

A Political World: Brands and the Representation of Migrant Women in Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Today's marketplace offers various opportunities for global brands to showcase their identity and values following the trend of taking stances on social and political injustice issues. The activist messages, thus, appear in the marketing strategies of the brands through advertising to place themselves in the partisan topics. Immigration has been an emerging point in this day and age with the discussions on the issue globally due to the changing policies and increasing number of people migrating. Prior studies investigated the representation of immigrants in different media mediums, such as newspapers, which suggested common discourses associated with the immigrants: victims and threats. In relation to these depictions, Western society is also suggested to be attributed to responsibility towards the immigrants who are in worse conditions. Although the invisibility or the superficiality of women as immigrants is lightly acknowledged in a few studies, there has not been an extensive exploration. Therefore, this research discovers how marketing exploits immigrants within their representation of (women) migrants through advertising. The intersectionality between immigration and feminism also pinpoints to gendered dimensions of immigration messages. In light of this purpose, the research examines ten digital audio-visual commercials retrieved from YouTube, through a critical discourse analysis driven by social semiotic analysis. With the intersemiotic translation, the research analyzes both the visual representations and audio elements. During the analysis, the theoretical literature is considered, as well as the specific observations deriving from the data with the context-boundedness. The findings indicate that the immigrants' visibility changes due to gender with less visibility or stereotypical roles (e.g. maternal) attributed to women characters. Although the migration becomes more feminized with more women migrating, marketing does not allocate a space for independent women stories as much as their counterparts, and this approach silences their experiences. Furthermore, immigrants' visibility through empathy and hospitality is targeted for the Western audience to take responsibility based on the vulnerable images of immigrants, while the threat notion is aimed to be overcome with humor and irony by illustrating the immigrants with potential. The results also revealed that the brands mostly abstain from taking rigid stances and prefer to showcase themselves as inclusive and diverse without stressing the discussions around immigrants. The research concludes that marketing exploits immigrants to display a better image for the brands by contributing to the othering of immigrants, since neither all actors are involved, nor the immigrants are given an opportunity to tell their own stories. Accordingly, the research emphasizes the need of building regulated approaches in depicting immigrants in advertising due to ethicality.

KEYWORDS: *Immigration, Women, Formal Responsibility, Brand Communication, Marketing.*

PREFACE

Writing this thesis has been a remarkable experience and a promising academic challenge for me. Within the time and the effort I put into this thesis, I gained a great understanding of my research which I believed to be significant considering the timely relevance.

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1. Introduction

At the first light of the day, after reminiscing over the photographs and exchanging goodbyes, mother and daughter start their journey. Our protagonists bear many hardships on the way and reach only another barrier: a wall. But remembering the reason why they started their journey, a door appears, and they successfully make it to the other side.

Personal Observation from the 84

Lumber Commercial

With the variety of controversial political issues, one of the topics that divide the public and require attention is immigration. While the reasons vary for people to leave behind their homelands, such as poverty, warfare, political complications, lack of economic opportunities, and natural disasters (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004), the year 2016 recorded over 247 million people to migrate (Maymon, 2017). Since World War II, the stable balance of gender ratios in immigration movements shifted with the contemporary needs for care workers which encouraged the females in different parts of the world to migrate (Gabaccia, 2016). Thus, the multidimensionality of feminization of migration is explained through the increasing number of women migrants more than ever and the expanding demand for migrant women labor (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004). Although the reasons for being on the move for women are distinct, most migrant women suffer from exploitations and violations (Maymon, 2017). They are indicated to be under a high risk of labor exploitation with underpayments (O’Neil et al., 2017) or lack of regulations that can lead to unfair hours of work (Pavlou, 2017). Under the challenging circumstances of the destination, migrant women are forced into prostitution to generate income (O’Neil et al., 2017) which result in traumatic experiences for women both emotionally and physically (Musacchio, 2004). According to the ACLU (n.d.), these consequences are usually associated with the low levels of education and language skills of migrant women.

Although it has been on the agenda of the countries for years, immigration has become a topic of debate with the emerging “refugee crisis” in 2015 with the 2016 British Referendum (Hobolt, 2016). The public opinion in the United States was recorded to be highly polarized on immigrants from Syria in 2017 (Pew Research Centre, 2017). Companies

also took Trump's presidency and the accompanying policies regarding immigration and travel ban to be the focal points to assemble activist actions (Streitfeld, 2017), regarding the changing climate at the United States-Mexico border with immigration control. The media, hence, allocated space for this topic via different channels. Global brands seized opportunities to make statements on this rising issue through strongly charged dialogues on immigration, race, and diversity in Super Bowl commercials (Hopsicker & Dyreson, 2017).

Similar to how 84 Lumber chose to address a social injustice issue in their commercial, taking a political stance in advertising is an increasing initiative between brands by positioning on partisan topics publicly, hence the divisiveness of the topics leads the brands to oppose or support the status quo (Moorman, 2020). While these topics may be in relation to gender rights, abortion, gun control, and more (Garfield, 2018), the brands do not hesitate to join the bandwagon of taking a role in world issues lately with the particular enthusiasm in the marketing and advertising fields (Clemensen, 2017). These activism efforts are also guided by the consumers who expect and demand brands to take stances according to their political values (Manfredi-Sanchez, 2019).

Taking a stance on political and social issues is perceived as a marketing tactic to acquire a marketplace opportunity (Moorman, 2020; Kotler & Sarkar, 2018) and advertisements appear as a suitable channel to convey these messages (Champlin, et al., 2019). Despite its risky nature, advertising presents opportunities by increasing purchase intentions when self-brand identification is strong in consumers (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Accordingly, brands aspire to amplify their standpoints to engage the global audience and combine these actions with digital affordances, such as in video formats (Manfredi-Sanchez, 2019).

The underlying motives of the brands are now increasingly scrutinized, as they act as activists in the sociopolitical context which leads the consumer-citizens to synthesize the possibility that the brands may stitch stories and images within their activism actions for monetary intentions (Holt, 2002). Therefore, this research acknowledges the exploitation and aims to discover how brands adjust to these social injustice issues in their activism efforts to appear responsible. This is argued to be a different strategy than corporate social responsibility (CSR) which stresses more on the consequences of taking certain actions on organizational reputation (Wettstein & Baur, 2016). Brand activism is also not known to benefit the majority of society without depending on universally "correct" responses to sociopolitical issues (Korschun et. al., 2019). Therefore, brand activism is acknowledged to be CSR's evolution (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018).

Several empirical research highlighted the different arguments and framings of the immigrants in news media (Fryberg et al., 2011; Gray & Franck, 2019; Horsti, 2013). The immigrants are usually portrayed as threats that create concerns based on public (e.g. violent crimes) and economic safety (e.g. welfare issues, protecting jobs) (Fryberg et al., 2011). Eberl, et al. (2018) added that the immigrants are usually underrepresented in news media, and in the situations of their presence, they are usually portrayed unfavorably as economic, cultural, or criminal threats. In some cases, they are represented as heroes to endure the hardships (Brune, 2004; Horsti, 2008). Contrarily, the “suffering” image of the immigrants in the media underscored the responsibility for people in better positions to embrace. While using emotions and sensibility is found to be effective in victim positions (Horsti, 2008), immigrants are placed to be protected by the West which may put further voicelessness to the immigrants (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Overall, these routinized portrayals led to the “otherness” of the immigrants (Lemish, 2000; Ellis, 1999).

These dispositions are noted to be pivoted based on gender differences which have not been highlighted in academia that offer a direction for this research. One of the issues that have been prominent in recent years is observed to be topics related to women (Zeisler, 2016). Around the topic of immigration, the media usually did not put a spotlight on the women migrants and their invisibility directed the “threat” conceptions to be linked to the migrant men (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016). In the cases of their existence, the stereotypical and superficial characteristics are associated with the women migrants/characters (Taylor & Stern, 1997). Thus, considering the institutionalized depiction of women as vulnerable (Zayer & Coleman, 2014) with taken-for-granted prevalent gender notions (Scott, 2008) and there is further need to discover the ethical representation of immigrants. Additionally, with the need to focus on the representation of immigration in advertising, this study adopts an intersectional approach on immigration and feminism to explore the portrayal of immigrants in digital commercials and combine it with a gender perspective.

Aim of the research

To date, there is limited study that analyzed the representation of immigration in advertising as a marketing tool by merely touching upon immigration (Gulbrandsen, et al., 2020). Instead, many academics focused on the portrayal of immigration in news or print media (Beckers & Van Aelst, 2019; Jacobs, Meeusen & d’Haenens, 2016) and addressed to media’s different responsibilities towards the vulnerable people through their visibilities (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). In these studies, the portrayal of the immigrants is found to

differ from being victims (Narli, et al., 2020; Horsti, 2008) to threats (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016). Furthermore, previous studies analyzed linguistic discourses of immigration or visual reporting (Jacobs et al, 2016; King & Wood, 2001; Musaro & Parmiggiani, 2017). Additionally, although there are studies to superficially mention the different portrayals of migrant men and women in media (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016; Taylor & Stern, 1997; Horsti, 2013), there is not a study to directly target gender's role in the immigrant depictions through the detailed images, discourses, and roles.

Baladrón-Pazos (2011) recommended effective ways to include immigrants in the advertisements by adapting more ethnic values into the campaigns that target the immigrant market better. Moreover, hoping the advertisements to include less stereotypical representations of the immigrants, their integration into the society is advised to be normalized without restricting them to their immigrant status (Baladrón-Pazos, 2011). However, previous studies have analyzed social advertisements aimed at supporting the social cohesion of the immigrants (Gadotti, 2005) by the governments and NGOs. These advertisements that are non-profit in nature showcased the protagonist immigrants as working class (e.g. maids and barmen) that legitimated the status differences between the immigrants and the native population (Pellegrino, et al., 2013).

Therefore, this study aims at contributing to the scientific debate by shifting the focus on the representation of immigration in advertising focused on commercial reasons and discovering the field's position on the social injustice issue. It is also important to delineate the (mis)representations in advertising considering its influential state to embody and impact cultural positions in the society, as well as its political power (Sobande, 2019). Advertising is also known as cultural production platform that reflects and shapes certain issues, such as race (Davis, 2016). Additionally, scrutinizing the digital commercials aspires to bring a timely relevance by inspecting both visual and audible elements. The inclusion of feminism analyzes the representation of women in the commercials to interpret the possible unequal gender portrayals and approaches. Gendered differences of migration are important, considering the undergoing different experiences of women and men in immigration (Gabaccia, 2016). Thus, this research offers an intersectional study between immigration and feminism from the advertisement viewpoint which contributes to the knowledge gap in academia with the following research question:

How does current advertising represent migrant women?

Sub-questions:

What forms of responsibility are attributed to migrant women in advertising? What type of moral concepts are used in these commercials? What normative dispositions of morality are used? How do the dispositions related to immigrants differ based on gender? How do the images of immigrants create meanings for society?

Societal and practical relevance

The current research helps advertisers and marketers to understand the representation of (women) migrants from timely examples by discovering various ways of representing immigrants and the different depictions based on gender. Professionals in the field are, thus, invited to recognize the evolving trends and conceptions in the last years of brands taking a position on immigration. This can lead the practitioners to create effective and more original commercials. The research can also assist them to synthesize the underlying meanings of the visual and textual elements of the current commercials on the topic of immigration and recognize the possible societal impacts of different depictions of immigrants. Furthermore, it can inspire the practitioners to depict immigrants ethically, considering the sensitivity of the issue and the people involved. This way the stereotyped portrayals and misrepresentations can be downgraded by accrediting voices to the immigrants to tell their own stories.

