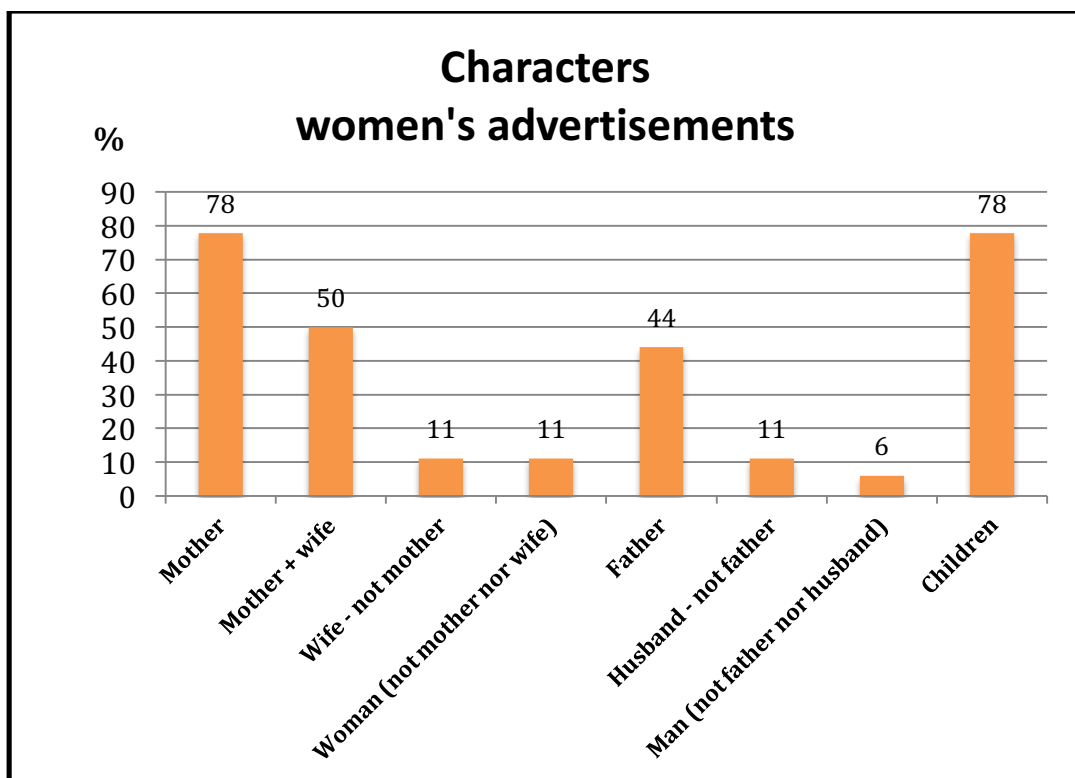


Figure 1: Characters in female-led advertisements

Figure 2. shows the corresponding percentages in the advertisements where men are the main characters. The total of these advertisements is the same as with women (18). When compared to women (mothers in 78% advertisements), men are portrayed as fathers only in 22% of the advertisements. In all of these advertisements the father's children are present and the father is pictured as being active in taking part of the domestic duties (cooking, shopping for the groceries etc.). The father is without the children's mother in 11% advertisements and in another 11% of the advertisements the whole family is pictured. In one of the advertisements a man is shopping with a group of children who are not his own. This makes the total of 28% (five advertisements) where children are visible in the advertisements when men are in the main part. The corresponding number with women and children is 78%. As a result, women are portrayed with children almost three times more frequently than men are. Men are shown as husbands but not fathers in 22% of the advertisements and in half of these advertisements their wives are also present. The men in these advertisements are most commonly pictured (61%) as independent men without the roles of being a husband or a father. In 17% of the men-led advertisements a woman, who is neither a wife nor a mother, is shown.

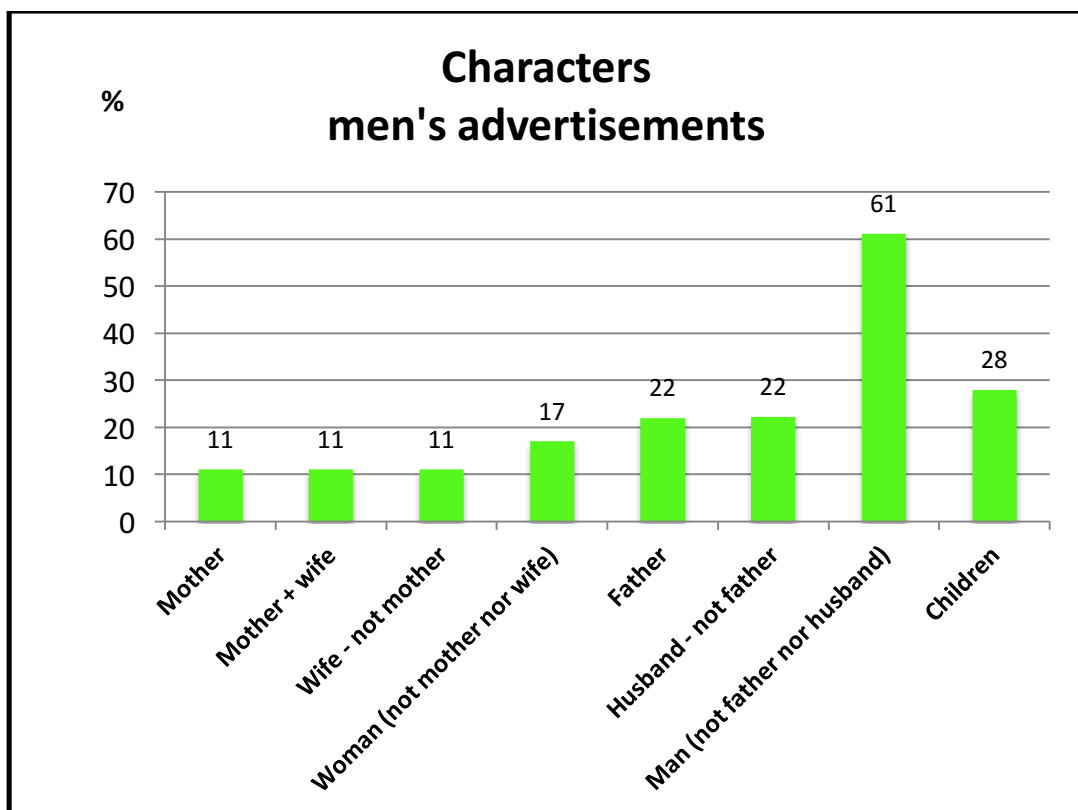


Figure 2: Characters in male-led advertisements

Figure 3. combines the two previous figures together. The total of all the advertisements is 36. The most occurring characters in the all of the advertisements are children with them being present in over half of the cases. Mothers are shown in 44% of the advertisements and fathers in 33%. The father is active in domestic duties in 58% of the advertisements where he is present, and passive in 42%. The striking difference is that men are portrayed as independent over two times more often than women.

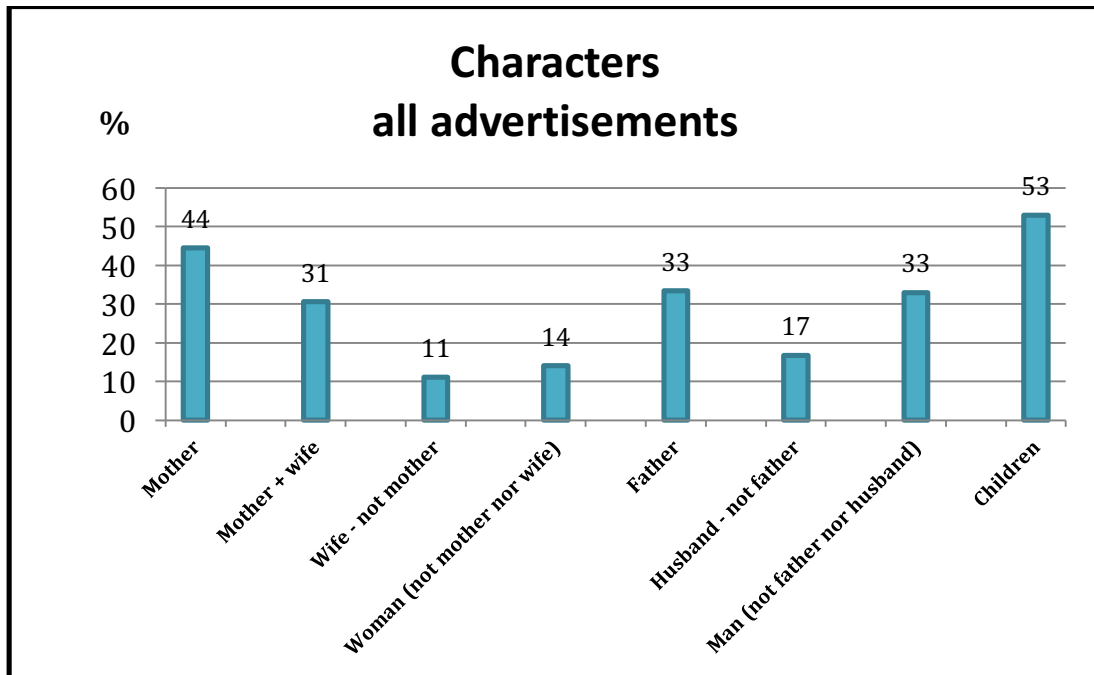


Figure 3: Characters, all advertisements

In 30 out of the 36 advertisements there is also a voice-over present (83%). The voice-over usually speaks about the offer but in some cases they take part, comment or add something to the conversation the characters are having. In some advertisements the voice-over is the only voice heard (F14, M5). The voice-over is male in 83% of the advertisements and female in 17%, which makes the male voice notably more dominant. This finding coincides with the previous studies discussed in chapter 2.2 in which was also found that the proportion of male voice-overs in advertisements is much bigger than female.

### 5.1.2 Settings and speech situations

Figure 4. exhibits the settings in which the women are portrayed in the advertisements. The most occurring place where women are seen is in the kitchen (61%). In the supermarket women are portrayed in less than 20% of the cases. In more than half of the advertisements it is either shown or implied that woman does the grocery shopping for the family. In 83% of the cases the woman is seen cooking and mostly she is seen cooking by herself without any help.

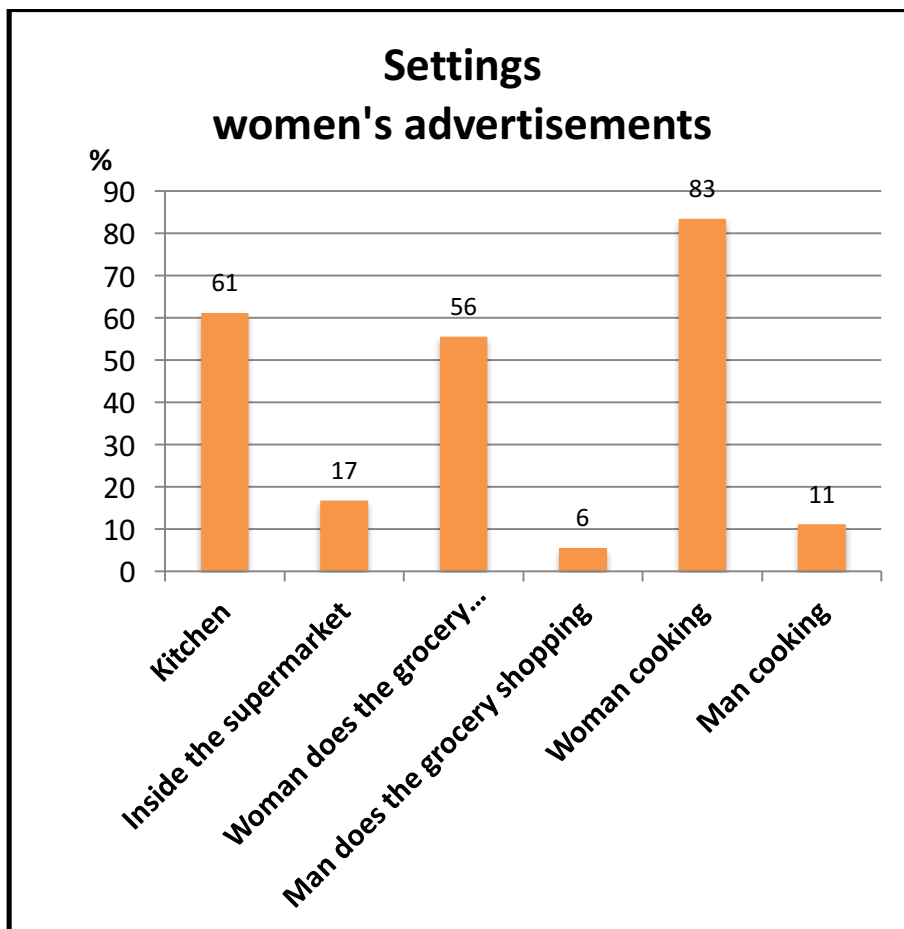
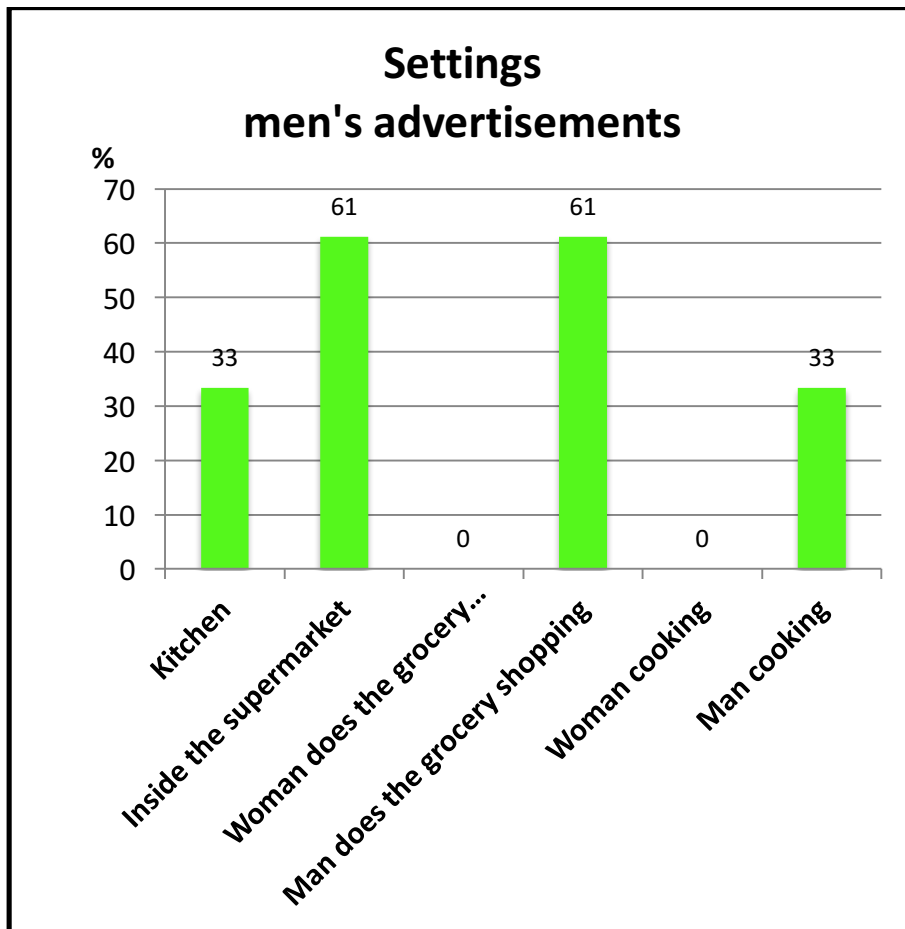