The in-depth intersectional analysis on migrant women in the commercials also suggests a multidisciplinary understanding by encompassing a timely need to concentrate on the gender's role in positioning the immigrants. Lastly, the research can enclose a thorough picture to the consumers on the current strategies used by the advertisers and marketers as they pinpoint to take a stance for the immigrants. The findings of the research with both explicit and implicit meanings can guide them to reconsider their thoughts and beliefs towards the brands. It can also inform the citizen-consumers on the conceptions regarding immigration and women and their possible impact on shaping society's collective imagination.

Research method in brief

The thesis adopts a discourse analysis driven by social semiotic analysis. The research includes Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework to explain advertising as a social practice to analyze through its discursive formation, along with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) visual grammar to discover how immigrants are represented in digital audiovisual commercials and identify the gendered differences in these depictions. Thus, while closely

following Jewitt and Oyama's (2004) three levels of visual social semiotics, the research pays attention to the multimodality of the commercials by recognizing the acoustic elements built upon intersemiotic translation (O'Halloran, et al., 2016). Greimas' (1987) semiotic squares also reveal the absences around the topic, especially focusing on the visibility/invisibility of the women migrants. The research question is then attempted to be answered by analyzing how the meanings towards the immigrants are formed within the visuals as well as in voice-over narrations to embody a complete understanding and thereupon uncover marketing's attempt to exploit immigrants and the linked diversity notions.

Thesis Outline

The first chapter of this research introduces the topic of research and the social injustice issues related to immigration through the common conceptualizations that are still persistent in the media. It identifies the knowledge gap and offers the cruciality of intersectionality between immigration and feminism in digital commercials along with the research question and the sub-questions.

The second chapter presents the previous studies on the mediatized representation of immigration through the marketing context. This section includes empirical studies conducted on news and television and print advertisements. Furthermore, the recent political events and movements (e.g. Trump's policies and #MeToo) build the relevancy of the research topic. The adopted conceptual framework underlines the understanding around the visibility of the marginalized groups with the theories around the intersectionality and different attributed responsibilities.

The third chapter encloses the suitable research design which follows a discourse analysis driven by visual social semiotics. It also explains the detailed steps on how 10 digital audiovisual commercials are purposefully collected and analyzed by addressing reliability and validity. The fourth chapter demonstrates the interpreted results under four categories.

The final chapter discusses the main findings on how advertising represents immigrants and identifies the gendered differences to exploit immigration. It concludes with the limitations of the current research and suggestions for future studies.

2. Theoretical Literature and Conceptual Framework

Chapter Overview

This section aims to deliver a structured theoretical framework based on relevant literature from the field of media studies focusing on the field of critical advertising (Hardy, 2016; Khamis, 2020). Three main points of this section are the representation of immigrants in the media, the responsibility towards the immigrants in the society deriving from media, and the theories on the typified visibilities of immigrants. More specifically, the first part of the chapter introduces the previous theoretical literature on the mediation of migration by explaining the portrayal of immigrants in media (e.g. news media and television). The activism efforts deriving from the real-life issues are mentioned within the studies that bridge immigration with women. The second part of the chapter encloses the distinction between formal and substantial responsibility by focusing on how immigration is adopted as activism efforts in the media. The focus is, further, pivoted into the representation of immigration in advertising through a discussion on ethical responsibility. The last part undertakes the visibility of immigrants through the conceptions of gender, empathy, hospitality, and threat which presents a direction to recognize specific ways for marketing to exploit (women) migrants in commercials.

The research relies on activism efforts by taking immigration in their focus as the social injustice issue. The brands aspire to a competitive advantage with moral legitimacy (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011) and further social benefits (Den Hond, et al., 2014). While brand activism increases value for the consumers (Shetty, et al., 2019), brands transfer meanings from a product to consumers with advertising (McCracken, 2005). Consumer-citizens tend to have more favorable attitudes towards brands that they share the same values and moral identities, which can lead them to feel a sense of belonging to the in-group brands (Escalas & Bettman, 2003). However, these initiatives can be viewed as not legitimate and trustworthy and solely as exploitation of social and moral issues by the marketers (Holt, 2002). Therefore, the research considers that the brands may choose to align their social values parallel to the public's moral values and questions the ethicality of the representation of the immigrants as a sensitive group to cover for marketing purposes.

The current literature indicates the ways the society adopts and views the concepts related to immigration and women empowerment through feminism, as well as how the media position immigrants from different genders across different platforms. This vision

offers an understanding of the strategies used by the brands in their activism efforts based on the growing trends. Furthermore, the previous studies underscore different messages attributed to women and men migrants with the assumption of women to be vulnerable and men to be a threat. In addition to this inequality, immigration in advertising has not been widely analyzed in academia that requires more scrutiny. Therefore, this research aims to uncover the intersectionality between immigration and feminism in advertising by considering how the marketers may exploit (women) migrants in their activism efforts.

Rethinking media responsibility

It is relevant for the research to understand the portrayal of immigration in the media to have a better context on understanding the overall approach of advertising. Previous literature has extensively focused on the representation of immigration in traditional and press media, since the human mobility crisis has been growing fast (Berry et. al., 2015; Chouliaraki, 2017; Musaro, 2017). The immigrants are found to be underrepresented in media, however in the times that they are present, they are represented in unfavorable ways, varying from cultural, economic, and criminal threats (Eberl, et al., 2018). It is noted that the media coverage of immigration impacts audiences' civic attitudes (Strömback & Shehanta, 2010) and voting behavior, as well as stereotypical cognitions of migrants when the audience is exposed to negative messages (Eberl, et al., 2018). Additionally, commercial television broadcasts bolster more negative and sensational responses on immigration and the audiences who prefer commercial news to public broadcasts are more likely to have negative opinions towards immigrants (Jacobs, et al., 2016).

Gray and Franck (2019) noted that with the increasing number of immigrants arriving in Europe in 2015, the construct attributed to the refugees to be "at risk" has switched into "as risk" to Europe. The securitization of migration underlined a realm of security (Huysmans, 2006) and strengthened the constructs of migrants as the "enemies at the gate" (Esses et al., 2013) who are a security threat to the destination countries in the West (Innes, 2010). The prior narrative across the newspapers is found to be supportive and sympathetic towards the immigrants with emotional pictures, such as three-year-old Alan Kurdi's body near Turkey's Mediterranean coast (Gray & Franck, 2019). However, in the light of certain events in Europe (e.g. mass attacks), the prior vulnerable state of the immigrants has altered into threats (Gray & Franck, 2019).

After the 2015 Paris terror attacks, the British newspapers shifted their reporting style based on fear of culture that terrorists may arrive in Europe under the cover of immigrants

(Gray & Franck, 2019). It is underlined that while the women refugees are positioned as vulnerable, men refugees are positioned as threats which strengthened the “as/at risk” concept by making refugees from both genders unsafe (Gray & Franck, 2019). Since the feminist scholars underline the orientalist fantasies linked to “the other” to originate from gendered identities, inequalities, and gender relations (Gray & Franck, 2019), the visibility of the gendered and sexualized representation of the “other” is important to consider for the research while emphasizing on the intersectionality between women and immigration.

Another study across Turkish daily press has found an assemblage of contradictory frames and discourses attributed to the Syrian women refugees deriving from gender-based problems: victim, criminal, threat, state of war and displacement, human and remedy (Narli, et al., 2020). The women refugees are approached with a humanitarian perspective as people in desperate situations, such as victims of forced marriages, in comparison to the alarming headlines with anger and object of desire that they could destroy the family structures (Narli, et al., 2020). It is noted that mothers and daughters correspond to the ideal victim image in famine coverages in the media (Moeller, 1999). Although the negative representations of women refugees through risk and danger dichotomies are observed to appear less, the possibility of fostering their otherization and discrimination was underlined (Narli, et al., 2020).

Distinctively from news media, an online Finnish social media platform, Suomi24, revealed how multiculturalism was opposed with mitigation between hate speech and extremism, due to the need to preserve the nation from the threats of multiculturalism (Nortio, et al., 2021). Backlashes against immigrants were also apparent with the Twitter hashtag #refugeesNOTwelcome in which refugees were particularly highlighted as male with the absence of women and children (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016). On the other hand, the invisibility of women refugees on social media reinforced the discourse of refugee men as “cowards” with an emphasis on brave women who stay and fight (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016). The use of children’s images is also argued to enforce hopeful pictures of future coexistence; however, the integration/assimilation process of the immigrants is justified only when they relinquish their cultural identity (Pellegrino, et al., 2013).

The representation of immigrants is also reviewed on Spanish television shows which indicated that the immigrants are underrepresented in national television (Marcos Ramos, 2019; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005). Moreover, the immigrant characters are found to perform background roles rather than leading roles in the series along with stereotypical and/or negative characteristics that could cause prejudiced behaviors (Marcos Ramos, 2019).

This lack of diversity on television has led the immigrant group's further social invisibility in daily life (Marcos Ramos, 2019), as this medium could have increased the native population's exposure to immigrants and built para-social connections with them (Harwood & Anderson, 2002). Distinctively, the overrepresentation of Asian-American immigrants in media is found to be restricted to stereotypes and background figures in television advertisements, as well as casting less visible and superficial characters to immigrant women than their male counterparts (Taylor & Stern, 1997).

The media's reflection of activism efforts is also stirred from feminism that underlines the aim to demolish patriarchy and protect women's rights and equalness (Sobande, 2019). Based on the different ideologies of feminism, activism towards the aforementioned goals is lately adopted in society. Consequently, female empowerment messages in advertising have increased in relation to brand activism (Kotler & Sarkar, 2018) which led women's rights actions (e.g. equality) to persist in the field (Champlin, et al., 2019; Zeisler, 2017). Hence, brands are expected to approach the social issues carefully while presenting women's empowerment messages as their marketing efforts, considering they evolve from social movements (Shetty, et al., 2019).

#MeToo movement was initiated with the publicized statements of people as they come forward with the sexual harassment and assault allegations towards the Hollywood producer, Harvey Weinstein. In time, the movement attracted the attention of celebrities and marketers that accelerated the global impact, especially with the virality on Twitter (Sobande, 2019). While the mainstream media covered the story from the angle of highlighting white women as the major target of these assaults (Garcia, 2017), there were certain inclusivity issues, such as race.

Although there were discussions on how women of color stories were pushed aside, immigrant women experiences were not mentioned in connection to #MeToo at all (Huang, 2018). The Trump Administration has targeted migrant women with the harmful policies that were reflected in public under anti-immigrant policies and were omitted to be a part of #MeToo movement under women's rights (Semotiuk, 2019). With #MeToo's success of underscoring the women's rights deriving from gender-based violence, the neglect of immigrant women has argued to increase their marginalization (Hallett, 2019).

Therefore, this missed opportunity is indicated for the research to have its basis on the intersectionality between immigration and feminism, and how this intersectionality exists in activism efforts. At the same time, the trend of adopting social issues by the brands and the organizations in marketing is approached with suspicion, considering the high chance of the

exploitation of these social injustice issues. As Cottom (2019) explains, the capitalistic society perceives morality of certain issues with their economic value. Additionally, brands may act more pervasive and aggressive (Holt, 2002), rather than truly create resistance around the social injustices. Thus, the research considers the possibility of the brands to seek profit within their efforts in appearing concerned about the social injustice issue.

Formal and substantive responsibility

Across different media platforms, immigration has been mediatized and portrayed in distinct ways. The mediatization of immigration tends to create a sense of “formal responsibility” in the Western society based on one’s moral education with the exposure of the news imaginaries of the immigration crisis (Silverstone, 2006, p.152). Under two pathologies, *complicity* presumes human vulnerability deriving from the media representation and *collusion* approaches their challenges with denial (Silverstone, 2006). As media reflect the “others” to suffer and the safe West to be protected, the “others” can be placed outside of “our” responsibility circle (Chouliaraki, 2006). The dehumanization of refugees through the othering strategy leads to a responsibility to protect “us” in contrast to “them” by placing repression on immigrants (Ellis, 1999).