Figure 4: Settings in female-led advertisements

Figure 5. shows that men are pictured in the supermarket two times more often than in the kitchen. In all of those advertisements it is the man who does the shopping and no women are seen or implied doing the grocery shopping in the men-led advertisements. When compared to women, men are pictured in the kitchen two times less often than women and in the supermarket almost four times more often than women. Men are seen cooking in one third of the advertisements. The number is

significantly smaller compared to the women-led advertisements in which women are seen cooking in 83% of them.



*Figure 5: Settings in male-led advertisements*

In total, when combining the whole data, there are no significant differences between whether the characters are seen in the home setting or in the supermarket, nor in who does the shopping. The most noticeably observation is in the actual food preparation: women are cooking in the advertisements two times more often than men. These findings are displayed in figure 6.

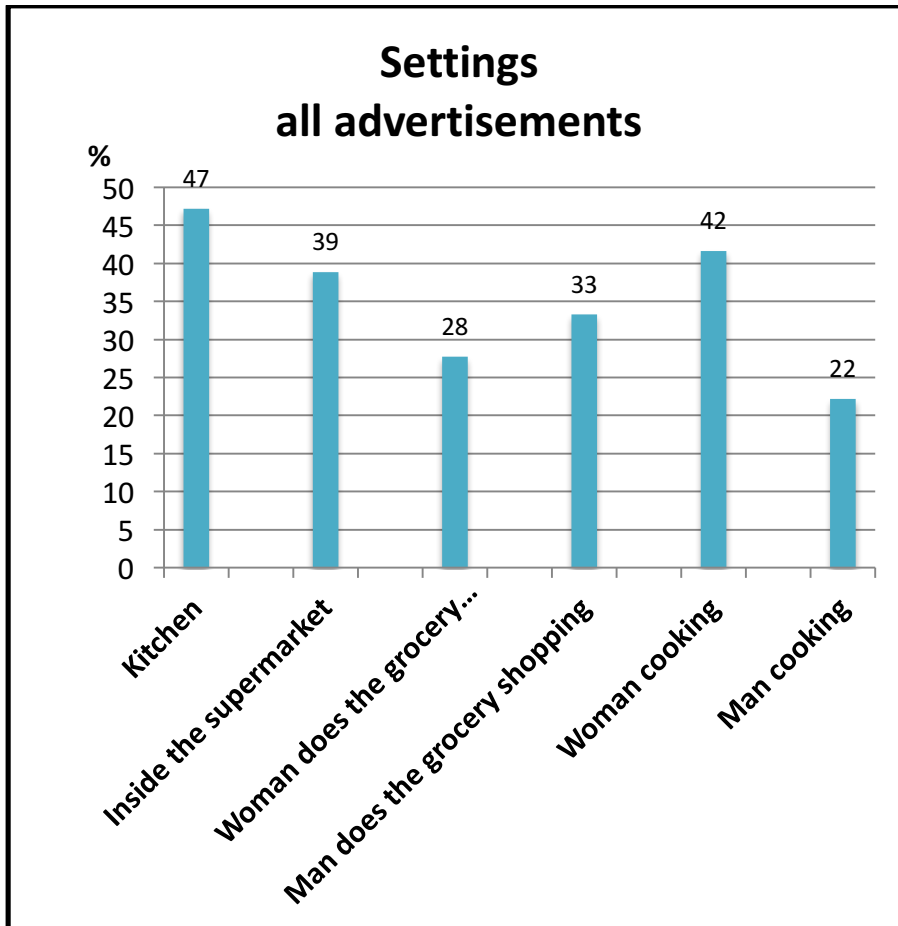


Figure 6: Settings, all advertisements

Research indicates that women are pictured with the company of children more often than men. This is replicated in the advertisements: women are with children 78% of the time and men only 28%. Figure 7. demonstrates the company each character in the advertisements is seen with. The men in the advertisements are most often pictured alone (39%) or in mixed company that is not their family (28%). Some studies have instigated that men are often pictured in all-male or mixed company and this is partially confirmed here too. Women are mainly portrayed with their family (78%), family being either children or husband or they are alone (22%). Women in this data set are never pictured with other people than their family. This demonstrates the traditional female roles where women are bound to their homes: it is their workplace and their responsibility.



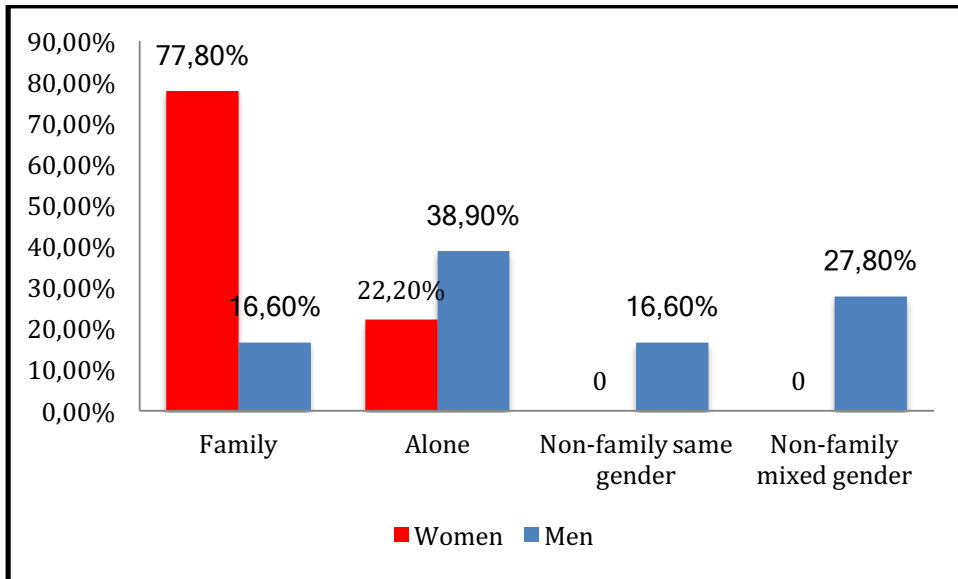


Figure 7: The company the characters are with

## 5.2 Linguistic features

In this chapter, the findings about the four generalisations of gendered language shown in table 5. will be discussed in their own chapters.

<b>The generalisations of gendered language</b>
1. Men use more humour
2. Women ask more questions
3. Women are emotional, men rational (give non-scientific vs. scientific arguments)
4. Women and men talk about different topics

Table 5: The generalisations of gendered language being analysed

### 5.2.1 Humour and word plays

Humour can be a highly contextual and cultural matter and in order for it to be successful the audience must be able to interpret it. The definition of humour according to the Oxford English Dictionary Online (2014) is: “the quality of being

amusing, the capacity to elicit laughter or amusement”. Linguistically humour can appear in multiple forms: it can be irony, sarcasm, metaphors, jokes, puns, word plays, figures of speech etc. To sort out the parts that rely on humour in the advertisements, two main techniques have been used. Firstly, if the language produces laughter either in the audience (physically present in the advertisement not the consumers) or in the character itself, that part has been considered as humour. Secondly, all the figures of speech and word plays have been extracted because they are essential parts of humour. Because many of the humorous phrases could go under many categories, they will be discussed more as a whole rather than counting the frequencies of each type of humorous vehicles. The main types of humorous vehicles in these advertisements are jokes, word plays and figures of speech. There can be multiple jokes and word plays performed out loud in one advertisement but they are not treated as separate units because sometimes one joke consists of many phrases. In total, humour is used in 28% of the women-led advertisements and in 67% of the men-led advertisements. Hence, it is clear that in this data men use humour noticeably more often than women. All the displays of humour are presented in tables 6. and 7.

	<b>Humour in female-led advertisements</b>
F2	“All hail the casserole queen!”
F9	“Table for four then?”
F10	“I always tell my friends there’s plenty more fish in the sea. Big ones, thin ones, funny ones, small ones. But best of all – grilled ones with new potatoes.”
F13	“Halloween isn’t scary. Not when you know the tricks to finding great treats.”
F16	“Aaah, the familiar wrestle: woman on bird.”

*Table 6: Humour, female-led advertisements*

	<b>Humour in male-led advertisements</b>
M1	<p>“I feel like a surgeon.”</p> <p>“Ian, you’ve got a queue of people who want you to do their eyebrows.”</p>
M2	<p>“Look at the shoot on that. I take no pleasure on this. Apply sucker.”</p> <p>“OOOOOOH, not like that! Have you never done this before?”</p> <p>“What did your last slave die of?”</p> <p>“Can I tempt you? Can I lure you with me milk?”</p> <p>“Cow juice! Cow juice!”</p>
M3	<p>“Cow juice! Cow juice!”</p> <p>“Can I tempt you? Can I lure you with me milk?”</p> <p>“Now quick run before I charge you. Go on, leg it.”</p>
M4	<p>“I wanna pick you up and carry you off and feel like Monday morning is so far away we might as well be in outer space.”</p>
M6	<p>“I’ve even got those three little words you long to hear: delicious strawberry cheesecake.”</p>
M7	<p>“Darling, thank you for looking after the kids – the little ones – and the big ones.”</p>
M10	<p>“If there’s one thing I love more than a bit of fishing it’s a bit of fish.”</p>
M14	<p>“Man: Ooh, you can’t beat a bit of British beef.</p> <p>Meat lady: You’re not wrong.”</p>
M15	<p>“every pinny wearing hero”</p>
M16	<p>“Husband: Great, that all comes to 74.89.</p>

	Wife: How do you know that?  Husband: I'm, um, at the checkout. *imitating a cash register peep**
M17	The entire advertisement: man listing different food products very fast
M18	“The king of meat.”

*Table 7: Humour, male-led advertisements*

In the discussion (chapter 6.3) the various displays of humour are analysed elaborately. Humour is also visible in numerous other advertisements presented in other forms, such as visual and contextual, than in the language spoken out loud by the characters. These forms, however, are not being analysed in this study because the purpose is to examine the language of advertising.