Consequently, acting upon formal responsibility based on the feeling of obligation to ourselves overlooks the equality that should be granted to the refugees due to a crisis of responsibility (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Whereas a substantive responsibility, that is regarded as an “unconditional hospitality” to the “other” (Dayan, 2007), offers a humane perspective that lies upon creating communities of belonging (Cavarero, 2000). In this context, being substantially responsible entails sharing the immigrant stories outside of “our” actions and stories by acknowledging them as citizens who can share their own stories, knowledgeable and creative individuals instead of the victims or terrorists of the “crisis” (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). In other words, the action of someone to tell their own stories is linked to the “ontological altruism” of narratibility (Cavarero, 2000).

Considering immigration as a divisive topic, the approaches by the society are recognized to vary which is then emphasized by brands as a marketing effort. US-based pro-immigration activists are revealed to grant human rights and help the immigrants throughout the integration process by focusing on multiculturalism (Kotin, et al., 2011). Since the public has a sense of fear towards the immigrants due to their unauthorized status, having religious activism combined with political activism is found to be effective for religious mobilizations for political aims (Kotin, et al., 2011).

The digital online communication tools are also effective facilitators of activism by emphasizing on collective identity and the sense of community (Norris, 2004). In the wake of the 2006 US immigration reform debates, the activists aimed at creating online communities with the other activists and raising awareness within the public (Harlow & Guo, 2014). However, considering the low levels of internet usage between the immigrants, the activists are found to be relying on word of mouth to serve immigrant communities (Harlow & Guo, 2014). Moreover, conveying activism through the online platforms led to the critique of slacktivism which is a dilution of activism by only taking effortless actions (Harlow & Guo, 2014).

Distinctively, anti-immigration activism was also adopted in public. The rising racist and nationalist statements of right-wing politics impacted the public discourse with the underlying worries about the nation-state and the need to protect the real and imagined borders (Makinen, 2017). The social value associated with people is recognized based on their economic value by highlighting class relations which are racialized and culturalized (Makinen, 2017). For instance, Filipino migrants are mostly welcomed and seen as a benefit to the labor force, rather than a burden, with the underlying assumption that they are women and can find partners in the destination country (Makinen, 2017). Moreover, the visibility of the extreme nationalist and xenophobic opinions in demand of stricter policies are underlined by the national media, with the development of anti-immigration activism (Maasilta, 2012). Makinen (2017) found that immigration as activism occurs in two ways: the articulation of feelings of injustice and failure based on the neoliberal regime and justifications for nationalist and racist convictions.

On the account of considering the activism efforts as a business practice in the market by aligning cultural values and beliefs to tackle a wide range of inequality issues (Moorman, 2020), the politicization of commercials is recognized by Gulbrandsen et al. (2020), especially within the increasing anti-Trump advertisements. The advertisements including immigration and diversity notions are indicated to stimulate resistance towards the Trump presidency, as most of them do not mention Trump explicitly, but choose to direct humorous elements at the policies, presenting emotional sceneries to the social injustice issue and create dystopian visions (Gulbrandsen et al., 2020). For instance, the commercial “Beer Wall” by Tecate reproduces the discourses of inclusion and solidarity, while overlooking the distressing realities and struggles of immigrants and instead of creating joyful images in their advertising strategy to build a more desirable image for the brand (Gulbrandsen et al., 2020). Although the commercials are also found to focus on acceptance, inclusivity, and diversity,

Gulbrandsen et al. (2020) concluded that the corporations mostly display criticism of Trump to have a self-referential position instead of contributing to a political resistance (Gulbrandsen et al., 2020).

Therefore, there is also a responsibility attributed to the marketers who present this sensitive issue and its actors to the public as a marketing effort. It can be argued that the ownership of immigrant stories is taken by the marketers to display them as “objects”, rather than individuals who can tell or react to the issues affecting them with agency (Pittaway, et al., 2010). Different tactics and approaches in the media towards this issue can influence one’s political knowledge and civic engagements (Jacobs, et al., 2016), as well as set the overall public agenda (McCombs, 2005), hence a responsibility towards the consumers also exists. Furthermore, the immigrants are frequently attributed as disadvantaged people by the marketers (Brenkert, 1998), who may have traumas originated from the reasons they leave their country of origin, such as female genital mutilation and forced marriages or violent experiences they may have during their transit process at the refugee camps (O’Neil et al., 2017). Thus, it should be considered with caution that immigrants may be subjected to vulnerabilities and traumas in their lives (Birman, et al., 2005) prior to displaying images and personal stories of immigrants in the media.

Conceptual framework of immigration and women in media

Deriving from the former studies on the representation of immigrants in media with the underlying responsibilities attributed to the Western society, four main conceptions are argued to be crucial for this research: Gender, Empathy, Hospitality and Threat. These conceptions are indicated to be typification of the ongoing visualizations of immigrants to “massify, infantilize or vilify” them (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017, p. 1167). As a reflection of pragmatic cases that reflect the generic elements in the society (Flyvbjerg, 2005), the following concepts are beneficial to understand the representation of (women) migrants in advertising along with the gendered differences in their depictions.

Visibility as Gender

Feminization of migration is simply the result of the gender ratios worldwide that indicated a slight increase in female numbers (UNFPA, 2006), with globalization (Castles & Miller, 1993), as gender variations compose the emigration and immigration practices. Furthermore, with fewer women migrating with their husbands or reunifications, women have become independent migrants who are individual economic suppliers (Petrozziello,

2013). Consequently, feminist studies highlighted the possible dangers for women to migrate, due to the cruel labor conditions and sex trafficking which led the authorities to initiate programs and policies for the threatened migrant women (Gabaccia, 2016).

In early research, immigration is tackled from a macro-level perspective with the assumption of giving the active labor force roles to men and restricting women to be dependents who are bound to the domestic sphere (Remennick, 2016). Further, these early efforts to define women migrants in relation to “marriages” and “sex roles” failed to underscore gender as an element of power and privilege without touching upon inherent inequalities (Remennick, 2016). Approaching women migrants as a separate case throughout the resettlement process has also marginalized them with the notion of “other immigrants” (James Simon, 2001). Within the new frameworks, women have been appointed with the breadwinner role by joining more to the labor force, as well as the domestic work that doubles their burden (Pessar, 2003).

The current research has relied on postfeminist notions and point of view to understand the representation of women in advertising based on messages around women empowerment (Banet-Weiser, 2012). It has been indicated that the females are presented in a less objectified way and more in a realistic way which attempts to redefine masculinity and femininity (Becker-Herby, 2016). Furthermore, the notions of women empowerment are crucial in demolishing traditional gender stereotypes (Champlin, et al., 2019).

Therefore, deriving from the recent activism efforts in the society for feminist goals, advertising is viewed to adopt approaches by realizing the trend of empowering women and challenging the traditional gender stereotypes and roles. The interplay of feminism and marketing is predicted to form a resistance towards the dominant ideologies that are usually attributed to masculinity (Woodruffe, 1997). Since this research aims to discover the ways of exploiting and/or reflecting migrant women in marketing, it is crucial for this research to understand the women empowerment sentiments and feminist ideologies in society that contribute to the intersectionality from the feminism aspect.

Moreover, Hyndman and Giles (2011) underscored that the representation of refugees in camps as immobile and attached to being passive was found to be correlated to feminization of asylum. Whereas masculinist representation illustrated the mobile refugee depiction as threats rather than innocent and helpless (Hyndman & Giles, 2011). Views towards the refugees that stay in the void are more convenient and related to the masculinist approaches rather than a feministic viewpoint (Sundberg, 2003). Therefore, the increasing dominant numbers of women migrants and the changing roles of becoming independent

migrants have coined “feminization of migration”, which needs further attention. Additionally, as women migrants are usually overlooked in academia with the perception of considering the migrants as male, rather than female (Osa & Garson, 2005), there is a growing need to emphasize women migrants.

Visibility as Empathy

Through a semiotic analysis on the visual representations of refugees in newspaper images, Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) underscored the visibility of the refugees deriving from empathy. In this category, the intimate images of the immigrants are pointed out, such as a vulnerable child, a rescue worker, and a mother along with her baby, in which individuation is offered by proposing a close-up with more humane views towards the immigrants (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). The vulnerable images of children are found to ignite a sense of responsibility in Westerns (Burman, 1994). Inclusion of children in the visuals of refugees leads to contrast between their innocence and the hostile opposition of the adult authorities in the eyes of the public (Moeller, 2002), sensationalizing the topic to be perceived as righteous.

These visual representations further underscore the failures done by the adults and target them as the responsible actors through the sentimental images (El-Enany, 2016). At the same time, from a critical point of view, this category of empathy can be judged on the point of portraying the refugees as powerless and clueless who need stronger actors or countries to help them. Hence, empathy can result in a charitable responsibility that is attributed to more powerful people (e.g. Westerns) to offer help and care, while stressing the otherness of the immigrants (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). According to Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017), these representations may ignite momentarily responses deriving from guilt that could work in favor of the refugees, however it could easily pivot into opposite moods and reactions of fear.

Visibility of Hospitality

Hospitality is explained by the use of the notions that stress the acceptance of the immigrants, such as “Refugees welcome here” and “Let them in” banners (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). This category switches the habitual portrayal of immigrants and replaces the “us” and “them” notions in the other way around. In doing so, “us” is posited as the evildoer who is the responsible ones to damage the refugees (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). The immigrants’ depiction deriving from hospitality encourages the formation of the stories and experiences of the marginalized groups in the society (Polletta, 2006). The act of hospitality

originates from the action of welcoming someone who appears to be the “other” into one’s own space, without expecting anything in return (Silverstone, 2006).

However, distinct critical viewpoints again arise, since they are recognized through protests or in public speeches, but this leads to voicelessness attributed to the immigrants, as they are in the position to be defended (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Furthermore, this was criticized that hospitality usually occurs in a mediated and symbolic way that the real humanized attributes are associated with the Westerns (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). These points, thus, lead to the epistemological violence in which the immigration issues and their stories are politicized, but their marginalization is preserved due to the Western discourses (Paik, 2016).

Visibility as Threat

The “threat” disposition of immigrants is noted to be distinct from the prior concepts arisen from the feeling of empathy and hospitality, which mostly focuses on fear and explains the tension of *our* social order caused by the racialized and cultural differences of the “others” (Gale, 2004). The aforementioned vulnerable child images exchange with the depictions of dangerous males who appear in “our” lands (Buchanan, et al., 2003). The discourses featuring refugee men as rapists or terrorists revoke the “threat” stereotype of Middle Eastern masculinity and direct doubt on the refugees (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016). This may be linked to the stereotypical approach that men are less empathetic than women with less nurturing characteristics (Christov-Moore, et al., 2014; Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Graham & Ickes, 1997).

Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) also emphasized on the racialized differences with the detection of darker skin tones, clothing and animalistic remarks towards the immigrants that stress the “threat” depiction. Therefore, their “other”ness is underlined within the intimidating images, reciprocal to “our” safety that is threatened (Boltanski, 1999). Additionally, a form of self-responsibility is created that does not accept people who are not like “us” and validates the reasons behind the immigrants’ exclusion, such as closing the borders (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). The “threat” image is emphasized with the illegality of entering or overstaying which presents the immigrants as criminals and social threats to society (Horsti, 2013). Consequently, the visualities of the immigrants as vulnerable and innocent convert into evil bodies that endanger “our” safety (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Thus, the ideas around their criminality mobilize people under fear to approve the actions of

not letting them in or deporting, instead of aiming for humanitarian response (Bleiker, et al., 2013).

Chapter Summary

The conceptual framework has discovered the representation of immigration in different channels of media with a special focus on the field of marketing. Previous literature revealed that the immigrants have been increasingly being portrayed as a risk to the West, rather than the idea that they are at risk. There is also a gendered distinction between the portrayals of immigrants with women appearing more vulnerable, sexualized, and underrepresented, whereas men to be a threat to the destination society. These depictions from news and traditional media led the concern towards the marketers to exploit the immigrants by showcasing them as vulnerable or dangerous with the underlying gendered differences.

Furthermore, the society's perspective on immigration and feminism has been identified which served as a direction for the marketing to exploit the societal values in their activism efforts. In this manner, reviewing the representation of immigrants through visibility as gender, empathy, hospitality, and threat help the research to make relevant conclusions on the marketers' portrayal of the immigrants in advertisements. Chouliaraki and Stolic's (2017) theoretical framework on the meditation of immigration in news imaginaries with empathy, hospitality and threat offers an understanding of the mediated roles of the immigrants. However, the previously offered theoretical standpoint by Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) on the visibility of immigrants is incomplete to adopt directly, considering its specific focus on the news. Therefore, this study aims to fill in the gap by employing these theories on the marketing level and explore how the marketing industry can exploit the immigrants within advertisements. Doing so, the societal formal responsibility of acting upon obligation rather than humane thoughts (Silverstone, 2006) towards the immigrants is also reviewed, yet through the advertising point of view. Moreover, the addition of the gender perspective expands the previous research domain due to feminization of migration (Gabbacia, 2016) and bridges immigration and feminism. Nonetheless, the concern towards these immigrant visibilities to rely on symbolic and charitable actions is still persistent that leads to further politicization and marginalization of immigrants.

3. Method

Chapter Overview

This chapter aims to explain the methodological approach adopted in the current research which focuses on how the marketing industry exploits immigration through commercials. The methodological approach to explore the representation of immigrants in commercials is explained, as well as to identify the gender's role in these portrayals. The digital media as the audiovisual archive is also highlighted which offers an opportunity to understand how marketing exploits immigration for activism efforts.

The first section outlines the study design by explaining the justification of the determined method. The second section focuses on the sampling process and data collection choices. The third section underlines the crucial concepts from the conceptual framework and explains their descriptions and gives details about their operationalization in this research. The fourth section uncovers the analytical framework and the particulars of the analysis process by emphasizing on the application of the adopted methods to the data. The final chapter identifies the notes on the validity and credibility of the research to establish assurance.

Study design and justification of method

The thesis adopted a qualitative approach through semiotic-driven critical discourse analysis. Since commercials include visual and textual data, it is important to synthesize both the explicit and implicit meanings by using qualitative analysis in the research (Brennen, 2017) which will better explain the entirety of the data. Instead of quantifying the unobtrusive data, meaningful interpretations are reached (Brennen, 2017). Therefore, the qualitative approach helped to answer the research question which aims to understand the representation of migrant women in digital commercials, with the attributed conceptions and responsibilities towards them, that is focused on the underlying meanings rather than quantification of conceptions. The flexibility characteristic of qualitative analysis ensured the analysis to be built on theories, but also note the emergent elements/conceptions due to its iterative nature that offers to add and withdraw elements (Schreier, 2013). In this manner, as an addition to the pre-existing theories for the visual data, an interpretive lens is utilized based on intuitiveness and strategicness through the researcher's analytic memos (Saldaña, 2021).

Through critical discourse analysis (CDA), language is utilized in three stages (text, discursive practice, and social practice) which underline that the texts and the socio-cultural

practice are perceived to be connected with discursive practice (Fairclough, 1992). Thus, the discourses are considered to be both constructed and constructive (Potter, 1996) that is due to the discursive interconnectedness (Fairclough, 1995). The three stages of CDA focus on description, interpretation and explanation, to first understand the linguistic elements and concepts within the texts, to interpret the connection between the texts and the discursive practices, and lastly to explain the relation between the discursive practices and broader social processes (Fairclough, 1992). Hence, this study approached language within the commercials to be a form of social practice that has an impact on how immigration is constructed and interpreted on a societal level.

To analyze the textual dimension, offered as a stage in Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, visual social semiotic analysis is adopted which focuses on unraveling how the specific meanings originate from through units of analysis (Hall, 1997). While denotation entails the explicit meanings of the images, connotation pertains to the implicit and underlying meanings (Van Leeuwen, 2004). Advertisements are highlighted to hold "means of representation and meaning construct ideology through the codes integrated into the society" (Dyer, 1982, p.129). Goatley (2000) argued to discover the marketers' use of various facets of consumerist ideologies in the advertisements through the obvious and the underlying ideological strategies. In this fashion, adopting visual social semiotics was beneficial, considering semiotics unfolds both the denotative (representational) and connotative (symbolic) meanings of the various visual images (Van Leeuwen, 2004).

Texts, through YouTube videos, underline what is expressed in the YouTube videos, as well as an opportunity to 'reposition' the meaning of the text for extensive analysis (Saul, 2010). The analysis of the marketing examples further enhanced the intersectional discursive attempts of gendered and immigrant subjectivities, as well as linking them to certain brand narratives (Preece & Kerrigan, 2015). Thus, interdisciplinarity is a key for critical marketing approaches (Burton, 2001), which is determined by feminism and immigration articulations that can reveal issues of power, ethnicity, and gender.

As the popular media texts are not produced from a common singular point, but they reflect ideological tensions and contradictions of the time with a plurivocal strategy (Fiske, 1987) and advertising benefits from numerous interacting signs in essence that are strategically incorporated (Hall, 1997), visual social semiotics was applicable for this research to understand the integrated underlying (implicit) meanings through the constructed images in the commercials focusing on immigration. Lastly, visual social semiotics uncovers the power structures and injustices in the society through the underlying intentions (Hall,

1997) and enlightens the particular ideologies within the controversial advertising contents (Van Leeuwen, 2004). Therefore, this resonates to an impeccable match with the research goal of focusing on immigration in advertising that is presented as a topic of social injustice.

Sampling and data collection

Social networking sites have become crucial spheres in disseminating the advertisements fast and extensively (Chu & Kim, 2011). The digital sphere provides an advantage to the brands, in terms of establishing the possibility to reach a great amount of audience. The virality, rapid spread of content, are embedded in the social media platforms, such as YouTube, (Berger & Milkman, 2013) and this distribution increases brand awareness and market share (Tuten & Solomon, 2012). Furthermore, YouTube is highly attributed as an alternative public sphere for youth (Baym & Shah, 2011) and a platform to create “a new political aesthetic of accountability” (Triliva, et al., p. 409) that the brands may be hold accountable for what they present regarding the social injustices to the public (Hediger, 2009) through commercials. Since social media websites are known to alter the traditional ways of protesting and activism with their flexibility (Vraga, et al., 2014), YouTube’s complexity is noted to be used for mobilizing, protesting and activism through videos (Vergani & Zuev, 2011). Hence, YouTube is taken as the main source during data collection, considering its convenience of exchanging digital media content to many people.

The unit of analysis of the research was commercials that are in video formats, rather than print advertisements. These visual constructions deliver meanings like the linguistic data in written text formats (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). Therefore, the current research aims to understand the meanings conveyed through the commercials on immigration. For the purpose of the research, ten commercials are selected through YouTube with a purposive sampling method. With purposive sampling, information-rich conclusions (Schreier, 2017) are aimed to be delivered that is based on a pre-selected criterion (Lopez & Whitehead, 2013). With the great number of commercials that have a stance towards immigration, the selection of the sample is based on the usefulness. As the research aims to understand how marketing exploits immigrants, the commercials that could answer the research question the best are chosen.

It was crucial for the research to have a heterogenous sample (Flick, 2007). To have a comprehensive viewpoint on the research question, it is carefully considered that the dataset includes a variety of elements on the issue of immigration. For instance, not all commercials explicitly mention immigration or immigrants, but highlight the cultural and ethnic diversity that occurs when people from different backgrounds come together. Therefore, content

diversity within the sample is maintained which also functions as a saturation point when no new elements derive from the analysis and contribute a value to the research (Scherier, 2013). Furthermore, since immigration and feminism are issues that can be embodied by different industries, the research did not limit itself to an industry which brought unique elements to the table. However, the sampling criteria included the following points:

- The commercial to be posted on YouTube.
- The commercial to directly or metaphorically include the issues related to immigration along with feminism and/or ethnic diversity.
- The brand to employ in different countries and/or the brand product(s) to be available internationally.

This digital audiovisual archive was effective in searching for the necessary data, considering many professional content providers (e.g. brands) use YouTube to share their videos with a greater audience (Mikos, 2017). YouTube provided the option to find commercials that are useful regardless of the date of publication. Although finding material via YouTube was efficient, the limitations due to licensing and the changing availability around the globe will be considered. Hence, the videos are ensured to be found elsewhere on the internet, in case unexpected problems occur throughout the research process.

The dataset in the research consists of 10 commercials by global brands which are found suitable according to the sampling criteria. The sample focused on commercials that are published from 2016 till 2021 to bring timeliness to the research. There were two exceptions that are published in 2014 and 2015, but they are included based on their content-wise appropriateness to the research. Moreover, the global women empowerment movement, #MeToo was initiated in 2017 and the immigration discussions arose in 2016 during Trump's presidency with his initiatives on federal immigration policy in 2017. Hence, a notable number of commercials are included in the research corpus from these years. The advertisements during the 2017 Super Bowl also became more diverse by including people from minorities and highlighting inclusivity messages (Barron, 2020), thus they were crucial to include into the research corpus.

YouTube's search engine is used to reach the data by entering certain keywords, such as "Immigration Commercials", "Super Bowl Ads", and "Women Empowerment Ads". When the commercials aligned with the mentioned points in the sampling criteria, they are decided to be used for the research. Although there was not a time limit for the commercials, the time span is aimed to be kept at a maximum 2 minutes. Exceptionally, a few relatively

longer commercials are added to the corpus, considering their usefulness and suitability to answer the research question. Each commercial is, thus, ensured to contribute to the understanding of how immigration is represented in marketing as brand activism efforts.

It is also important to point out that the chosen sample consists of commercials from the Western context. All the commercials are in English, with one of them in Spanish but with English subtitles. Additionally, despite most of the brands originated in the United States, Mexican, Scottish, and Canadian brands are also included to have diversity within the shared contents. Lastly, the commercials are retrieved from the YouTube account of the brands with the campaign explanations that can be found in the description box of the videos. In the case of not being able to find the brand's official YouTube account to publish the commercial, the researcher chose the videos with the widest audience size with the uncut version of the commercial. For instance, although the Budweiser commercial was published by Budweiser Canada with a cut version, the researcher chose to include the uncut version to have a more comprehensive view.

Table 3.1. An overview of the selected commercials

<i>Text</i>	<i>Brand</i>	<i>Commercial</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Commercial Link</i>
1	Coca Cola	America The Beautiful	2014	1:30	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGC2E7GP52U
2	Johnnie Walker	This Land	2017	1:40	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODv1XK2kA1
3	84 Lumber	The Entire Journey	2017	5:44	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPo2B-Z28&t=114s
4	Coca Cola	Holiday's are coming	2019	0:31	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NmnRLNr6dc
5	Expedia	Train	2017	1:21	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i58FFYKvj7o
6	Airbnb	We Accept	2017	0:30	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yetFk7QoSck
7	Budweiser	Born the Hard Way	2017	1:30	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExTeQO8PwM&t=1s
8	Corona	The Wall	2016	1:22	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UJaAa8gDPot=17s
9	Tecate	The Beer Wall	2015	0:30	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXYM_zBVF7
10	Molson	I am Canadian	2017	1:47	tps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsQ7XGCs7lQ

Operationalization, analysis framework, and process

The research's main goal is to discover how the marketing industry exploits migrant women through the commercials of global brands. The theoretical framework has indicated that their portrayal lies on the grounds of gender (Gabbacia, 2016; Remennick, 2016), empathy, hospitality, and threat (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Thereby, this research approaches feminism to understand the portrayals of immigrants based on the gendered differences. The attributed visibilities are further associated with the formal responsibility concept (Silverstone, 2006). Additionally, the previous empirical research also revealed certain articulations towards the immigrants through the otherization of immigrants. Table 3.2. provides definitions of these concepts and exemplary references that can be found in the media which actualize the formation of the categories used in the analysis.