### **5.2.2 Asking questions and tag questions**

The second gender generalisation is that women ask more questions than men. In total the characters ask 28 questions and seven tag questions in the advertisements. 12 (43%) of the questions are asked by women and 16 (57%) by men. The questions are grouped by gender and then categorised in four groups depending on the question type. The first two question types are the ones presented in chapter 2.2 and two question types, humorous questions and open-ended questions are added since humour is one of the major contextual features analysed in this study and open-ended questions combine the questions which cannot be categorised under any of the other question types. The four groups are: yes/no-questions (abbreviated YN), rhetorical/speculative questions (abbreviated RH), open-ended questions (abbreviated OE) and humorous questions (abbreviated HU). Yes/no questions are the types of questions that require the answer to be either ‘yes’ or ‘no’, open-ended questions require the answer to be something else than a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, rhetorical and speculative questions are questions that ponder something but do not necessarily require an answer and humorous questions are questions that are asked to create amusement in the audience and do not necessarily require answers either. All

the questions asked in the advertisements are found in tables 8. and 9. and tag questions in table 10.

<b>QUESTIONS ASKED BY WOMEN</b>	<b>ADVERTI SEMENT</b>	<b>QUESTION TYPE</b>
Steaks.... On a Tuesday?	F3	RH
Where did he get the money from?	F3	OE
Maybe he sold his PlayStation?	F3	RH
Sorry could we just have a look at that one?	F5	YN
Why can't they make the prices low – and keep the prices low?	F7	RH
Table for four then?	F9	HU
Seen the time?	F12	YN
Whose idea was it to put a cross in these?	F16	OE
Early night?	M11	RH
Are you at Tesco's yet?	M16	YN
Where are you?	M16	OE
How do you know that?	M16	OE

Table 8: Questions, women

<b>QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEN</b>	<b>ADVERTI SEMENT</b>	<b>QUESTION TYPE</b>
What's for tea, love?	F5	OE
What do you mean?	F17	OE
Hello young lady what would you like?	M1	OE
Would you like one of our bags where you can cook in the bag?	M1	YN
Have you never done this before?	M2	YN (HU)
So you only supply milk to Asda?	M2	YN
What did your last slave die of?	M2	HU
Can I tempt you?	M2	HU
Can I lure you with me milk?	M2	HU
Can I tempt you?	M3	HU
Can I lure you with me milk?	M3	HU
Which fish?	M10	OE
Tonight? Hmmm tonight? Tonight...?	M11	RH
Does it have to cost a fortune every time you want some fresh fish?	M13	YN
Is that so unreasonable?	M13	RH
Did you get the quiche?	M14	YN

Table 9: Questions, men

<b>WOMEN</b>		<b>MEN</b>	
Let's enjoy it while we can, <u>eh</u> ?	F7	Lovely, <u>innit</u> ?	M3
Although I'm not quite sure about... well, <u>you know</u> ?	F8	I wanna stay in bed on a Saturday morning and <u>eh, you know</u> ?	M4
Learned our lesson though, <u>didn't we</u> ?	F17	We could do with a bit of fun, <u>couldn't we</u> ?	M14
They bake them here, <u>you know</u> ? <i>GIRL</i>	M14		

Table 10: Tag questions

The percentual division of the questions asked in the advertisements is displayed in figure 8. The most common question types women ask are rhetorical (33%) and open-ended questions (33%). One fourth of the questions are yes/no questions and only one question a woman asks is a humorous one (8%). The distribution of the questions types men ask is somewhat different. Almost one third of the questions men ask are humorous (31%) and another 31% are yes/no questions. Question "Have you never done this before?" (M2) is categorised as an YN - question but analysed also as a humorous question since it can be understood as both. One fourth of the questions are open-ended (25%) and the least common question type is a rhetorical question (12%) amongst men.

Tag questions are not as common as normal questions in the advertisements. The total of them is seven with men saying three (43%) tag questions and women four (57%), although one of these four tag questions was asked by a girl and children are not the subjects analysed in this study.

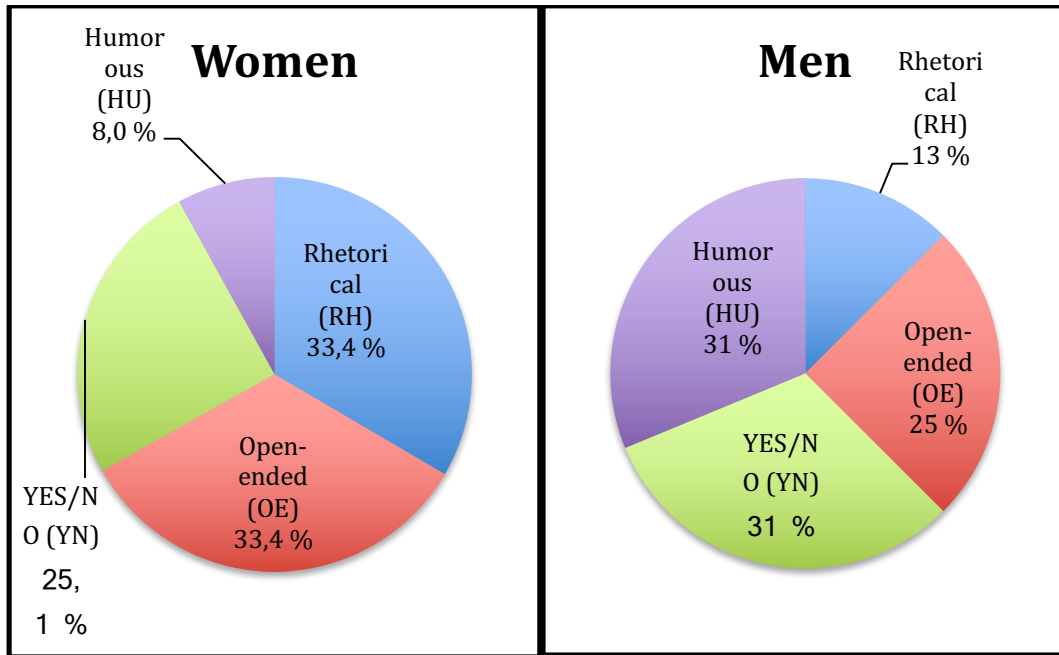


Figure 8: Humour

### 5.2.3 Emotional vs. rational reasoning

The third generalisation of gendered language argues that women are more likely to use emotional reasoning whereas men rely on facts and scientific argumentation. The data was analysed by using Furnham and Voli's (1989) method of dividing argumentation said by the characters in the advertisements in three categories: 'factual', 'opinion' and 'no argument'. The arguments analysed are mainly the ones that discuss the products being advertised. The discourses that are not related to the products being advertised or lack a clear form of argumentation are put to the 'no argument' – category. In some advertisements the characters express both facts and opinions within one advertisement so therefore they fall under both categories. Some arguments were difficult to categorise and thus the 'opinion' category forms mostly of arguments which clearly indicate a preference such as with the phrase "I like". Factual arguments are not only hard, scientific arguments but include also other general "facts about life". No kind of indication of preferences have been categorised under 'factual'. All the arguments can be found in two separate tables 11. and 12.

<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	<b>ARGUMENTATION, WOMEN</b>
	<b>FACTUAL</b>
F2	I chose this casserole because not only has it got big chunks of lamb but it's big on flavour.
F6	Or fish fingers, even quicker. The kids will love it.
F7	Why can't they make the prices low – and keep the prices low?
F12	Seen the time? You'll have a house full before you know it.
F13	Not when you know the tricks to finding great treats.
F16	There's never enough rings, never enough hands, never enough time. It's hard work.
F18	Learned our lesson though, didn't we? Never made that mistake again.
	<b>OPINION</b>
F1	A good cup of tea starts with a good tea bag. And that's why I chose these.
F1	Ah, that's lovely
F2	I love the casserole. I would say I'm the casserole queen. It's heart warming, it's hearty and it's a good comfort dish.
F8	'the entire advertisement'
F9	I want delicious parma ham followed by a stone baked mozzarella, tomato and pesto pizza with garden salad.
F10	But best of all – grilled ones with new potatoes.
F11	'the entire advertisement'
F15	'the entire advertisement'
F17	This is just so beautiful. I wish you were a bit more outdoorsy.
	<b>NO ARGUMENT</b>
F3	
F4	
F5	
F14	

Table 11: Argumentation, women



<b>ADVERTI SEMENT</b>	<b>ARGUMENTATION, MEN</b>
	<b>FACTUAL</b>
M1	It is easier. All the directions are on the back. Have a nice meal.
M2	'the entire advertisement'
M3	Yorkshire milk that is, as fresh as it can be.
M8	Valentine's is all about making the person you love feel special.
M12	There was a time when you could get that on almost every street. On this one you still can.
M14	So it started with the credit crunch and now petrol's gone up.
M18	Get ready for 21-day aged steak. The king of meat. So chew slow, make a meal of it cause it doesn't get better than this.
	<b>OPINION</b>
M1	I feel like a surgeon.
M4	'the entire advertisement'
M9	'the entire advertisement'
M10	'the entire advertisement'
M12	I like bakers better when they're trained.
M13	'the entire advertisement'
	<b>NO ARGUMENT</b>
M5	
M6	
M7	
M11	
M15	
M16	
M17	

Table 12: Argumentation, men

In 42% of the women-led advertisements women advertise the product by expressing their opinion about it. Men express their preferences in third of the men-led advertisement. Another difference is seen in the 'no argument' – category: 22% of the women-led advertisements have no arguments whereas the corresponding figure with men is 39%. Women and men stated factual arguments in an equal number of advertisements (39%). Figure 9. sums up the proportions. What should be noted is

that because some advertisements include multiple forms of argumentation, the combined percentage exceeds 100.

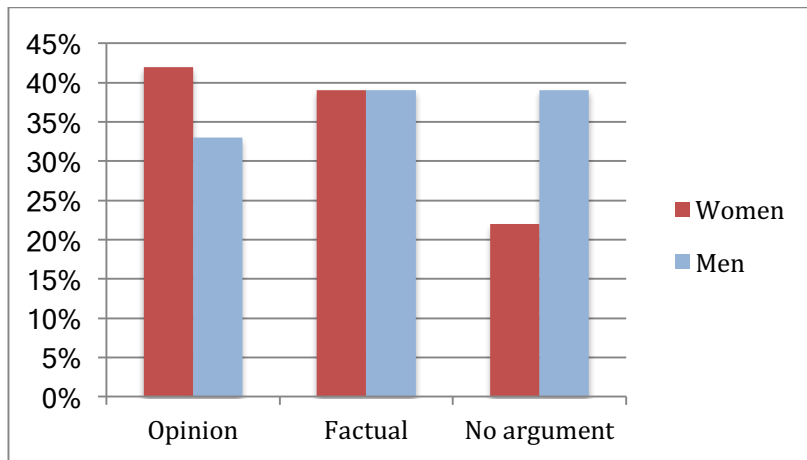


Figure 9: Argumentation

#### 5.2.4 Speech situations and topics

The fourth and final generalisation of gendered language analysed in this study is the argument that women and men discuss different topics. Women are said to talk about personal relationships, feelings and home-related topics while men talk about the outside world, politics, sports and cars and avoid discussing personal matters. Table 13. groups all the topics discussed in the 36 advertisements and presents them in the order of their occurrence frequency. In some of the advertisements more than one topic is discussed. The most frequent topic for women to discuss is feeding the children or the family (39%) with food quality falling as second (28%). Food quality was the most discussed topic amongst men (44%). The second most discussed matter with men was pleasing women or cooking for them as a treat (33%). Food prices were the third most frequent (28%) of men's concerns but it was the least discussed topic by women (6%). In 22% of the men's advertisements the talk was professional talk coming from a supermarket employee. From women there was no professional talk heard. The third biggest worry for women was Christmas stress (17%) while no men were pictured stressing about Christmas. Both women (11%) and men (6%) also dreamed about what else they could do instead of cooking roughly as often. In 11% of the women-led advertisements women also talk about doubting men's kitchen skills.

<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Topics, women</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Topics, men</b>
F2, F4, F6, F9, F12, F13, F14 39%	Feeding children/family	M2, M3, M10, M12, M13, M14, M15, M18 44%	Food quality
F1, F2, F9, F10, F15 28%	Food quality	M5, M6, M7, M8, M11, M16 33%	Pleasing women/cooking as a treat
F5, F16, F17 17%	Christmas stress	M9, M13, M14, M16, M17 28%	Prices
F8, F11 11%	Dreaming about what else to do instead of cooking/grocery shopping	M1, M2, M3, M17 22%	Supermarket employee (professionalism)
F3, F17 11%	Doubting man's kitchen skills	M4 6%	Dreaming about what else to do instead of cooking/grocery shopping
F7 6%	Prices		

*Table 13: Conversation topics*

## **6 Discussion**

In this chapter all the previously introduced findings will be discussed and analysed in the light of the theoretical background and the research questions. The occurrences of the stereotypical gender roles and the generalisations of the gendered language are

not discussed in the same order in which they are presented in tables 4. and 5. but instead dealt in a more logical order concerning their similar themes. The visual and contextual findings will be analysed first to lay foundations for understanding the linguistic features more comprehensively. In chapters 6.1 and 6.2 the four stereotypical gender role claims will be discussed in pairs and the rest of the chapters are dedicated to covering the four generalisations of the gendered language one at a time.

## **6.1 Woman's place**

Williamson (2003) stated that advertisements “still keep women in their place”. This phrase summarises quite accurately how women are portrayed in the majority of the advertisements studied here. Despite of the fact that advertising research has suggested an increase in the non-stereotyped advertisements, for example, in turning the traditional gender roles upside down (see chapter 2.3.1), this has not largely been the case in any of the advertisements studied in this thesis. Women are mainly pictured in their age-old traditional caretaker roles bound to their homes spending time with nurturing their children. Women are not pictured in a professional setting in any of the advertisements but men are pictured as supermarket professionals in a quarter of the men-led advertisements (M1, M2, M3 and M17). Women are seen as mothers in 78% of the women-led advertisements and in 61% of the time they are pictured at home, in the kitchen. This confirms the third claim of the stereotypical gender roles (table 4.), which argues that in advertisements women are pictured at home. According to the third stereotype men are mainly seen in leisure in advertisements but this is not necessarily the case in this data. Men are seen in the kitchen 33% of the time and in 61% of the advertisements men are pictured inside supermarkets. However, in most of the advertisements where men are seen in supermarkets, they are also seen in various free time settings. The term ‘leisure’ can also be comprehended in many ways. Here, being in a supermarket has not been categorised as leisure. Therefore, depending on the manner of categorising, this claim can or cannot be held true in these advertisements.

The fourth claim of the stereotypical gender roles (table 4.) is that women do the grocery shopping for the family or in other words they are the product-buyers, according to the coding scheme of Furnham and Voli (1989) and Aronovsky and

Furnham (2008). Men, instead, are usually shown as the product experts who hold factual knowledge and authority. When investigating the data, the claim that women do most of the grocery shopping, is not reproduced here. It is actually the men who are pictured doing more grocery shopping and they are pictured inside the supermarket over three times more often than women. However, the men who are seen doing grocery shopping are hardly ever doing so as a family man but rather they are implied to be shopping as independent men purchasing food products only for themselves. When all the 36 advertisements are analysed together, men do the shopping in 33% and women in 28% of them. The difference is not significant but it might implicate that the traditional gender roles are changing slightly, at least. It could be a reflection of the reality that men are taking more responsibility of domestic duties.

However, when analysing the characters on the basis of their credibility, i.e. who is the product buyer/user and who is the product expert in them, the typical division surfaces. Women are the product buyers or product users in 89% of the women-led advertisements. They are usually talking about their own food preferences and everyday lives and sharing tips on preparing dinner. These advertisements often portray women cooking in their own kitchens. Women are product experts in only 11% of the advertisements (F10 and F15). In both of the advertisements the women are independent. They are also the product users but they are talking from an expert point of view.

These two advertisements (F10 and F15) where women are pictured as product experts differ significantly from the other women-led advertisements. In F15 a single woman is seen shopping alone and telling about her high shopping standards. Her speech is assertive, authoritative and demanding – it fulfils all the characteristics of masculine talk. Other factors contribute to the masculine setting as well: the woman is portrayed in an independent role, pictured outside of home and seen in mixed-gender company. Women who manifest masculine features are often viewed rather negatively and they are said to be domineering and aggressive. The woman in the advertisement says herself that she is pretty hard to please when she goes shopping so she acknowledges herself that she is a tough case.

In F10 a woman is portrayed similarly as an independent, single woman. She is talking about her fish preferences but implying that she is actually telling about what kind of men she likes. At the same time various photos of men appear on screen. This is the only advertisement where men have been portrayed as sexual objects. They are presented as such with humour when the woman says the metaphorical phrase: “I always tell my friends there’s plenty more fish in the sea”.

Surprisingly, men are not pictured as the product experts in the majority of the men-led advertisements, like previous studies have suggested (see chapters 2.3.1 and 2.3.2). Instead they are both users and experts in an equal amount of the time (50%/50%). Men speak as occupational professionals in almost half of the cases when they are product experts. The other half of the time the men are listing precise product attributes and other facts concerning the food quality, origin and price. These appear in advertisements such as:

M14: “I just want a decent choice from a sustainable source. With none of it frozen and thawed out later.”,

M12: “When they can make dough from scratch, not just heat it up. And bake different types of bread – fresh on the premises.”

and M9: “I won’t pay more than the going rate.”.

These quotes are typical representations of the masculine assertiveness and authority.

Despite the previous, men are portrayed in similar positions to women in half of the men-led advertisements. They are pictured as domestic product buyers, although not so much as users. They are seen taking care of the grocery shopping in 61% of the advertisements but then again, they are usually seen shopping for themselves as independent men, not so much as family men. So by judging from these advertisements, it seems that there has been an increase in men doing the grocery shopping compared to previous findings. However, men are still rarely seen doing the family grocery shopping but instead they are only looking after for themselves.

There has been speculation that children could have an impact on the shopping habits of their parents (see chapter 2.3.2) and this could be potentially extended into these advertisements. Children, seen in 53% of the advertisements in the data, make the

most occurring characters. In the data, women are mainly seen at home with children and this is a reflection of how things still are in the western society: women are the main caretakers of children and the domestic duties. It was also previously mentioned that women are the biggest purchasing force in Britain so it would make sense that when women are home alone with children, the children are also exposed to television advertising and could therefore be an influence on their mother's shopping habits with their own demands.

## **6.2 Woman's responsibility, man's feat**

In chapter 2.3.1 it was discussed that being a mother and a caretaker is highly linked to femininity. A feminine woman does all the household duties and enjoys doing them and spending time in the kitchen. Women are also usually pictured as being dependent: they are wives and/or mothers whereas men are more often portrayed in independent roles. Advertising research has also found this same tendency (see chapter 2.3.2). These characterisations sum up the first two claims of the stereotypical gender roles (table 4.) up for analysis and all these traits come true in the data. Women are mainly pictured in dependant roles and men independent (claim 1), and it is largely women's responsibility to take care of the domestic duties and children (claim 2).

The most reoccurring role for women in the advertisements is being a mother. This is the case in 78% women's advertisements. In all of those cases the mother is seen as the main caretaker for the children and sometimes even for the husband. What seems apparent is that women in the advertisements are concerned and stressed about cooking and grocery shopping. In 13 out of the 18 advertisements (72%) it is clearly pointed out or otherwise implied that kitchen duties are solely women's responsibility. Compared to the advertisements where men are in the main part this same stress of responsibilities is not visible in any of the cases. Even though men are pictured grocery shopping in the advertisements they are not portrayed as the family caretakers. In fact, in M16 the father who has been left in charge of the grocery shopping for the family takes a nap instead. The concept of the 'new man', a more feminine, nurturing and domesticated man, is hardly visible in the advertisements. Fatherhood is demonstrated only in fifth of the men-led advertisements.

The role of being responsible for the cooking is visible in many forms. In F1 the husband says that his wife makes always the tea in their household. In F6, F8 and F9 the woman is seen as the caretaker for the whole family. In F6 the mother is distressed about when she has to go inside from sunbathing to cook while her husband is playing football with the kids in their backyard. In F8 the wife says to the husband she wishes she could do something else instead of cooking, like go to the gym, and wishes that the husband would stay home and feed the children. And in F9 the mother plans and cooks the family's dinner and the whole family comes to the ready laid table. The mother even jokes about the fact that the family comes to the table like they are coming to eat in a restaurant. In F2, F4, F7, F12 and F13 the mother is seen alone taking care of the children. In F4 the mother worries about needing a bigger fridge to feed all the mouths and in F7 the mother is clearly on a maternity leave with two small children. In F12 and F13 the mothers share advice to other mothers. It was previously mentioned (chapter 2.3.2) that food is "a woman's offering of love" and all the previously mentioned advertisements seem to reflect this ideology.

The most extreme case of everything falling on women's shoulder can be seen in F5 where the mother is seen doing all the preparations for Christmas by herself. The message of the advertisement goes: "Behind every great Christmas there's mum" with the emphasis on the word great. The message and the whole advertisement suggests that women should be in sole charge of making Christmas happen in order for it to be great. In the end of the advertisement when the exhausted mother finally sits on the couch to relax with a glass of wine her husband asks: "What's for tea, love?" which yet again verifies the fact that women do not get a break from cooking. The advertisement faced a lot of criticism from consumers and it was a heated topic in the media in 2012 when it came out (*Daily Mail*, 2012, and *The Guardian*, 2013). It was said to be utterly sexist and insulting and consumers could not believe how Asda dares to air such a stereotypically degrading advertisement today. In all of the three Christmas advertisements (F5, F16 and F18) analysed in the data, the woman is the only one who is pictured stressing about Christmas and juggling all the preparation tasks. The men are not seen as active participants. The term 'superwoman' was introduced in chapter 2.3.1 and it is most definitely applicable when describing the women in these advertisements.



The men-led advertisements tend to imply that men who deal with food are accomplishing something that they should be proud of, or they are doing a favour to their wives. This is a contradiction to the women's advertisement where it is implied that women cook because it is their responsibility. This proudness over men is evident even in two of the women-led advertisements where men appear (F3 and F17). In all the advertisements where men are seen with some family, or in other words if they are not single, they are taking part in domestic duties only as a favour to women, not because it is their responsibility. And they all seem very proud of themselves for doing the cooking.

In nine (50%) advertisements men are seen cooking or grocery shopping because they want to please their wives. Three of these advertisements are Valentine's Day (M6, M8, and M11) related and one a Mother's Day advertisement (M7). In M11 the wife reminds her husband not to forget what the day is and he goes shopping for ready-meals last minute. The wife is so pleased with him for making dinner on Valentine's Day that she rewards him with sex. In M6 the husband tells the wife not to worry, that he has got it all under control: the romantic meal with all the trimmings. He also proudly presents that he has even remembered the wife's favourite song. In the Mother's Day advertisement (M7) the husband thanks his wife for taking care of the children and him and even refers to himself as the "big child". This is a typical representation of the emasculated nurturing man that was previously introduced in chapter 2.3.1: the new man is dependant, stupid and weak. All these advertisements imply the message that men are cooking as a present or to thank their wives. It also signals that men cook only on special occasions and it should be treated as such.

In M5 the husband is apologising for upsetting his wife by making her breakfast. He is pictured being very pleased with himself because the apology has worked. In F17 the husband goes to buy milk to prove his wife he is not useless. In F14 the wife hands her husband their toddler's milk cup and he reluctantly goes to feed the child.

According to these advertisements the main difference between women and men and food is, that when men are dealing with food, they are doing something extraordinary whereas women are only doing the job that is expected of them. And by doing something so out of ordinary, the men should take much pride in it because they have

accomplished something great. In M15 the men who cook are even referred to as “pinny wearing heroes”. The direct admiration by women is present in M11 where the wife rewards the husband with sex and in F3 where the mother is very proud that his grown son is cooking.

These portrayals of women and men are as stereotypical as they can be. There is a clear distinction in the gender role division of responsibilities. Even though food does not carry any gender bias, it has and still is, advertised in gendered terms. The advertisements keep producing the traditional gender stereotypes and the public are exposed to these images.

These advertisements also exhibit only the ideal typical nuclear families where a family consist of a mother, a father and a child/children. Everyone is heterosexual. None of the characters represent any deviations from the norm: there are neither single-parent families nor homosexual people. This picture is the not only the one the advertising industry wants to portray but it is also what society wants us to see: a heterosexual white family that is the natural institution that we should all aim to be part of and admire (see chapter 2.3.1). No changes towards more equal and accepting society can be seen to have happened, at least by judging from these advertisements.

### **6.3 Humour and word plays**

Advertisers take full advantage of using humour frequently and diversely (see chapter 2.2.1). Humour engages the audience’s attention and it can be used to disguise negative connotations. It is used as one of the major strategic tools when trying to persuade consumers. Consumers themselves prefer advertisements that are funny and amusing because they create positive feelings within themselves and also positivity towards the product being advertised. Humorous advertisements are also more worthy to watch, especially when watching advertisements is usually considered as unappealing and dull. The majority of all the advertisements in the data contain humour in some form: linguistic, visual, contextual or cultural. The focus in this analysis is only on the humour that appears linguistically.

The first generalisation of gendered language (table 5.) argues that men use humour more frequently than women. The stereotype that “women don’t tell jokes” is more or less visible in the advertisements here. Humour is present in 28% of the women-

led advertisements and in 67% of the men-led advertisements. The content in them also differs. Men-led advertisements tend to be humorous throughout the duration of the advertisement piece and include multiple jokes and word plays whereas in the women-led advertisements the jokes are shorter and include usually only a single humorous phrase. All the jokes and word plays were displayed in tables 6. and 7.

The humour in the advertisements varies all the way from simple jokes to ambiguity and everything in between. Below, some examples of word plays, jokes and metaphors expressed by the characters in the advertisements are being discussed. Humour is all about the audience. If the audience cannot incode the amusement in the message, humour will not be successful. Humour is highly contextual and cultural and often it is not transferrable from one culture or language to another. Below, I will also discuss whether the examples of humour have the qualities to be successful and what could potentially make them incomprehensible.

Examples of word plays are heard in advertisements such as F13: “Halloween isn’t scary. Not when you know the tricks to finding great treats” where the advertisers are making a word play out of the Halloween tradition trick-or-treating. If a person is not aware of this tradition, the amusement in the advertisement will be left misunderstood. However, since the tradition is fairly common in Britain, the word play is most likely successful. In M10 the man is using adnomination, the repetition of words with the same word root, to create a funny effect: “If there’s one thing I love more than a bit of fishing it’s a bit of fish.”