Table 3.2. An overview of the theoretical concepts, their definitions and references

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Definitions</i>	<i>Exemplary References</i>
Visibility as Gender	Feminism	Ensuring the equal treatment regardless of sex or gender and dismantling patriarchy (Sobande, 2019). Resistance towards the “dominant ideologies which are characteristically masculine” (Woodruffe, 1997, p. 667).	Focusing on the gendered differences (stereotypical, sexualized) between the portrayal of immigrants. Visibility or non-visibility of women characters within the commercials.
Visibility as Empathy	Immigration/ Immigrants/ Migrants	The immigrant/migrant title is attributed to people who left their country of origin due to a war, natural disasters, fear of persecution or who move for work reasons (O'Neil et al., 2017).	This research recognizes the immigrants to be not highly skilled expats, but as people who fled because of obligations. This may lead them to be depicted in vulnerable positions.
Visibility as Hospitality	Diversity	Being open to immigration/immigrants and embracing the diversity of culture, traditions, values, and race/ethnicity (Blad & Couton, 2009).	Celebration of diversity with the elements of inclusion and acceptance of differences.
Visibility as Threat	The otherization of the immigrants	The othering strategy on the immigrants to invoke repression (Ellis, 1999). Presenting the immigrants to suffer who can be outside of our safe responsibility circle (Chouliaraki, 2006).	“Us vs them” notions with the underlying positioning of “us” as the West and “them” as the immigrants who are the dangerous outsiders. The otherization within the immigrant groups as well with the sexualized representations of women (Gray & Franc, 2019).

It is important to have an overview of the aforementioned concepts to understand the basis of the data analysis process. Nonetheless, it is also useful to acknowledge that the analysis benefited from the theoretical standpoints in the prior research while rendering the interpretations specific to the chosen sample deriving from the recent contexts to comprehensively understand the advertising industry's possibility of exploitation of immigrants. In this fashion, the ethical representation of immigrants is scrutinized by employing the ethical conventions (face-ism, idealization, exoticization, and exclusion) by Schroeder and Borgerson (2005) as the basis.

The collected data is analyzed with CDA for the textual dimension that focuses on the linguistic features (Fairclough, 1995). To understand the discursive strategies and created messages around immigrants and the gendered differences CDA contributed to reveal the historical discursiveness of power relations and inequality conceptions (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Correspondingly, the research utilizes CDA to examine the strategies of depicting (women) migrants and discern the gendered differences in the migrant visibilities through the discursive constructions. CDA is guided by visual social semiotic analysis which approaches the written and spoken language as well as images as semiotic resources for the execution of the meaning making process (Van Leeuwen, 2005). With semiotics to be known as the "study of signs" (Chandler, 2007), social semiotics pinpoints to "semiotic resources" and "signifying potential" on top of the traditional notions as "signifier" and "signified" which considers "resource for making-meaning" (Halliday, 1978, p.192). Specifically, the visual elements are argued to have meanings that lead to multiple ways of interpreting experience and social interactions (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). It further grants the researcher an understanding towards the origins of the ideological meanings behind the texts (Berger, 2010).

The commercials that constituted the sample are analyzed by adopting Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) visual grammar approach which is the extended version of Halliday's (1978) semiotic work. Thus, the visual social semiotic resources and the elements in images are argued to represent the world (in obvious or less obvious way) as well as interacting with or without the text (Jewitt & Oyama, 2004). In the research, the semiotic resources are analyzed in meaningful ways by considering the relations of the visual syntactic patterns (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). More specifically, the research followed Jewitt and Oyama's (2004) three levels of studying visual social semiotics which is (1) Representational, (2) Interactive Meaning and (3) Compositional.

Representational meaning entails the interplay between narrative and conceptual elements within the images to recognize how the participants, places and objects are

represented (Jewitt & Oyama, 2004). Interactive meanings comprise contact, distance, and point of view in which contact is understood by the gaze, distance is realized with the shot distance and the point of view to be in relation to camera angle (Jewitt & Oyama, 2004). Lastly, compositional meaning discusses the compositional structures of texts by attention to the layout. Particularly, the placement of the elements regarding information value, framing, salience, and modality are observed (Jewitt & Oyama, 2004). Therefore, this research analyzed the visualities of the selected data with these semiotic resources.

Furthermore, the semiotic square that is developed by Greimas (1987) is also used as a tool to discover the absences and the non-explicit cultural elements that carry negativity within the images. The semiotic square is argued to be beneficial in marketing to detect problems in visual communication and enhance advertising communication in consumer research (Mick & Oswald, 2006). Hence, the square is established by noting a cultural concept with its logical conjunctions and disjunctions which is mapped out by pairing the concepts to understand the whole meaning of a symbolic system (Weber, 2005). By having different semiotic squares for each category, the focus is cast on different viewpoints to understand the strategies of positioning immigrants in the commercials. The vertical axes are noted to be complementary, while the diagonal axes create contradictions.

Additionally, combining verbal and visual elements was valuable for the research to understand the complete meaning of the commercials in representing immigrants. The digital multimodal texts embody various semiotic resources (language, image, and sound) by “coexisting, cooperating and getting translated” (Kourdis, 2015, p. 311). Intersemiotic translation is crucial to acknowledge that constructs our reality and experience of the world and interpersonal relations with semiotic resources through the resemiotization process (O’Halloran, et al., 2016). The resemiotization is illuminated with visual and acoustic modes of signification (O’Sullivan, 2013) and comprehensive understanding and interpretations are achieved on various levels (textual, experiential, and interpersonal) (O’Halloran, et al., 2016). Thus, by having time-stamped annotations, each frame is analyzed based on the interplay of different semiotic resources. It was especially relevant to the current research which focuses on digital audiovisual commercials, in which voice-over narrations and the dialogues between the actors are also considered.

During the analysis, certain theories were helpful to build the expectations and certain materials to analyze the sample, such as the semiotics square and the contrast table. The previous empirical material towards the representation of immigrants in different platforms of media is considered, as the previous real-life portrayal of the immigrants appointed a route to

understand the field of marketing and its approach. Although the chosen theories and empirical studies did not lead to a universal understanding of the reflection of immigrants and women in digital commercials, they were not random formations but a reflection of the current visual practices when referring to immigrants and women in media. More specifically, Chouliaraki and Stolic's (2017) theoretical standpoint on the meditation of immigration and feminization of migration (Gabbacia, 2016) to understand the increasing interdependence of women migrants are taken as the foundation of the analysis.

Finally, although the prior theoretical knowledge was worthwhile, the researcher was open-minded to include the emerging elements. As Berger (2010) suggests the field notes to have an important role in interpreting the meanings of our social worlds, which corresponds to the meanings created in the commercials. Thereby, the researcher kept detailed notes of the analysis, the analytic memos, on three levels and paid additional attention to the contrasts to understand the constructed power relations in the commercials.

Validity and Credibility

The present research considered the validity and credibility concerns and took careful notes on the need of having methodological rigor around applying the relevant methods, ensuring sufficient data, and designing an innovative analysis (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). The possible danger of generalizability within the data analysis is also acknowledged since the qualitative analysis focuses on a small sample to reach in-depth results (Silverman, 2011) which can include subjective interpretations. The analysis findings are also considered to be context-bounded (Maxwell, 1992) to the chosen sample of the marketing products. Therefore, the research suggested the potential meanings of the commercials based on the socio-political context, rather than a definitive interpretation (Chouliaraki, 2008).

Additionally, although using unobtrusive secondary data was beneficial to decrease the researcher bias, as the researcher does not play a role in the production process (Brennen, 2017), the qualitative nature of the analysis led the interpretation to occur in a personal way that is unique for the researcher (Van Dijk, 2008) that can be derived from previous knowledge and personal experience. Hence, to hinder any possible credibility issues, the methodology section granted a space to explain the methodological decisions and the process of data collection and data analysis in detail which was crucial to ensure the readers' trustworthiness (Brennen, 2012).

As another way to strengthen the reliability of the current research, the connections between the data and the results are provided (Polit & Beck, 2004). This can also be

associated with the context-boundedness of the sample and the analysis; hence the sample is explained in detail along with the tables and relevant information that can be found in appendices. The information exclusively included the summary of the commercials, however the political environment that they were published in is also considered (e.g. during the Trump administration). Expediting the transferability process is also linked to explaining the context, the selection of the data and the data analysis process clearly (Graneheim & Lundman 2004). These demonstrations are made transparent for replicability reasons (Silverman, 2011) to increase the reliability of the findings when the process of the inquiry is followed by the other researchers (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

For the validity of the research, analytical induction is also focused by having continuous comparisons and analyzing the variance of the study (Silverman, 2011). Throughout this process, the data are repeatedly compared with the prior analysis, and the deviant cases are discovered as the outliers which are distinct from the initial expectations of the research (Silverman, 2011). Therefore, during the data collection process, the sample is aimed to be enriched with commercials containing different characteristics and countries of origin. This contributed to having meaningful comparisons between the data which consisted of distinct and identical elements (Maxwell, 2013) and, thereupon, delivering well-built answers to the research question. Overall, the transparency is aimed to be provided by enclosing the details of the decisions made along the data collection and building the understanding for the interpretation of the data.

Chapter Summary

Through a critical discourse analysis driven by visual social semiotics, the selected methodology is found suitable to discover the exploitation of immigrants in marketing. In this manner, the research focuses on 10 commercials that are in digital audio-visual video formats to detect the underlying discourses, ideas, and contrasts in the representation of immigrants. The semiotic squares contribute to the meaning-making process by enlightening the contrasts within the immigrant portrayals. Therefore, the research bridges the textual and visual data to answer the research question. While the previously mentioned theories construct the main concepts for each identified category, the context-specific elements from the data are important to provide a comprehensive viewpoint.

4. Results

Chapter Overview

This chapter demonstrates the findings of the analysis on 10 digital audiovisual commercials that focus on immigration. The results indicated that the main findings are categorized under four categories: (1) Visibility as Gender, (2) Visibility as Empathy, (3) Visibility as Hospitality and (4) Visibility as Threat. Along with the semiotic squares for each category, the contrast discourses are indicated which highlight some absences in the brand representations of immigrants. While analyzing, both the implicit and explicit meanings of the images, the whole meaning of the commercials are reached by acknowledging the acoustic elements, such as voice over narrations and dialogues. In each category, visual social semiotic analysis is delineated in detail and the contrasts discourses are interpreted.

Table 4.1. Categories and the contrasts in the sample.