Jokes are told in advertisements such as F10: “I always tell my friends there’s plenty more fish in the sea. Big ones, thin ones, funny ones, small ones. But best of all – grilled ones with new potatoes.” The woman is first pictured as if she is talking about men, but later appears that she is talking about real fish. If a person does not know the meaning of the metaphor ‘plenty more fish in the sea’, they will most likely not be able to understand the ambiguous meaning in the advertisement and therefore miss the joke in it.

Examples of metaphors include M10 where the dialogues goes as following:

“Man: Ooh, you can’t beat a bit of British beef.

Meat lady: You’re not wrong.”

In the advertisement a very good-looking muscular man is ordering meat from the meat counter and the meat lady implies that the man is the “bit of British beef”. Here the amusement lies in objectifying a handsome man as a piece of meat. This is a good example of how advertisements disguise sexuality with humour. Advertisers wrap otherwise negatively perceived matters with amusement. Another metaphor is evident in F16 where the mother says: “the familiar wrestle: woman on bird” to express how difficult and hard it is to prepare the Christmas turkey. The wrestle is familiar to all those women who always have to prepare the turkey.

Another feature of humour is exaggeration and self-bragging. This is visible in advertisements such as F2 and M18. In F2 the mother calls herself “the casserole queen” and in M18 a steak is referred to as “the king of meat”. In M15, the men who barbecue, are referred to as “pinny wearing heroes” and one of these pinny wearing heroes is also pictured in the advertisements in a humorous manner. Also, in M1 the fishmonger says that he feels “like a surgeon” when he is filleting a fish and all his colleagues and customers are looking at him doing it. These advertisements create humour by comparing cooking, which is an ordinary every day task, to something high or extravagant.

One group of humour is funny questions, which are meant to be rhetorical and therefore processing them leads to amusement. Especially men in these advertisements tend to create amusement by asking questions in order to engage their audience and hold the centre of the stage. Humorous questions will be discussed more in chapter 6.4 to come.

Some advertisements rely completely on humour. Advertisements M1, M2 and M3 are filled with humorous dialogues between men and they are funny from start to finish. The men in them use humour to joke about themselves but also about their colleagues. M17 shows a male supermarket worker listing various food products as fast as he can in order to be amusing.

Previous studies have found that women tell jokes to other women and to small audiences whereas men like to hold the centre of the stage and tell jokes to a bigger audience (see chapter 3.5). Men do this in order to create a hierarchical social order. 80% of the humorous phrases women say are said to the consumers behind the camera without any physical audience present in the advertisement. Many of them are also implicitly aimed at other women/mothers, so therefore these results seem to comply with the previous studies. In only one advertisement (20%) the woman tells the joke to an audience which is her family. The audience in men-led advertisements is much more versatile. In 42% of the humorous men-led advertisements the men are telling the jokes to an audience which is physically visible. These audiences consist of more than a couple of people. Out of these audiences, 60% are mainly same-sex audience, thus it seems that men joke around in the company of other men. It was said before that men create a hierarchical social order through humour and this could be the case in the majority of the jokes which have an audience present. In 33% of the time the audience is the consumers behind the camera.

25% of the jokes men tell are aimed to their wives even though their wives are not physically present in the advertisements. In chapter 2.2.1 men's humorousness was explained with evolutionary biology. Men need to amuse women in order to mate and hereby women like men who make them laugh and men like women to laugh at their jokes. Examples of these jokes are heard in M6: "I've even got those three little words you long to hear: delicious strawberry cheesecake" and M7: "Darling, thank you for looking after the kids – the little ones – and the big ones". In the former one, the three little words that most people would assume to be are 'I love you', but instead the husband says "delicious strawberry cheesecake". And in the latter one, the husband is making a joke of himself when implying that he is a big child himself.

According to Eisend, Plagemann and Sollwedel (2014: 260): "traditional female stereotyping occurs in non-humorous ads, whereas traditional male stereotyping occurs more often in humorous ads". This dichotomy manifests in the data also. Overall, women are pictured as mothers or wives in their stereotypical home surroundings and these advertisements are not as humorous as the ones with men. Men, on the other hand, are seen being funny most of the time outside of home or in a professional role.

In chapter 2.2.1 it was discussed that advertisers use humour to draw the consumers' attention away from things that are normally viewed rather negatively. Examples of such matters are sexism and stereotyping. Jokes are also said to be used to portray non-traditional gender roles and to over-exaggerate traditional ones. However, no reverse or non-traditional were visible in this data and so therefore no comment can be said about it. But, sexual innuendoes are visible in advertisements such as M2 where a man is milking a cow and says: "Look at the shoot on that. I take no pleasure on this. Apply sucker." In M2 and M3 the same character is seen giving milk samples to women and saying: "Can I tempt you? Can I lure you with me milk?" to them. The earlier discussed advertisement M14 is also charged with sexual innuendo. What should be noted is that all these allusions of sex are displayed only in the advertisements where men are the main characters. Despite of this, women are not pictured as sexual objects in any of the advertisements which can be viewed as a positive thing and hopefully as a signal of some kind of changes in equality.

Many people perceive food, grocery shopping, cooking and all things related to it, as dull chores and this becomes clear in these advertisements themselves. In advertisements such as M4, F8 and F11 the characters are discussing what else they would rather do than spend time preparing food or doing the shopping. Marketing such ordinary and tedious products such as food products can be an extremely difficult thing to do. It is no wonder that the advertisers rely heavily on humour when promoting food in hopes of attracting and then engaging consumers' attention. Research has also indicated that humour can change the ways people process information (chapter 3.5).

Humour is not only used for humour's sake but all these humorous phrases are usually created to convey messages. In these advertisements humour informs the consumers about how foods plays a role in love and relationships (M4, M6, M7 and M16). In these advertisements food is used as a thank you and they also show how other couples too struggle with grocery shopping. Humour can make the consumers to feel empathy towards the characters in the advertisements or help them to relate to them. Advertisements picture the everyday dullness of cooking (F2 and F9) and also the pressures of cooking on special days such as Christmas (F13, and F16). With humour, the advertisers also familiarise the consumers to the backstage of

supermarkets: the origins of food, the people who prepare them and the people who work in supermarkets (M1, M2, M3 and M17). These advertisements show how much fun it is to work in a supermarket.

#### 6.4 Questions

In chapter 2.2 it was introduced that one of the characteristics of advertising language is asking questions, especially yes/no-questions, rhetorical questions and tag questions. Questions engage the audience and make advertisements more interactive. This technique is visible in the advertisements studied here: multiple questions are asked in almost half of the advertisements.

The second gender generalisation (table 5.) is that women ask more questions and tag questions than men. Women ask questions in order to maintain the flow of the conversation, to initiate a new topic and to invite people to join in to the conversation. Questions, and especially tag questions, are argued to be a sign of weakness, insecurity and hesitation. Men see questions more as requests for information. Some of these features are evident in the advertisements too but mainly these claims are not reproduced in them.

Only 12% of the questions men ask are rhetorical, compared to women 33%. Women's thoughts are heard in the advertisements much more often than men's and it is often that women in their thoughts ask rhetorical questions, like in advertisements F3: "Maybe he sold his PlayStation?" or F7: "Why can't they make the prices low – and keep the prices low?". In fact, only one of the questions men ask is not spoken out loud by the character because it is his thought. Whereas over 40% of the questions women ask are not spoken out loud in conversation.

One of the striking gender difference in asking questions is in the humorous questions. Almost one third of the questions men ask are intended to be funny or amusing. One of the gender generalisations is that men use more humour than women and this happens to be the case in this data. One example is a funny Asda salesman who appears in two of the advertisements (M2 and M3) amusing women by asking: "Can I tempt you? Can I lure you with me milk?". Men also joke around in all-male groups by asking humorous questions from each other such as in

advertisement M2: “Have you never done this before?” and “What did your last slave die of?”.

Out of all the questions women ask only one can be considered to be have asked as a joke: “Table for four then” (F9). The mother who asks the question is seen cooking by herself and then her whole family rushes to the dinner table. The mother asks the question in order to joke about the fact that she has prepared the entire meal as if she was a chef and the family is just coming to a ready laid table as if they are coming to a restaurant.

Men ask mainly simple yes/no questions that are directed to someone else in the advertisements. 75% of the questions men ask are a part of a conversation with some other character/s in the advertisement. It seems apparent that men ask questions to either seek to information or to be amusing. Only half of the questions women ask are a part of a visible conversation with another character. These questions are also asked mainly in the certain same advertisements (F5, M11 and M16) whereas men ask questions in many advertisements (F5, F17, M1, M2, M3 and M14). On the account of this, in these advertisements it is more often the men who ask questions as parts of conversational sequencing and as invitations for others to join in to the conversation. In addition, the only two questions that can be considered as topic initiations or topic changes (“What’s for tea, love?” (F5) and “So you only supply milk to Asda?” (M2)) in all of the advertisements are asked by men, not by women, as it is often claimed.

The main generalisation, that women ask more questions than men, is not accurate in this data: it is actually men who ask more questions than women in the advertisements: men ask 16 questions and women 12. 65% of the questions are heard in the men-led advertisements and 35% questions take place in the advertisements where women are seen in the main part. There are no significance differences in asking tag questions: women are heard saying four tag questions and men three. Out of the four tag questions asked by females, one is asked by a girl, which makes it statistically irrelevant since this study excludes children.



## 6.5 Emotional vs. rational reasoning

Women's emotionalism and men's rationalism is one stereotype that is familiar to most people. This is also the third generalisation of gendered language (table 5.) that is analysed in this study. Women are known for expressing their feelings and opinions. Women are also strongly linked with gossiping and chit-chatting, which both are considered as trivial and unworthy (see chapter 3.5). Men's talk, on the other hand is said to be "real talk". They discuss facts and base their arguments on them. Previous studies have indicated that women are less likely to give scientific arguments in television advertisements than men (Furnham & Voli, 1989, and Aronovsky & Furnham, 2008). They have also argued that women in advertisements express their preferences more than men or give no arguments whatsoever. These are the hypotheses also for this study.

In 42% of the women-led advertisements the women characters are expressing their opinions. This is in line with the previous studies and stereotypes. Women use clear indicators of their preferences such as: "I love the casserole" (F2) and "I like fresh bread" (F15). They also express their desires explicitly: "I want delicious parma ham" (F9) and "I wanna go out for a walk" (F11). Women express feelings mostly about cooking and other domestic duties. Even though men express their opinions in many advertisements with the phrase "I like", their reasoning behind it is more scientific than based on emotions. Examples of this can be seen in advertisements: M10: "I like to know where it was caught and how" and in M12: "I like bakers better when they're trained". In the advertisements where men clearly express their preferences, which are based on feelings, the preference is expressed in such way that makes the men seem belittled or amusing. Such is demonstrated in advertisement M4 where the man simply states: "I like sausages" in a manner that makes him look simple or even dumb. Men base their arguments in opinions 33% of the time. It seems that in the advertisements it is ok for women to express their preferences but when men do similarly, the entire act is seen as trivial and something to be laughed at. Men express their feelings and opinions in order to be amusing. From this, it can be implicitly inferred that women's talk might be considered as less serious and more of a stream of consciousness than men's "real talk". Women also talk more about the

quality and the taste of the food products whereas men talk about food production and origins and ethicality.

No differences are seen in the amount of advertisements where women and men give factual arguments, contrary to the previous studies. The percentage is 39% in both women and men-led advertisements. Despite of this, the tendency for women to be more non-scientific even in their factual argumentation is visible. Women are more likely to say more general facts which lean more towards expressing emotions than stating scientific facts. Examples of this are: “I chose this casserole because not only has it got big chunks of lamb but it’s big on flavour” (F2), “Or fish fingers, even quicker. The kids will love it” (F6) and “Seen the time? You’ll have a house full before you know it” (F12). All these facts are related to everyday life and women’s own needs and experiences whereas the factual arguments men give concern more the outside world. This is evident in the following arguments in M2: “All Asda milk comes from a dedicated group of farmers.”, M12: “There was a time when you could get that on almost every street. On this one you still can.” and M14: “So it started with the credit crunch and now petrol’s gone up”.

One hypothesis is also that women are more likely to leave any kind of argumentation out of the conversation than men but this was not replicated in this data. The numbers were surprisingly the opposite: in 22% of the women-led advertisements no conclusive arguments were expressed but the portion in men-led advertisements was almost the double (39%). It appears so that when men do not have something factual to say, they rather not comment anything.

The argumentations the characters use in these advertisements are clearly thought and planned beforehand. It is probably because advertisers want to appeal to both genders that they use the stereotypical gender argumentation. If women really are emotional and men rational it would make sense for the marketers to assimilate the language the characters speak in the advertisements in order to arouse the consumers’ attention. Especially when women are the major purchasing force it is worthwhile to try to persuade more men to buy food products. And one of the best ways to do so is to try to make men feel familiar with the characters and help them to relate to the characters in every aspect, especially linguistically and in argumentation which are the vehicles that furthermore affect their thought processes.

In conclusion, the results seem to somewhat obey the general gender stereotypes. The differences between the percentages are not major, but the findings behind the numbers are significant. The only deviation from previous findings is in not giving any arguments. However, since the classification of dividing all the arguments under these three categories can be prone to subjectivity, a consultation from another researcher could possibly produce slightly different results.

## **6.6 Topics**

Traditionally women's talk has happened in the private surroundings, mainly home and in a small company of other women whereas men have dominated the public front of speaking and they usually talk to bigger audiences. In these advertisements the characters are usually pictured in these traditional speech situations: women are portrayed in private settings i.e. home with children and men outside of home with company (see figure 7.). In the advertisements women are never shown in the company of any other people than their own family. Men are seen in same or mixed gender groups in almost half of the time and almost all of their discussions happen outside of home. Women's talk barely leaves the home front. These findings coincide with previous advertising research, such as the study done by Furnham & Bitar (1993).

The topics women and men discuss in these advertisements also confirms the traditional generalisation that women and men do talk about different things, which is the last and final generalisation of the gendered language (table 5.) examined. Traditionally women are said to talk about people, home, feelings and personal matters while men discuss the outside world: sports, politics and cars and avoid talking about interpersonal matters. Therefore the topics men discuss are viewed as serious and real talk while women's talk in turn is considered as trivial.

The most discussed topic amongst women is talking about feeding the family and/or children. It is the topic of 39% of the women-led advertisements. The mothers are talking about their food preferences and concerned about what to cook for dinner. In these home-related advertisements the mother-characters are clearly trying to appeal to other mothers; they are sharing their knowledge, worries and advice to fellow mothers in the audience. Women are generally said to bond through discussing

troubles and worries. In some of the advertisements (F2, F9 and F12) the mothers are talking directly to the mothers behind the television by looking straight to the camera. In F12 the mother character says: “I’d be ready if I were you.”. This kind of style, synthetic personalisation, where the characters in the advertisements are directly addressing the consumers, as they were their friends, is a common technique used in advertising (see chapter 2.2). Women traditionally value solidarity and sisterhood and therefore seeing similar issues in these advertisements to what women deal with in their real lives can lead to very efficient marketing – and also to the reproduction of the gender stereotypes.

Food quality is the topic women discuss the second most (28%). They wish the food they feed to their children to be of good value. The third most occurring topic (17%) in the women-led advertisements is Christmas stress. The mothers in these advertisements are clearly in charge of making everything happen for Christmas and they start to do it early. They are exhausted and not happy with the workload. In F16 the mother complains that: “There’s never enough rings, never enough hands, never enough time. It’s hard work.”. Men are never seen as the main characters in Christmas advertisements and they are not shown stressing about it, or taking much part in preparing for it, as a matter of fact.

The women in these advertisements do not seem to take great pleasure in being responsible of the domestic duties, contrary to the belief that women are supposed to enjoy cooking and cleaning because it is feminine, something innate. 17% of the advertisements show women explicitly dreaming about what else they could do instead of doing all the housework. In F8 the mother wishes that the husband would feed the children instead of her. In 11% of the advertisements women are doubting a man’s kitchen skills and expressing their disbelief that a man could take care of the domestic duties. In F17 the woman even calls her husband “hopeless”.

Aronovsky & Furnham (2008) found that that the three most dominating reasons why consumers buy a certain products are pleasure, money and quality, in respective order. These three are also the top three things the men in these advertisements discuss. In comparison, in only one advertisement (6%) a woman is talking about food prices. Food quality makes the biggest segment (44%) the men are concerned about in these advertisements. They only want the best quality food, they want to

know the sources where the food comes from and they want everything to be as fresh as possible. In 28% of all the men-led advertisements the men want all this to come at a reasonable price. In these advertisements the men state facts about food quality and prices and they also make demands that supermarkets should be responsible for providing the necessary information for consumers, for example about the origins of their food products. Their talk is “real” and serious and they state their demands very directly, like for example in advertisements M9: ” I want low prices I can rely on.”, in M10: “And I like to know where it was caught and how. “ and in M13: “Then I want a proper fishmonger to fillet it in front of me – at a good price”.

Men never talk about feeding the family nor they are trying to appeal to the consumers’ emotions. Rather, they are trying to appeal to the consumers’ rational side. The men in the advertisements are not seen chit-chatting or talking about their feelings, the things which men usually try to avoid in order to not be linked with femininity or homosexuality. In only one advertisement (M4) a less stereotypical man is shown. In this the husband is talking about his hopes and shows glimpses of his softer side. He is also expressing his feelings to his wife: “Thanks for listening gorgeous. I love you”. The second most frequent topic (33%) men talk about is pleasing their wives or cooking as a favour or a treat. This matter was discussed more elaborately in chapter 6.1.

Unlike women, men are seen discussing current matters such as the credit crunch (M14), petrol prices (M14) and locally produced food (M2). Men are pictured in a professional setting in over fifth of the advertisements when their character is a supermarket employee. No main character women are seen in similar settings. A typical masculine man is a workingman and women’s workplace is home. This dichotomy is obvious in the majority of these advertisements. In M1 the fishmonger says that he feels like he is a surgeon when filleting a fish which indicates that he takes much pride in his work.

Previous studies have claimed that men talk about women less than 30% of the time and women talk about men almost 90% of the time (Coates, 2003: 121). In these advertisements women and men talk about each other the exact same amount of time, in 27% of the advertisements.

In conclusion, while some of the topics, such as food quality and prices, are discussed both by women and men it is clear that women and men are concerned about different topics and they are portrayed in different speech situations. The goal of advertising is to persuade and influence consumers and by portraying characters in familiar situations to them they do exactly so. If advertisements are a reflection of our social values then judging by these advertisements not many steps towards less stereotypical and gender equal atmosphere has been taken even if the new advertisement research has suggested otherwise (see chapter 2.3.1).

## **7 Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to find out whether the language in present-day food advertising differs between genders by focusing on the main generalisations of gendered language identified in the field of language and gender research. The objective was also to analyse if advertisements still rely on the traditional stereotypical gender roles.

The data comprises of 36 recent food-related advertisements of four of the biggest supermarket chains in Britain. Food was chosen as the topic because it offers a good test-case for gender studies: even though food is a neutral matter it has always been linked with highly stereotypical gender characteristics. The data was approached on two levels: linguistic and contextual, and analysed by focusing on four generalisations of gendered language and four stereotypes of traditional gender roles. In this closing chapter the research questions will be answered and the main conclusions of the analysis will be presented. The main conclusions will be contrasted with the previous studies introduced in the earlier chapters and ideas of how to expand the research in this topic in the future will be demonstrated.

The data in this study supported some of the hypotheses made about gender stereotypes but some were not apparent. In some cases straightforward conclusions were hard to draw. The conclusions here should be read with keeping in mind the relatively small size of the data. A larger data could definitely provide more valid results for generalisation but much can be said already on the basis of this data. Nevertheless, since the data sample was chosen randomly it can give a good representation of the nature of the current food advertisements in general.

The first research question was set to find out how the language the women and men characters use in modern day British supermarket food advertising differ from each other. Differences were analysed in the use of four linguistic features: humour, asking questions, argumentation and topics. The results with humour align with previous studies and the common stereotype that women are less humorous than men. In the advertisements men are seen joking over two times more often than women. Their lives are pictured to be more amusing and funny whereas women are dealing with the burden of the domestic duties.

The second feature analysed was questions and tag questions. One of the claims of gender characteristics is that women ask more questions and use more tag questions than men. Questions are seen negatively as a sign of weakness and hesitation but also as a strategic way to maintain the flow of conversation. This claim was not replicated in the data. Even though women asked more rhetorical questions than men, which could be seen as a sign of insecurity, it was actually the men in these advertisements who asked more questions in total. Men used questions as conversational sequencing more often than women so it would seem that men have to work as much, or even more, than women to keep the conversation flowing. Because the number of tag questions was small nothing conclusive was drawn from it.

The third linguistic aspect studied was argumentation. According to the old stereotype, women are thought to be emotional and men rational. Previous studies have found that this can be seen in the way women and men form arguments in conversation: women's arguments are based on opinions and men's arguments in facts. This claim did not hold true in these advertisements. Even though women did express their opinions slightly more often than men, the difference is not significant. This could be read as an indicator that women's arguments are taken more seriously and valued as much as men's. Women also based their opinions in facts as often as men, although women's facts can be seen as slightly less scientific than men's.

The third research question was established to find out whether the claim that women and men discuss different topics comes evident in this data set. Women stereotypically discuss feelings, personal relationships and children, or in other words the things that are considered as trivial. Men, on the other hand, discuss "real" matters: politics, sports, cars etc. the things that are happening in the outside world.

In this data, women and men are still mainly pictured in their traditional speech settings: women at home and men outside of home. They also discuss different topics. In the advertisements women are mainly talking about home-related topics and children. Whereas men talk about food prices, quality and current matters and they never talk about feeding the family. This is an unfortunate re-representation of the stereotypical dichotomy where women are the caretakers and men the breadwinners. Even though the world has changed towards being more equal for women and men and despite the fact that these portrayals are not fully true representations of the reality, the advertising industry still keeps on insisting on picturing it to be so.

In this data sample the language women and men use could indeed be analysed by using gender characteristics. This answers the second research question set for this study. The question could, however, have been, *should* language women and men use be analysed by using these gender characteristics. Furthermore, it should be asked if language in general use should even be analysed on the basis of gender and does trying to find differences in women's talk and men's talk only hinder gender equality. Some scholars strongly argue that no such characterisations can be made by using wide categories such as gender but rather the focus should be on individuality. Individual approach could be more appropriate since gender is not a clear-cut matter but more of a wide spectrum of individual differences and identities. Cameron (1992: 39) also points out that instead of focusing on listing what the gender differences in language are, more focused should be put on analysing what the differences actually mean.

Besides linguistic features this study also analysed how the stereotypically traditional gender roles are visible in the advertisements. This is also the fourth and final research question. This was studied by using a coding scheme that analyses various visual and contextual aspects, such as the roles the characters in the advertisements are playing, the settings they are pictured in and the actions they are seen taking. Previous studies have noticed that in advertisements women are pictured more at home, in dependant roles, taking care of the domestic duties, such as grocery shopping, and being responsible for the children. Men, on the contrary, are pictured as being independent and they are more often seen in professional and leisure



settings than at home. These findings paint the picture of the age-old stereotypical division of gender roles and responsibilities and therefore they were also the qualities studied here.

For the most part, all these traditional gender roles were recreated in the advertisements studied here. I expected that there would be more deviation and reverse gender roles illustrated but this was not the case. Instead women are seen in their traditional caretaker roles bound to their homes and being dependent of their husbands. Men are pictured in the outside world taking care of business and joking around with their peers. Even though men are often seen doing the grocery shopping it is never done with the role of being a family man but as an independent man. Despite of this, the advertisements do not paint the picture of a happy housewife who loves her chores; instead the women are often pictured as being unhappy with their responsibilities and consider all the chores to be burdens. Some extreme cases of everything falling on women's shoulders were seen in Christmas advertisements where organising the whole event is implied to be solely women's responsibility.

On the contrary to cooking being women's responsibility, the men who cook in the advertisements are pictured as accomplishing something when doing so. Men are seen cooking for their wives only as a present, an apology or as a favour. The cooking is done with proudness and received as an accomplishment. Whereas women cook the everyday meals, men cook only on a special occasion. What this illustrates is that the main difference between women and men and food is that when men are dealing with food, they are doing something extraordinary whereas women are only doing the job what is expected of them. As Williamson (2003) said: advertisements "still keep women in their place". However, one improvement in equality can be seen in the data: sexism and objectifying women was almost invisible.

It is understandable that marketers prefer to use gender stereotypes because they carry a highly condensed messages and a lot needs to be said in the short duration of a regular television advertisement which is usually 30 seconds long. But it is surprising that these stereotypes are the only depictions of genders the advertisements demonstrate. Especially when in the Western culture, more specifically in the UK where these advertisements are broadcasted, these stereotypes

are not the only gender roles in real life. Women are usually not bound to their homes and they have careers and men participate in the domestic duties and in raising the children. Some studies have noticed a reduction in presenting stereotypes in advertisements and it would be interesting to investigate if this is the case with a bigger data.

This study raises multiple questions and areas for further research. Humour is one of the main strategic vehicles used in advertisements and therefore it offers an ideal topic for further analyses. Humour could be extended to sarcasm and irony and then analysed more exhaustively. Lexical items were completely excluded from this study. Studying word choices and vocabulary could deepen our understanding if women and men are consciously intended to speak differently in advertisements. From the perspective of marketing studies it could be worthwhile to research whether targeting plays any roles in reproducing stereotypical gender roles and in language choices.