<i>Categories</i>		<i>Argument</i>	<i>Brand Names</i>
Visibility as Gender	Women dominated/Men dominated	The prominence (protagonists) of the characters in the commercial.	Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Coca Cola (Holiday's are Coming), Expedia, Budweiser, Corona, Tecate
	Stereotypical /Challenging	The immigrants in stereotypical roles or in challenging roles to the media's usual representation.	Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Coca Cola (Holiday's are Coming), Expedia, Budweiser, Corona, Tecate
Visibility as Empathy	Powerless/Strong	The image of the powerless immigrants, in contrast to the strong "us" to save the immigrants.	Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Expedia, Budweiser
	Vulnerable/Hero	Immigrants in vulnerable roles (e.g. children) or immigrants as heroes to have succession stories.	84 Lumber, Expedia, Budweiser
Visibility as Hospitality	Welcoming/Hateful	Welcoming actions towards the immigrants to embrace diversity or having negative feelings towards the immigrants.	Coca Cola (America the Beautiful), Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Coca Cola (Holiday's are Coming), Airbnb, Budweiser, Corona, Tecate, Molson
Visibility as Threat	Criminal/Legal	Associating danger with the immigrants (Criminal "Them")	Coca Cola (Holiday's are Coming), Corona
	Fear/Safe	Being afraid of the immigrants (e.g. due to their illegality) or having trust towards them.	Coca Cola (Holiday's are Coming), Airbnb, Budweiser, Tecate

Visibility as Gender

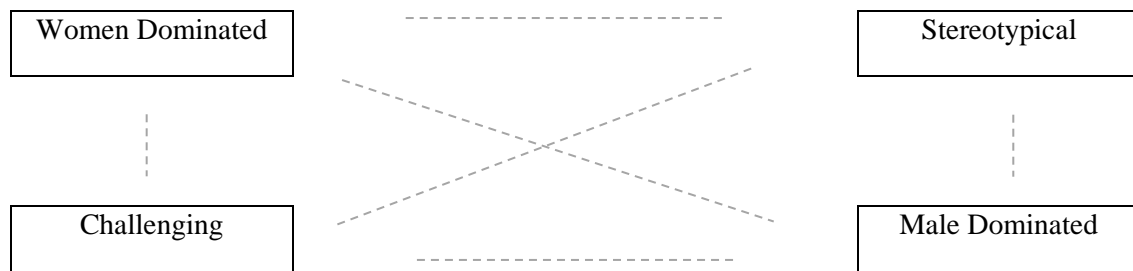


Figure 4.1. The Semiotics Square, Visibility as Gender.

As the first observation, gender is indicated to be an important element to consider in the commercials. By having different approaches to this concept, some commercials highlighted the visibility of women characters, some had invisibility of women characters and the rest included both women and men characters, almost equally. The invisibility and visibility are decided based on the prominence of the characters, in other words, who are the protagonists of the focused stories. The commercials that included both men and women do not draw much attention to a specific character, but usually include a variety of people to underline diversity.

84 Lumber presents a commercial in which a story of a mother and a daughter is followed through their journey starting from Mexico to the United States border. Within the sample, the choice of female protagonists is a crucial distinction that acknowledges the visibility of the women immigrants. On the representational level, having these characters going on the journey independently, by themselves, is an empowered characteristic that is employed to the female migrants. This image shifted women from being in the dependent roles and qualified them to be protected by the West (us), as they pivoted from being the other (them) into a communitarian figure (Horsti, 2013). Thus, the stereotypical approach of having women in dependent roles (e.g. someone's wife) is challenged. For instance, the frame with the protagonists in an empty field holding hands underlines the symbolic attribute of their powerfulness that they can stand against the whole world and its challenges together. Moreover, with the daughter character in the commercial, the sentimentality is conveyed in the hope of attracting the attention of the viewers to build more positive feelings towards the migrant family.

The Latino mother and daughter who leave their home at dawn are seen to be reminiscing over their memories through a stack of photographs and saying goodbye to the old man figure, who seems like a grandfather. This frame with the grandfather indicates

another vulnerable character, other than the child, which enhances the sensuality of the viewers. Furthermore, the display of the female immigrants has a vital importance, as the hardships they go through can be doubled in the eyes of the viewers by conveying extra sensitivity, considering mothers and children are depicted as the ideal victims (Moeller, 1999).

Within the sample, Expedia's commercial has another woman character in the lead. The commercial distinctly chooses this female protagonist not belonging to the immigrant group, but a Western individual who is highly concerned about the issues in the other parts of the world. This can increase the viewers' personal connection with the protagonist, who belongs to "us", and feel encouraged to take responsibility towards these crucial issues in the world. Although the commercial includes soft and fun moments, the main idea is strengthened with the combination of the serious issues that are tackled through images of protests. The relevancy of the research is highlighted with the volunteering actions of the woman protagonist for the refugees. All these caring actions of the protagonist is presented in connection to the narrator's statements:

"... To peek over our neighbor's fence and once we do, we see there is wonder waiting on the other side."

On the compositional level, the Western woman protagonist's savior role is consolidated. The salience of the frames reveals the color *red* to attract more attention from the viewers. The protagonist's hair color attributes a difference to her in many frames, such as during the protests or as she interacts with other people in foreign countries who have dark hair color. The red color also matches with the protest placards, symbolizing the crowd's passion towards what they fight for. The woman protagonist's lifesaver jacket is also red as she hugs the immigrants in the seashore, denoting that she acts as a lifesaver to the immigrants.

Moreover, the narrator explains that she "brings the world one step closer" or "bridges the continents". When these are combined with the shots when she is checked by the soldiers, which seems like a country in the Middle East, or when she rescues migrants near a shoreline, a savior power is attributed to the protagonist. Considering the frames of the protagonist putting out efforts for the vulnerable migrants, who are originally from the fortunate West, a formal responsibility is constructed. Therefore, the responsibility targets "our" actions, as the Western citizens choose to behave deriving from civic agency (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).



Figure 4.2. The Train (0.43). Expedia.

Another note on displaying a woman to take the responsibility towards the important issues can be due to the stereotypical role of women's nurturing side. There is a stereotypical belief that men appear less nurturing and caring than women (Christov-Moore, et al., 2014; Diekmann & Eagly, 2000) with the expectation of men to be less emphatic (Graham & Ickes, 1997). Thus, the association of taking responsibility towards the vulnerable people can be more naturally and easily made in the minds of the viewers. Albeit a woman is depicted as an independent character traveling around the world, her gender is made use of to reproduce the image of maternal women.

On the other hand, the rest of the commercials either majorly focus on male characters or include both genders to create diversity. As one of the examples in the sample, Tecate's inclusion of male protagonists leads to the invisibility of women. Without allocating a space for the women, neither on the California nor on the Mexico side, their experiences and stories are overlooked. This can be due to the media's overrepresentation of migrants as men, rather than women (Rettberg & Gajjala, 2016). Additionally, the humorous element of the commercial may lead to certain questions. For instance, there is an attributed symbol when the Californian man jumps to the other side, denoting that travelling is uncomplicated, the real challenges of the immigrants throughout their journey are neglected (Gulbrandsen et al., 2020). Therefore, the commercial gained a simpler and joyful resonance which can attract attention with a humorous and ironic take on "the wall" issue. Nevertheless, the cheerful get-together between the eight men may distort the reality of what really happens at the border and create a hyperreality, which is easier to consume by the viewers.

Through the interactive meaning, Coca Cola's commercial (America the Beautiful) contains diverse gender groups with different people taken to the focus with the close-ups. In these frames, the people of America look directly into the camera which aims to create a direct eye contact with the viewers. The backgrounds in these frames are blurred and only the person is focused on which bolsters the connection with the viewers. The thumbnail on YouTube is chosen to be a shot with the woman wearing hijab which can be perceived as an

interesting point to consider. This can be a marketing choice to drive more traffic to the video, as it ignites attention to the timely debates on wearing hijabs, and a woman is at the center for such a discussion.

With the semiotic square considered, while the Johnny Walker commercial gives visibility to the immigrants and grants voice to them with the use of Latinx protagonists, there is invisibility for the women (Latinx) immigrants. The “threat” frame stressing the illegality and criminality of the immigrants in media is also linked to the males (Horsti, 2013; Gray & Franck, 2019) is overcome by presenting positive and cheerful depictions of the Latinx protagonists. Hence, the male immigrants are represented as hard-working creative people who are not feared by the locals. On the other hand, there is invisibility and silence attributed to the women immigrants by not allocating space to explain their existence and experiences.

Interestingly, the band members are also seen to enter a bar from the “exit” which conceptually symbolizes the illegal migration at the border on the representational level. However, this may indicate the informality of the male migrants, rather than the women as they are not mentioned throughout the commercial. They are even displayed interacting with local people, such as the two older women out jogging who share smiles with the band. This implies that the band is familiar with the setting of Los Angeles, they command the city, and the locals attribute optimistic feelings towards them, rather than fear or hatred.



Figure 4.3. This Land (0:57). Johnny Walker.

The male-dominated ambiance also overlooks the visibility of women, with even the extras to be chosen as males. There are only a few times that women are visible in the commercial. It is interesting that the successful Mexican image is illustrated with only men characters who accomplish something without women belonging to this category. While those roles are given to the male counterparts, women are seen as they sit on the terrace in a

fancy dress, giving out the scissors to the successful man or on a mechanical bull. It can even be argued that women are sexualized from the shots with the attributed symbol of the woman flipping her hair on the mechanical bull. Additionally, the mechanical bull is a symbol of embracing the Mexican culture, since the game has associations with the original sport, rodeo, that has ties to Mexico. Although the commercial is focused on destroying the stereotypical way that the Mexican people are seen, it disregards women by not giving a space in the storyline.

The Budweiser commercial is also men-dominated with the invisibility of women. In most of the frames, even the background characters are male which overlooks women as migrants. Women are only seen on the street as a group once and as a young girl on the truck who is also migrating. This image directs to another important point, as it illustrates a vulnerable character that people can convey empathy towards with more humane views (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).

Table 4.2. Visual social semiotic resources and elements for Visibility as Gender.

Representational	Interactive Meaning	Compositional
<p>Narrative:</p> <p>-Transactive: Mother and daughter (actors) say goodbye to their hometown (goal) (84 Lumber) , the woman protagonist (actor) volunteers to save the refugees (goal) the woman protagonist (actor) joins a protest (goal) (Expedia), the two groups of men (actors) gaze each other (goal) (Tecate), the group of people (actor) shares a Coke (goal) (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>), the band members (actors) walk down the street (goal) (Johnnie Walker).</p>	<p>Contact:</p> <p>-Offer: gaze directed at the story (84 Lumber, Expedia, Tecate, Budweiser)</p> <p>-Demand: eye contact with the viewer while singing (Johnnie Walker), smiling/neutral (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Corona)</p>	<p>Information value:</p> <p>-Central: the protagonist(s) and the extra characters (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, 84 Lumber, Johnnie Walker, Expedia, Budweiser, Corona, Tecate)</p>
<p>Conceptual:</p> <p>- Attributed symbolic: The woman (carries) flips her hair (symbolic attribute) (Corona), The mother and daughter (carries) holding hands (symbolic attribute) (84 Lumber), The band members (carries) smiling at people (symbolic attribute), The band members (carries) entering from the "exit" (symbolic attribute) (Johnnie Walker)</p>	<p>Distance:</p> <p>-Close-up: protagonist's face (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, 84 Lumber, Expedia, Budweiser, Corona)</p> <p>-Medium: from the waist-up (Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Expedia), from the back (Expedia, Budweiser)</p> <p>-Long Shot: the whole body figure (Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Tecate), men climbing on a wall (Corona)</p>	<p>Framing:</p> <p>-Connect: vector looking towards something (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Corona, Tecate)</p> <p>-Disconnect: contrast color of red hair (Expedia)</p>
	<p>Point of View:</p> <p>-Vertical: on the eye level (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, 84 Lumber, Expedia, Corona), looking down at the subject (Corona)</p> <p>-Horizontal: from the sideline (Tecate)</p>	<p>Salience:</p> <p>Blurry background that puts attention on the actors (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, Corona), the emptiness of the location to put more attention on the actors (84 Lumber)</p>
		<p>Modality:</p> <p>-Natural: vibrant color (Johnnie Walker, Expedia), colorful but low saturation colors (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>), blue and yellow (Tecate), yellow low saturation (84 Lumber), black and red (Corona)</p>

Visibility as Empathy

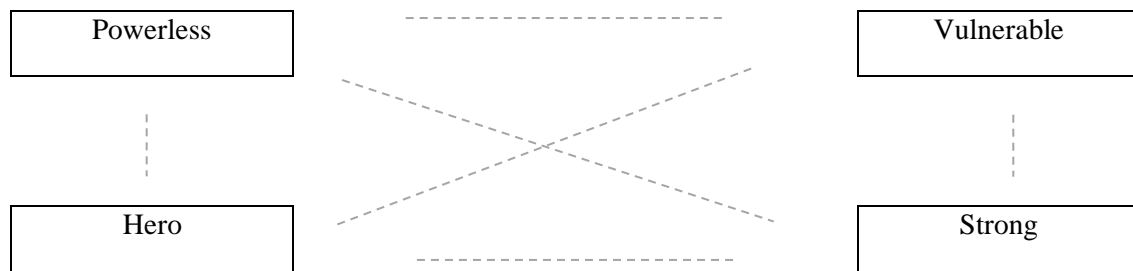


Figure 4.4. The Semiotics Square, Visibility as Empathy.