Another issue that arose from this study is the lack of gender variation in advertisements. These advertisements mainly pictured typical forms of femininity and masculinity and the ideal nuclear families that they compose. The heteronormative mind-set was the only message conveyed even though it is not an accurate representation of the modern reality. A wider spectrum of sexualities and different types of families are definitely needed to be seen and heard in advertisements. Further research could consider focusing on how these are currently represented in advertisements, if at all.

It was previously stated that advertising is a vital part of our social reality and a part of the process where we learn to understand and define gender. If this truly is the case then a change in how advertisements portray genders could be a step towards a less gender-biased world where individualism has more space to flourish and children could acquire more tolerant world views and have equal opportunities despite of their sex or gender.

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## Advertisements

ASDA: Chosen by you – Tea bags

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12961&advertiser=Asda&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12961&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

ASDA: Chosen by you – Casserole queen

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA15619&advertiser=Asda&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA15619&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

ASDA: Steaks on a Tuesday

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA16628&advertiser=Asda&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA16628&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

ASDA: Bigger fridge

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA16806&advertiser=Asda&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA16806&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

ASDA: Christmas advert 2012 – Behind every great Christmas there's mum

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qr5Zge14XG0> (Accessed January 20, 2015)

ASDA: Make the most of summer at Asda

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CO-OP: The weekly shop – A wife's reply

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12289&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12289&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

CO-OP: Truly irresistible <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeCh68XRFoo>

(Accessed January 20, 2015)

CO-OP: Plenty more fish in the sea

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12776&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12776&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

CO-OP: Long weekend

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12839&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12839&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

CO-OP: Preparing dinner for the kids

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA14725&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA14725&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

CO-OP: Halloween – Tricks for great treats

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA15656&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA15656&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

CO-OP: Milk for Maisy

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA18429&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA18429&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

MORRISONS: Denise Van Outen

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA4312&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA4312&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

MORRISONS: For you Christmas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uk1F1uynims> (Accessed January 20, 2015)

TESCO: Milk

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA3678&advertiser=Tesco&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA3678&advertiser=Tesco&type=recent) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

TESCO: Christmas Turkey [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM9\\_MRptiNA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM9_MRptiNA) (Accessed January 20, 2015)

ASDA: Fish in a bag

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA4738&advertiser=Asda  
&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA4738&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

ASDA: Cow juice

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA3772&advertiser=Asda  
&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA3772&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

ASDA: Milked myself

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA3847&advertiser=Asda  
&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA3847&advertiser=Asda&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

CO-OP: A Husband's plea

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12283&advertiser=Co-  
Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12283&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

CO-OP: Bread <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0raCaehV3vg> (Accessed January 23, 2015)

CO-OP: Valentine's Day #1

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12494&advertiser=Co-  
Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12494&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

CO-OP: Mother's Day

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA14585&advertiser=Co-  
Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA14585&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

CO-OP: Valentine's Day #2

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA14421&advertiser=Co-  
Operative&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA14421&advertiser=Co-Operative&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

MORRISONS: Alan Hansen

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA5003&advertiser=Morr  
isons&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA5003&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)



MORRISONS: Nick Hancock

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA4739&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA4739&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

MORRISONS: Valentine's Day tonight

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA2490&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA2490&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

MORRISONS: Fresh bread

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA5029&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA5029&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

MORRISONS: Robert Lindsay

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA9157&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA9157&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

MORRISONS: Let's celebrate

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA12799&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA12799&advertiser=Morrison&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

TESCO: Barbecue chicken [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op\\_t14NNnvc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op_t14NNnvc)  
(Accessed January 23, 2015)

TESCO: Find your favourites

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA13541&advertiser=Tesco&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA13541&advertiser=Tesco&type=recent) (Accessed January 23, 2015)

TESCO: Price drop – fast talking

[http://www.tellyads.com/play\\_advert/?filename=TA14504&advertiser=Tesco&type=recent](http://www.tellyads.com/play_advert/?filename=TA14504&advertiser=Tesco&type=recent) (Accessed March 26, 2015)

TESCO: Love every mouthful: Steak

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhKcJ1AikQo> (Accessed March 23, 2015)

## Appendices

### Appendix A. Advertisements with women in the main part

#### 1. ASDA: Chosen by you – Tea bags (30 seconds)

##### a) Characters

A married elderly couple

##### b) Setting

A married elderly couple is having tea in front of their trailer and they seem to be on vacation.

##### c) Transcription

Elderly woman: I make most of the tea in our house – ever since day one.

Elderly man: Fifteen years

Elderly woman: Sixteen nearly. I think I must have about eight cups of tea a day.

Elderly man: She makes very good tea, this lady here, yes.

Elderly woman: A good cup of tea starts with a good tea bag. And that's why I chose these.

Voice-over (male): ---

Elderly woman: Ah, that's lovely

Voice-over (male): ---

#### 2. ASDA: Chosen by you – Casserole queen (30 seconds)

##### a) Characters

A mother and daughter

**b) Setting**

Mother is making food in the kitchen while her daughter is drawing next to her.

**c) Transcription**

Mum: I love the casserole. I would say I'm the casserole queen. It's heart warming, it's hearty and it's a good comfort dish. I chose this casserole because not only has it got big chunks of lamb but it's big on flavour.

Voice-over (male): ---

Mum: All hail the casserole queen!

Voice-over (male): ---

**3. ASDA: Steaks on a Tuesday (30 seconds)****a) Characters**

A mother and son

**b) Setting**

Mother comes home to the kitchen with her grocery shopping while her son is cooking steaks. The mother ponders where he got the money for the steaks.

**c) Transcription**

Mum (Thinking): Steaks.... On a Tuesday? Where did he get the money from? Aww, my little boy's got a job. –Clearly not. Maybe he sold his playstation? – Don't be daft. Oh no! He's got himself a fancy woman.

Voice-over (male): He wishes, but no. He's just been to Asda where butchers selection steaks are now two for just seven pounds.

#### 4. ASDA: Bigger fridge (30 seconds)

##### a) Characters

A mother, her two children and many of her children's friends

##### b) Setting

Mother is unpacking the grocery shopping bags while her children sit on the table waiting for food. After every time the mother looks away from the table more children has come to the table.

##### c) Transcription

Mum (thinking): Now, here comes trouble. Mmh, I know that look. Now these will keep them happy. Huh, I'm sure I only had two. Right, good job I stocked up. That, that and those. Oh! I'm gonna need a bigger fridge.

Voice-over (male): To help feed to extra mouths over summer Asda's lowered the price.... (the offer)

#### 5. ASDA: Behind every great Christmas there's mum (60 seconds)

##### a) Characters

A wife, her husband and their children and relatives.

##### b) Setting

The advertisements shows glimpses of the many tiring Christmas preparations the wife/mother has to do all by herself: picking the Christmas tree, writing the Christmas cards, decorating the tree, the baking, shopping for the presents, shopping for the Christmas food, wrapping the presents, catering for the Christmas guests, cleaning everything afterwards while still doing all the normal everyday routines (taking kids to school, feeding them, doing laundry, cleaning). When all this is done, the wife finally gets to sit down with a glass of wine.

##### c) Transcription

Husband: Perfect!

Wife: No... Sorry could we just have a look at that one? Ah, yeah!

Wife: That way, back a bit

Child: Wake up! It's Christmas!

Voice-over (male): It doesn't just happen by magic. Behind every great Christmas there's mum. And behind mum there's Asda.

Husband: What's for tea, love?

**6. ASDA: Make the most of summer at Asda (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A mother, a father and their children

**b) Setting**

The mother is sunbathing and relaxing in her backyard while the children and the father are playing football next to her. The mother keeps thinking about when she needs to go in to cook and keeps moving her sun chair to where the sun is.

**c) Transcription**

Mum (thinking): Ah, sun! Let's enjoy it while we can, eh. Five more minutes then I'll go in and cook. Hang on! Fajitas are quick. Let's catch a bit more. Or fish fingers, even quicker. The kids will love it. –Sorted.

Voice-over (male): To make the most of summer Asda's lowered the prices....

**7. ASDA: Price lock at Asda - Prices go down and stay down (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A mother, her toddler and her older son

**b) Setting**

A disoriented mother is trying to feed her toddler in a messy kitchen while her other son is making more mess. At the same time she is thinking about why the food prices are going up and accidentally eating her toddler's food.

**c) Transcription**

Toddler: Mmmmm...

Mum (thinking): I'm sure baked beans were cheaper last week. Hold on! The bread was cheaper too. Uh, and the milk. Why can't they make the prices low – and keep the prices low?

Voice-over (male): That's a very good question.

Mum: That would make sense.

Voice-over (male): Couldn't agree more. That's why with Asda's new price lock down...

**8. CO-OP: The weekly shop – A wife's reply (60 seconds)****a) Characters**

A wife, her husband and their children

**b) Setting**

A wife is giving a reply to her husband's plea on spending less time grocery shopping. The advertisement shows glimpses of the things the wife would like to do instead of doing the massive weekly shopping (go the gym, let the husband do the cooking for the children, get her nails done, go to the funfair, go to the beach, eat ice cream, make love to her husband).

**c) Transcription**

Wife: Darling, I forgive you for appearing on tv. See I don't wanna do the massive weekly shop anymore either. I wanna go to the gym. And leave you cooking boiled eggs and soldiers for the kids. Get me nails done on the

way home. If I'm gonna sit in traffic I want it to be for the funfair. I wanna hold hands on the beach - even if it's raining. And eat ice cream, ooh, lots of ice cream. I don't want to wait an eternity for a parking space only to buy stuff we won't need or eat. Just like everyone else. And Saturday afternoon's should be for napping. Although I'm not quite sure about... well you know, hmph. I'll see you on Saturday hubby. I'm looking forward to it already.

Voice-over (male): ---

**9. CO-OP: Truly irresistible (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A mother, her husband and children

**b) Setting**

A woman is planning a delicious three-course menu. At the end of the advertisement her family barks into the kitchen and it turns out she is making dinner for her family.

**c) Transcription**

Mum: I want delicious parma ham followed by a stone baked mozzarella, tomato and pesto pizza with garden salad. Then, a scrumptious Sicilian lemon and summer berry tort. – Table for four then?

Voice-over (male): ---

**10. CO-OP: Plenty more fish in the sea (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A woman, her friends and many men

**b) Setting**

A woman is walking on the beach talking about how she always tells her girlfriends that there are plenty more fish (implying men) in the sea. She

then tells what kind of fish there are in the sea and frames of different kinds of men appear. But in the end it becomes clear that she is actually talking about eating fish.

**c) Transcription**

Woman: I always tell my friends there's plenty more fish in the sea. Big ones, thin ones, funny ones, small ones. But best of all – grilled ones with new potatoes.

Voice-over (male): ---

**11. CO-OP: Long weekend (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A mother, her husband and their children and a big group of people having dinner outside

**b) Setting**

Mother/wife is sitting on a couch talking seemingly to her husband about what she wants to do this long weekend. Glimpses of her hopes show in the advertisement.

**c) Transcription**

Mum: I wanna put the long back into this long weekend. I want us to catch up with lifelong friends. I wanna go out for a walk – a long walk. With the kids. Or maybe even a bike ride. As long as it's downhill. I want us to enjoy each other's company. For as long as we can anyway.

Voice-over (male): ---

**12. CO-OP: Preparing dinner for the kids (20 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A mother and her two children



**b) Setting**

A mother is standing in the kitchen panicking that she will not have enough time to prepare the dinner before everyone gets home.

**c) Transcription**

Mum: Seen the time? You'll have a house full before you know it. In through the front door straight to the fridge door. I'd be ready if I were you.

Voice-over (male): ---

**13. CO-OP: Halloween – Tricks for great treats (20 seconds)****a) Characters**

A mother and many children

**b) Setting**

A mother is talking in the kitchen about how to make a successful Halloween.

**c) Transcription**

Mum: Halloween isn't scary. Not when you know the tricks to finding great treats.

Voice-over (male): ---

**14. CO-OP: Milk for Maisy (30 seconds)****a) Characters**

A mother, a father and their baby daughter

**b) Setting**

Mother is warming milk in the kitchen for her daughter and puts in the cup. The father then comes to get the cup, gives her wife a kiss and goes to feed his daughter.

**c) Transcription**

Voice-over (female): Right now nothing is more important than this milk. In just a few moments it must be lovely and frothy and warm. It must be in the pink cup, not the yellow one. With the lid just so. So Maisy enjoys a peaceful night's sleep. And mum and dad enjoy a night to themselves. Milk – it's important. That's why we charge so little for it. Your local Co-op here for you for life.

**15. MORRISONS: Denise Van Outen (60 seconds)****a) Characters**

A woman

**b) Setting**

A woman is walking on a field pushing a shopping trolley and talking about her high standard shopping habits. Then she is seen on a boat, in a café and finally in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Woman: I'm pretty hard to please when I go shopping. Especially when I'm shopping for food. I like fresh bread, made from scratch by bakers on the premises. I like a fish counter where the fish has never been frozen. I like fresh meat. Freshly cut on the day. Same with sandwiches, I like them freshly made with fresh things in them picked in-store that day. Oh, and I like freshly whipped creamy cakes finished by hand on the spot. So when I come home – I come here!