The analysis of the commercials on the representation of migrants pinpointed the second observation to be Visibility as Empathy. This concept is attempted by conveying the contrasts of “powerless/strong” and “vulnerable/hero”, deriving from the semiotic square. The images of the powerless immigrants who are in need of help and the vulnerable characters are aimed to ignite sadness and worry from the viewers’ perspective. Therefore, the empathy towards the immigrants results in a charitable responsibility that is shown by the stronger people (“us”, the West) to help (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Moreover, the success stories of the immigrants build a resistance towards the “vulnerable” images to also produce empathy. Contrarily, these representations intended to reposition the immigrants as close to “us”, as heroes, rather than stressing their otherness. This brought the immigrants closer to the Western image, as one of “us”, who have the capital to benefit the nation.

The 84 Lumber places powerlessness on the migrant mother and daughter with many frames in the commercial from the beginning to symbolize the challenging journey awaiting them, such as the stormy weather the child faces against the grey clouds. This is strengthened on the representational level as the mother and daughter take shelter under a shop’s roof, walk down the train line, and jump onto the train to be able to continue their journey. These details of the challenging moments in return serve to explain the story behind the “Entire Journey”. The experiences of the migrants are closely told in the commercial that resonated a stronger connection between the viewers and the protagonists.

Further, with the interactive meaning, the immigrants are victimized to gain empathy from the viewers by targeting the emotions. For instance, the frames that illustrate the protagonists as sad, tired, and crying. These experiences throughout their journey mostly consist of despair moments that are accompanied by the protagonists’ dirty faces and raptured clothes within the medium shots. Even some things that are taken for granted like a bottle of water are represented to be precious sources for the migrants. These specific frames are

synchronized with the 84 Lumber workers to designate the difference between the ease of living on the other side of the wall. Therefore, the United States side, “our”, is highlighted with its safety.



Figure 4.5. The Entire Journey (3:34). 84 Lumber.

However, a feeling of hope also exists in the commercial as this is reminded to the viewers a couple of times. One prominent example is the United States flag that the child composes together by collecting pieces throughout the way which also reflects the child’s innocence to invoke heartfelt emotions. Furthermore, making the United States flag resonate with the immigrants’ determination and their nourished hope towards their new life in the destination country. The feeling of hope is also demonstrated with the appearance of a door in the wall which is built by the 84 Lumber workers. Hence, the charitable responsibility is observed by creating the image of the strong people (“us”) to save the people in need (“others”) (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).

Additionally, Expedia demonstrates the vulnerability of the migrants through the character range, including children, women, and men. On the representational level, the use of children who are rescued from the boat creates a vulnerable and sentimental image which may impact the viewers to feel more emotional towards the storyline. This can further increase their sense of responsibility, considering the shot where the woman protagonist hugs the migrant child near the seashore. This image of the suffering child is explained by Burman (1994, p.241) as “the colonial paternalism where the adult-Northerner offers help and knowledge to the infantilized-South”. In other words, instead of giving a voice to the immigrants, it encourages the people who are in more fortunate conditions (us, the West) to help the others (them).

“One day you will look back and see that you have made this world a better place.”

“What is the key? It’s you.”

Budweiser's commercial includes both contrasts, as it narrates a migrant's success story while reflecting the despair he goes through on the way. Depicting the immigrants as vulnerable and in need of care is shifted by underlining their determination and braveness through the protagonist. With Visibility of Empathy, the commercial underscored that the viewers can understand the immigrants' perspective by diving deep into their stories and experiences. The horizontally displayed frames on the interactive level from the front positioned the viewers to look directly to the commercial to initiate the feeling of being a part of the story which can enforce empathy. For instance, it almost feels like the viewers are also on the ship and on the truck to create the sense of being "one of them" going on the same journey. The hardships the immigrants go through is also made visible with the close-up shots of the protagonist to create empathy. Thus, the focus is set on the protagonist's facial expressions rather than the people around him whose faces are not visible and appear merely as silhouettes.

Moreover, the commercial prominently stresses the migrant protagonist's close connection to his notebook that is filled with ideas and dreams, to underline that the immigrants can be determined and ambitious with a lot of qualities and ideas to contribute to the host country. This is aligned with the concluding statement in the commercial "When nothing stops your dream". Therefore, the commercial, which is inspired by their founder's life, reflects a success story of an immigrant who contributed to the establishment of a world-famous beer brand by pursuing a dream. In other words, the immigrants are reflected not merely as people who are in need of care and in despair, but also as the determinant people with a lot of ambitious qualities. Although presenting the immigrants as useful subjects for the destination country is not very often (Horsti, 2013), this commercial discusses immigrants to be the heroes as they survive challenging journeys (Brune, 2004).

On the compositional level, the vulnerability of the immigrants is chosen to be reflected with the salience of the colors in the yellow rusty desert context, as well as the bright sun which connotes the tiredness of walking in such a condition by 84 Lumber. Whereas Budweiser creates the plot in dark tones while telling their story. The protagonist's suit and the other immigrants' clothes also match with the background which indicates a sad ambiance that their journey was not smooth. The dark tones also reflect the frightening feelings of the protagonist. Nevertheless, the protagonist wears a suit, like a businessperson, and this is a success story of an immigrant who founded Budweiser beer by contributing to society.

Similarly, there is a deviation from the mediatic representation of immigrants being victims or threats to the local society, with how the band members are depicted by Johnnie Walker. According to the information value, the band members are in the central focus of the camera with their physical movements of walking, their heads held up, body posture to be straight-up, and taking ownership of where they walk. Thus, they are observed to be successful immigrants which brings them closer to the viewers (“us”). Without having restricted spaces (e.g. on the pavement or in the bar), the protagonists own the places with pride and self-confidence.

Additionally, the use of vulnerable characters is observed by Coca Cola (Holiday’s are Coming). However, differently than the other commercials, they are the children in the destination country belonging to “us”. The image of the children is associated with the storyline and aims to attract the viewers into the commercial with the children’s naiveness. It also conveys empathy with the viewers on the basis of igniting the viewers’ collective memory with the use of Santa Claus, since when the past is transferred to the present happenings, certain guiding patterns are followed (Shils, 1981). Therefore, the Santa folklore is adopted to transmit the understanding that Santa is the gift-bearer and someone to look up to whom we should have positive feelings towards. Moreover, the statements with the voice-over symbolize that the society has internalized Santa Claus, although his actions can be associated with what outsiders would do. Thus, it is not rational to be afraid of neither him nor the implied immigrants.

Table 4.3. Visual social semiotic resources and elements for Visibility as Empathy.

Representational	Interactive Meaning	Compositional
<p>Narrative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transactive: Mother and daughter (actors) look at the wall (goal), the daughter (actor) shows the American flag she gathered (goal) (84 Lumber), a child (actor) looks through the neighbor's fence (goal) (Expedia), the woman (actor) looks through the boat carrying refugees (goal), the man (actor) sketches ideas on his notebook (goal) (Budweiser) 	<p>Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Offer: gaze directed at the story (84 Lumber, Johnnie Walker, Expedia) -Demand: close attention directed at the protagonist's facial expression, sad and smiling (Expedia), the sad and desperate (Budweiser), tired and crying (84 Lumber) 	<p>Information value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Central: the protagonist (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, 84 Lumber, Johnnie Walker, Expedia, Budweiser, Corona, Tecate) -Vertical (from the top): the beer sketch on the notebook (Budweiser), the flight information by Expedia on the phone (Expedia), the daughter taking the American flag out from her bag (84 Lumber) Horizontal (left/right): the protagonist woman on the right gazing the island, talking to the men on the train (Expedia)
<p>Conceptual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attributed symbolic: The mother and daughter (actors) stays around the fire alone (84 Lumber), The protagonist and fellow migrant (actors) gaze towards the sky, The immigrants on a truck taken to another location (Budweiser) 	<p>Distance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Close-up: protagonist's face (84 Lumber, Expedia, Budweiser) -Medium: from the waist-up (84 Lumber, Expedia), from the back (Expedia, Budweiser) -Long Shot: the protest images from far (Expedia), the whole body figure (84 Lumber) 	<p>Framing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Connect: the fence (Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>), the weather (Budweiser) -Disconnect: weather and ocean (Expedia)
	<p>Point of View:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vertical: looking directly at the actors (84 Lumber, Johnnie Walker, Expedia, Budweiser) -Horizontal: from the sideline (Expedia), frontal (Johnnie Walker, Budweiser) 	<p>Salience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Color: background dark grey tones (Budweiser), yellow-rusty desert color, under the sun frames (84 Lumber), the red lifesaver suit the woman protagonist wears (Expedia) Color contrast: red hair of the protagonist, the live ocean blue vs foggy ocean weather with refugees, natural forest colors vs greyish weather during the protests (Expedia), dominant grey vs vibrant fire (Budweiser)
		<p>Modality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Natural: full color with grey, yellow (Budweiser, 84 Lumber), Tonal contrasts (grey vs live tones) (Expedia)

Visibility as Hospitality

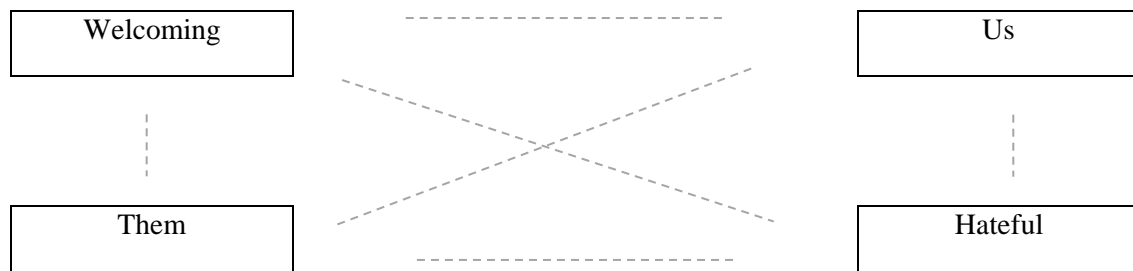


Figure 4.6. The Semiotics Square, Visibility as Hospitality.

The third observation of the analysis is Visibility as Hospitality which features the contrast between welcoming actions and hateful feelings. Through the welcoming actions, celebration of diversity stood out in this category which unraveled solidarity between people from different backgrounds. The celebration of different cultures is also highlighted by displaying specific cultural symbols. Based on the semiotic square, the contrast between “us” and “them” is aimed to be blurred by accepting the immigrants in one’s own space.

Furthermore, the opposing actions are also underlined in this category, as the commercials aimed to deliver the idea that the immigrants should be accepted, rather than hated on. For instance, throughout the story of the Budweiser commercial, the unwantedness of the immigrants in the society is represented with the scenes of the locals saying, “Go back home”. The direct positioning of the viewers into the frame gives the viewer the feeling of being there and creates an empathy with the storyline as the discomfort of the protagonist can be felt. These negative feelings are further discussed in the next category with the immigrants’ display as threats.