Voice-over (male): ---

**16. MORRISONS: For you Christmas (90 seconds)****a) Characters**

A mother, a father, children, relatives

**b) Setting**

An exhausted, stressed and fed up mother is talking about all the things she must do and juggle before Christmas. Glimpses of the chores are shown throughout the advertisement.

**c) Transcription**

Mum (thinking): And so it begins... It's everywhere. There's so much to do. But with the decorations and the tree. Don't forget Debbie and Derrick, you know the couple you met in Corfu in 1996.

Debbie: We really must stay in touch

Mum: Why couldn't he have been a shepherd. It's enough to make you an emotional wreck. \*sigh\* And before you know it, it's here. Aaah, the familiar wrestle: woman on bird. And then they come: the helpers. They don't know where anything is! Whose idea was it to put a cross in these? There's never enough rings, never enough hands, never enough time. It's hard work. But it's Christmas and I wouldn't have it any other way.

**17. TESCO: Milk (50 seconds)****a) Characters**

A wife and a husband

**b) Setting**

A married couple are camping outdoors and they run out of milk. The wife is mocking the husband him being hopeless and so the husband says he goes to milk a cow but instead he goes to a supermarket to buy the milk.

**c) Transcription**

Wife: This is just so beautiful. I wish you were a bit more outdoorsy.

Husband: What do you mean? I love the great outdoors.

Wife: See, hopeless.

Husband: No, I'm not. If I'll go find a cow I'll get us some milk for breakfast.

Wife: You don't know the first thing about cows.

Husband: Just leave it to me.

Voice-over (male): ---

Husband: Not bad, eh. You can't beat milk straight from a Cornish cow.

Wife: Mmm, delicious. Especially how it comes out so delightfully chilled.

**18. TESCO: Christmas Turkey (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A mother, a father and their two daughters

**b) Setting**

The advertisement starts with an old home video where the family is cooking their first Christmas dinner in their new house but the turkey does not fit in the oven. Then the advertisement comes back to this Christmas where the whole family is hassling around making Christmas dinner and the turkey fits in the oven now.

**c) Transcription**

Dad: Cheers! Merry Christmas!

Mum: It was the first Christmas we had at our house. I had to borrow plates from next door. Wish we'd borrowed the oven too. Put the camera down and help me please! Learned our lesson though, didn't we? Never made that mistake again.

## **Appendix B. Advertisements with men in the main part**

### **1. ASDA: Fish in a bag (30 seconds)**

#### **a) Characters**

A male fishmonger and his colleagues (all male) and some customers

#### **b) Setting**

A fishmonger is filleting a fish for a customer while his colleagues are admiring his work.

#### **c) Transcription**

Man 1. (a fishmonger): I feel like a surgeon. Aww, look at these. I like this.

Man 2. (colleague): That is concentration. That is good.

Man 1.: Look at that!

Man 2.: Look at that! Three in one!

Man 1.: Three in one

Man 3. (another colleague): Ian, you've got a queue of people who want you to do their eyebrows.

Man 1.: Hello young lady what would you like?

Woman (customer): Two salmon fillets

Man 1.: Would you like one of our bags where you can cook in the bag?

Woman: That sounds easier to me.

Man 1.: It is easier. All the directions are on the back. Have a nice meal.

### **2. ASDA: Cow juice (40 seconds)**

#### **a) Characters**

A male Asda employee, male milk parlour workers and customers (both women and men)

**b) Setting**

A male Asda employee goes to a milk parlour to learn about the dairy industry where he is guided by male employees. At the end of the advertisement he then gives out free milk samples to the customers in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Man 1.: Welcome to the milking part of the world.

Man 2.: I know it's a strange and slightly frightening world. Look at the shoot on that. I take no pleasure on this. Apply sucker.

Man 3.: OOOOOOH, not like that! Have you never done this before?

Man 2.: So you only supply milk to Asda?

Man 1. That's correct. All Asda milk comes from a dedicated group of farmers.

Man 2.: Quick as you can. What did your last slave die of? Out of the cow into the fridge. Cow juice! Cow juice! As fresh as it can be. So go on have a go. Down that. Look at that! Can I tempt you? Can I lure you with me milk?

Man 4.: Cheers

Man 2.: Cheers, I'll join you.

**3. ASDA: Milked meself (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A male Asda employee and various customers (women, men, children)

**b) Setting**

A male Asda employee is giving out free milk samples to the customers in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Man 1.: Hohoo, cow juice! Cow juice! Yorkshire milk that is, as fresh as it can be. Milked meself. Down in one, mate. That's it. All the way.

Man 2.: That's beautiful.

Man 1.: Lovely, innit. Excuse me, now don't run away. Haha. Can I tempt you? Can I lure you with me milk? Down that. Look at that.

Children: That's nice.

Man 1.: Now quick run before I charge you. Go on, leg it.

Man 3.: Cheers

Man 1.: Cheers, I'll join you.

**4. CO-OP: A husband's plea (60 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A husband

**b) Setting**

A husband is making a plea to her wife about not spending so much time doing the weekly shopping. Glimpses of the things he would rather do are shown throughout the advertisement.

**c) Transcription**

Husband: Darling, if you're suddenly aware that your husband is on television talking to you, well, I'm sorry. But, I don't wanna do that massive weekly shopping anymore. I don't want us to sit in that traffic jam anymore. Or queue for that car park when we could be walking in the park with the kids. I don't want to throw anymore sausages away. I like

sausages. I wanna stay in bed on a Saturday morning and eh, you know? I wanna hold hands. Throw bread at ducks. And laugh at your fear of swans. I want us to fall asleep together on the sofa and wake up with a pile of kids on top of us. I wanna pick you up and carry you off and feel like Monday morning is so far away we might as well be in outer space. Thanks for listening gorgeous. I love you.

Voice-over (male): ---

**5. CO-OP: Bread (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A husband and wife

**b) Setting**

A husband is making his wife breakfast to apologise while she is in the shower.

**c) Transcription**

Voice-over (female): This is an important bread. It has an apology to make. Once golden and quietly placed on the bedside table it will gently whisper to Karen: ‘Dave didn’t mean what he said last night. He knows your mum means well. And, he may not always say it but he loves you.’ Bread – it’s important. That’s why we charge so little for it. Your local Co-op. Here for you for life.

**6. CO-OP: Valentine’s Day #1 (30 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A husband

**b) Setting**

A husband is standing in the kitchen telling the camera/her wife that he has got everything sorted for Valentine’s Day.



**c) Transcription**

Man: It's Valentine's Day. But don't worry love I've got it all sorted. I've got the bubbly on ice. The romantic meal all lined up. And I've remembered your favourite song! I've even got those three little words you long to hear: delicious strawberry cheesecake.

Voice-over (male): ---

**7. CO-OP: Mother's Day (30 seconds)****a) Characters**

A father, mother and their two children

**b) Setting**

A husband is saying thank you to his wife for looking after kids and him.

**c) Transcription**

Husband: Darling, thank you for looking after the kids – the little ones – and the big ones.

Voice-over (male): ---

**8. CO-OP: Valentine's Day #2 (30 seconds)****a) Characters**

A husband

**b) Setting**

A husband is talking to the camera/his wife on his way walking to the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Husband: Valentine's is all about making the person you love feel special. I know you said let's not make a big deal of it this year but I just couldn't help it.

Voice-over (male): ---

**9. MORRISONS: Alan Hansen (40 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A man

**b) Setting**

A man is pushing a shopping trolley first in a flea market, then at auctioneers, on a football field and finally in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Man: We're all in the market for a bargain. But I want more. I want low prices I can rely on. Week in – week out. Instead of deals on stuff I'd never touch I want them on things I buy all the time. And whether it's home grown or something a bit more exotic. I won't pay more than the going rate. That's why I won't go anywhere else.

Voice-over (male): ---

**10. MORRISONS: Nick Hancock (40 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A man

**b) Setting**

A man is talking about his preferences on fish while sitting on a boat, walking on the beach with a shopping trolley, scuba diving and then finally shopping in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Man: If there's one thing I love more than a bit of fishing it's a bit of fish. I like it this big, this thick and fresh. And I don't mean frozen but thawed out so it looks fresh. I mean fresh and freshly cut. And I like to know where it was caught and how. Which fish? I don't mind. I'm not fussy.

Voice-over (male): ---

## **11. MORRISONS: Valentine's Day tonight (30 seconds)**

### **a) Characters**

A husband and wife

### **b) Setting**

A husband is leaving for work and the wife says he must do better tonight. All day long he keeps thinking about what is happening tonight and then he realises it is Valentines Day and he goes food shopping. At the end the wife is very pleased for dinner and they head for the bedroom.

### **c) Transcription**

Husband: See ya later love!

Wife: You better to better tonight!

Husband: Tonight? Hmmm tonight? Tonight...? TONIGHT!

Voice-over (female): ---

Wife: That was delicious! Cheers! Aww, you must be shattered.

Husband: Yeah

Wife: Early night?

## **12. MORRISONS: Fresh bread (40 seconds)**

### **a) Characters**

A man

**b) Setting**

A man is walking on a field pushing his shopping trolley talking about how he likes his bread. In the end he is buying bread in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Man: Bread – the stuff of life. If you’ve got stuff, you know, to make it. I like bakers better when they’re trained. When they can make dough from scratch, not just heat it up. And bake different types of bread – fresh on the premises. There was a time when you could get that on almost every street. On this one you still can.

Voice-over (male): ---

**13. MORRISONS: Robert Lindsay (40 seconds)****a) Characters**

A man

**b) Setting**

A man is pushing his shopping trolley in a river, then sitting on a boat, then on a fishing boat and harbour and in the end goes fish shopping in a supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Man: Does it have to cost a fortune every time you want some fresh fish? I just want a decent choice from a sustainable source. With none of it frozen and thawed out later. Then I want a proper fishmonger to fillet it in front of me – at a good price. Is that so unreasonable?

Voice-over (male): ---

**14. MORRISONS: Let’s celebrate (40 seconds)****a) Characters**

A man and a big group of children

**b) Setting**

A man is walking on a field with a big group of children. Then he leads them to a supermarket and they shop food for a party.

**c) Transcription**

Man: So it started with the credit crunch and now petrol's gone up.

Boy: It'll get worse before it gets better.

Man: We could do with a bit of fun, couldn't we?

Children: Yeah!

Man: All right, follow me. I know where to go. Aaah, hot cross buns!

Girl: They bake them here, you know.

Man: Ooh, you can't beat a bit of British beef.

Meat lady: You're not wrong.

Children: Freddie! Cupcakes!

Man: STOP! Did you get the quiche?

Boy: Ah, the quiche!

Man: Come on, let's get this party started.

**15. TESCO: Barbecue chicken (40 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

Various men

**b) Setting**

Various men cooking and eating barbeque food. Flashes of multiple things associated with barbequeing appear throughout the advertisement.

**c) Transcription**

Voice-over (male): The barbecue is lit, the chairs are borrowed, the shirts are out. And it's fresh British chicken all the way. You gotta love a barbecue – bring on the drumsticks!

Written not spoken: Every squeeze, every scorch, every skewer, every pinny wearing hero. Love every mouthful.

**16. TESCO: Find your favourites (40 seconds)**

**a) Characters**

A wife and husband

**b) Setting**

A wife is ringing his husband while he is sleeping at home whether he has been to the supermarket yet. He then quickly goes to his computer and goes online shopping pretending to his wife that he is actually in the supermarket.

**c) Transcription**

Husband: Hello

Wife: Are you at Tesco's yet?

Husband: Just walking in now everything's under control.

Wife: Where are you?

Husband: I'm just by the fruit and veg.

Wife: Well turn left to the cheese aisle.

Husband: Found it! Oh, it's on offer!

Wife: Ooh!

Voice-over (female): ---

Husband: Great, that all comes to 74.89.

Wife: How do you know that?

Husband: I'm, um, at the checkout. \*imitating a cash register peep\*

### **17. TESCO: Price drop (30 seconds)**

#### **a) Characters**

A Tesco salesman

#### **b) Setting**

#### **c) Transcription**

Salesman: White bread, flatbread, garlic bread, granary bread, chocolate croissant, chocolate mousse, chocolate fudge cake, mushroom soup, chicken soup, lentil soup, broccoli and stilton soup, sliced beef, sliced ham, sliced chicken, sliced salami, ice cream, whipping cream, clotted cream, salad cream, fish cakes, sponge cakes, oat cakes, potato cakes, apple bap pies, apple juice, seafood sauce, barbeque sauce, tartar sauce, horseradish sauce, ummh, tea bags...

Voice-over (female): --- (price drop)

### **18. TESCO: Love every mouthful: Steak (40 seconds)**

#### **a) Characters**

A man and various other men

#### **b) Setting**

A man is getting ready to cook and eat a steak. Multiple other pictures of other men cooking and eating a steak and side dishes appear throughout the advertisement.

**c) Transcription**

Voice-over (male): Ladies and gentlemen! Get ready for 21-day aged steak. The king of meat. So chew slow, make a meal of it cause it doesn't get better than this.

Written not spoken: Every slice, every sizzle, every side, every melt, every mop up. Love every mouthful.