The celebration of diversity is seen as the most common strategy in this category. On the representational level, Airbnb’s commercial mention the celebration of diversity through a montage of human faces from different backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, sexual preferences, genders, ages, and cultures. The commercial is, hence, in favor of establishing social justice in the society (Gulbrandsen, et al., 2020) through the diverse human images that underscore their acceptance with the following text:

We believe no matter who you are, where you’re from, who you love or who you worship, we all belong. The world is more beautiful the more you accept.

Through the interactive meaning, the people are captured looking directly into the camera which initiates direct eye contact. Having people directly looking into the eyes of the viewers aim to create the feeling of closeness and intimacy with the actors in the commercial. The close-up shots also strengthen this connection between the actors and the viewers. Additionally, displaying the people with a neutral face bolsters the naturalness and the seriousness of this issue. These can also be read from the perspective that people from the West need to face these people and understand their responsibility towards them. Chouliaraki & Stolic (2017) emphasized the formation of responsibility for the West who are in the destination country by positioning “us” as the guilty people and has to take responsibility towards “them” (the immigrants). Thus, through the Visibility of Hospitality, Airbnb underscores the importance of taking responsibility for the immigrants by engaging in welcoming actions and accepting them, without expecting anything back (Silverstone, 2006).

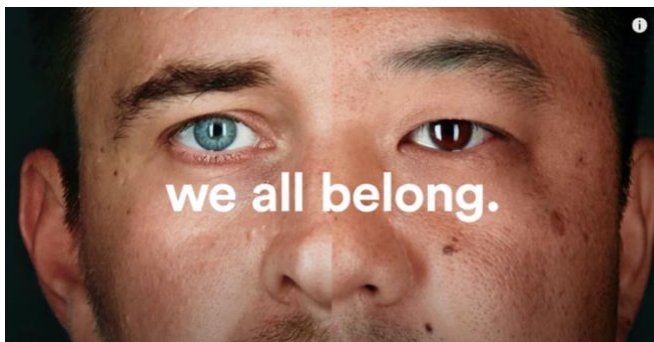


Figure 4.7. We Accept (0:15). Airbnb.

The Coca Cola's *Holidays Are Coming* follows a distinct way in making a point on the issue of immigration by alluding metaphorically to the misconceptions on the immigrants. With Coca Cola's choice of telling the story, the viewers are encouraged to welcome the immigrants by blurring the line between “us” and “them”. The commercial's aim is underscored with the last seconds of the commercial when the question of what to do when we come across Santa Claus (the immigrants) is answered by the idea of “welcoming” them. The folklore story of Santa Claus is further composed as a nighttime story with the contrast of festive bright red and white colors (Christmas lights and Santa costume) in the dark tones at night. As Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) explained the hospitality actions to include welcoming banners, the commercial similarly shows a card addressed to Santa Claus with a bottle of Coca Cola. These actions also accentuate the West's responsibility towards the newcomers with their hospitality. People that are welcomed are depicted as the “others” who

are new to one's own space (Silverstone, 2006). Hence, the closure statement highlights the celebration of diversity:

If we focus on what divides us, we may forget what we love about each other.

“What we share is stronger”.

As not all the commercials within the sample include direct notions towards the Trump administration and the growing debates over immigration, displaying diversity and talking positively about it are helpful for the brands to take a stance. The Molson commercial was broadcasted a few years before the global debate on Trump administration's immigration bans, which can explain the non-explicit mention of immigration, but underscoring the related elements and celebration of multiculturalism.

The celebration of multiculturalism is based on the plot of the commercial, as a red beer fridge is located in a public square which can only be opened by saying “I am Canadian” in 6 different languages. The overall positive environment in the commercial is provided with the salient narrative of the commercial in which a colorful background, a sunny day, and humorous moments for people in the commercial to share a laugh are seen. The distance of the shots varies from medium and long shots. The commercial's amateur filming, thus, involve the viewers in the scene and make them enjoy the positive environment that is created with high modality. The plot twist occurs when after trying out in English, people realize that they need other people speaking different languages. Therefore, the previous associations of the “needy” immigrants are shifted into the other way around, as everyone needs one another.

The commercial's tagline is, further, important to consider, as it reflects the Canadian nationalism, as well as its cultural mosaic. Canada went through a more complex way of expressing nationalism, when compared to the United States that demonstrated the American nationalism openly (Lipset, 1965) while moving from a colony to a nation. The repeated nationalistic sentence, is thus, shown in a way that Canada is proud to have people from different backgrounds. In the end of the commercial, people manage to open the fridge and they share the Molson beer while smiling at one another which symbolize the togetherness. Therefore, people share the beer as they share the land with the feeling of unity. In other words, Canada can be depicted as a country that is open to people from different backgrounds that are not only hospitable, but also embraces the incomers into their lands.

“We are Canadian”

Likewise, the Coca Cola commercial, *America the Beautiful*, included shots of people from different ethnicities, genders, age groups, religions and cultures which signify the melting pot characteristic of the United States through the attributed symbols. The long and medium shots of the various cityscapes, the Pacific seaside, the Southwest desert, restaurants and different neighborhoods (e.g. ChinaTown) are blended together that imply the diversity of the nation, along with people who are the fabric of the country. Similar to Molson's representation of Canada, the United States is presented as a country that contains people from diverse backgrounds through the welcoming optimistic environment that it creates. Furthermore, showcasing diverse people celebrate human values, such as equality and solidarity, as the elements that make America beautiful.

Interestingly, there are no conversations between the characters or voice overs in the commercial. However, the song that is played in the background is "America the Beautiful", sung in different languages, including English, Spanish and Hindi. The song, the backbone of the commercial, highlights the multiculturalism that is present in the United States where different languages are spoken, and different voices can be heard. Therefore, the song aspires to increase the patriotic values within the viewers. The final statement, further, bolsters this understanding.

"Together is Beautiful"

The colorful shots are also helpful to manage the saliency and create the sense of togetherness by having shots of people dancing, sharing a laugh, swimming, and surrounding a table. As the common point of these people, other than being American, a bottle of Coca-Cola takes its place in many of the shots, either on the table or in the hands of people. The use of children enhances the emotional side of the commercial and stresses the concept of family that implies the United States as a big family containing different members.



Figure 4.8. America is Beautiful (1:03). Coca Cola.

Furthermore, the commercial by Johnnie Walker follows a Los Angeles based Latinx psych-soul group, Chicano Batman, as they cover the song “This Land is Your Land”. When the opening and the closing shots are considered, the saliency of the commercial is created as a day in the band’s life, as the first shots take place with a sunny background where they run for errands and the commercial finalizes with a dark background symbolizing the night. Consequently, a high modality is secured with the vibrant high saturated colors. The commercial takes place in Los Angeles which creates a safe and familiar environment for the band. Furthermore, this creates a sense of reality with the majority of Latinos living in metropolitan cities with a fourth of them living in California (Delgado, 2005). Thus, a localism strategy is highlighted with showcasing the venues and streets of Los Angeles.

The inclusion of the Black Label Johnnie Walker in certain scenes (e.g. the opening rooftop scene and at the bar) stresses the fact that this is a commercial by the brand itself and not a music video for the band. The JW logo is also seen during the commercial, as the protagonists walk down the street. By following the protagonists through their hard day at work, the commercial finalizes in a shot where the band members give a cheer with a glass of Johnnie Walker, as they deserve to enjoy themselves at the end of the day. This symbolizes that the brand product is something to be earned and enjoyed by people who are from a middle or high-class.

Not having constraints on the spaces the protagonists move around incorporates a fluidity to their movements, as they are allowed to enter anywhere. This can be argued to be in relation to immigration and how Latinx people are welcomed in the United States. The band members can enter anywhere, own up their space and be themselves as they belong. Additionally, the casual clothing of the protagonists changes into a more formal wear with a suit and a bowtie. This way, a symbolic attribute as respect is aimed to be conveyed through the Latinx protagonists. This also directs the meaning that the protagonists are getting ready for work, with the following studio shots. Thus, a different representation of the immigrants is articulated in the commercial compared to the “useless”, “underclass” and “criminal, threat” associations. Instead, adjectives, such as “hard-working” and “beneficial to the society” are connotated with the immigrants who work hard and have economic means to purchase a black label whiskey.

The song “This Land is Your Land” accompanies the band throughout the commercial as they cover the song which is known to be an “iconic song and rallying cry for American unification” (PR Newswire, 2016). The song was also used by the brand for another advert under their Keep Walking America campaign. The diversity of the United States can be

understood from the lyrics, and this becomes clearer with the special note in the commercial on bilingualism. The band performs a verse of the song in Spanish to highlight the image of the American melting pot where several languages are spoken. Bilingualism was first adopted in the media by the mid-1960s when Chicano activism and issues related to Latinx accelerated (Gutierrez, 1980). This way the Spanish language is commodified to signify a resistance as a political act.

In various shots, Mexican culture's symbols are integrated with the American ones to underscore the diversity celebration while the Latinx protagonists explain their own story. These symbolic attributes are conceptually narrated in the commercial. In the tailor shop, a Charro suit is seen which narrates the nationhood and the power of the Mexican identity (Martynuska, 2016). In the scene with the pop-up shop, the folk art is depicted on the walls with a skull made of cardboard in reference to the traditional Mexican celebration, "Day of the Dead". Considering on the day of the celebration, the departed relatives are remembered that enhances the link between the families (Brandes, 1998), the commercial uses this symbol to delineate the interconnectivity between the older generations of the immigrants with their younger offspring. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that there is no visibility of all Latinx subgroups, but only the symbols to reflect the Mexican American identities. Therefore, the commercial does not give a full picture on the celebration of the Latinx diversity in the United States but brings a limited view.

The blend of the two cultures is, further, viewed with the shot where the protagonists walk through an American diner in the background. While the diner concept belongs to the American culture, the menu includes "burgers, tacos and pastrami" that is brought together from immigrants from different cultures. This way, while diversity is celebrated, the immigrants are seen as people who contribute to the American economy. Moreover, the Latinx protagonists are also seen enjoying an "American" burger that they get from the food truck. This symbolizes that there is a two-way of appreciation towards what is brought from each culture. Finally, the music's power of bridging people is underlined as the band members get a guitar from the people in the car to stress the interconnectivity between the people in the United States.

Table 4.4. Visual social semiotic resources and elements for Visibility as Hospitality.

Representational	Interactive Meaning	Compositional
<p>Narrative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transactive: A group of people (actors) to interact with each other (goal) (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>), Santa Claus (actor) seeing a note for him (goal) (Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>), the group of people (actors) to try the statement in different languages (goal), the group of people (actors) to share drinks (goal) (Molson) -Non-transactive: collage of human faces (actors) (Airbnb) 	<p>Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Offer: gaze directed at the story (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>, Molson) -Demand: direct eye contact with the viewer (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, Airbnb) 	<p>Information value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Central: the protagonist(s) and the extra characters (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>, Airbnb, Molson)
<p>Conceptual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attributed symbolic: The diverse group of people (carries) (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Airbnb, Molson), The band members (carriers) to wear a suit (symbolic attribute), Cultural symbols (Charro suit, food names) (Johnnie Walker) 	<p>Distance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Close-up: protagonist's face (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Airbnb) -Medium: from the waist-up (Coca Cola, <i>America The Beautiful</i>, Molson) -Long Shot: the whole body figure (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, Molson) 	<p>Framing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Connect: vector looking towards something (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, Airbnb), focusing on the beer fridge (Molson), the similarity of the tones of outside and inside (Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>)
	<p>Point of View:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vertical: on the eye level (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, Johnnie Walker, Airbnb, Molson) -Horizontal: from the sideline (Molson) 	<p>Saliency:</p> <p>Blurry background that puts attention on the actors (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>, 10), the night (dark) and the festive bright colors (Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>), the colorful papers deriving from the Mexican culture (Johnnie Walker), changing skin tones, eye and hair colors (Airbnb)</p>
		<p>Modality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Natural: vibrant color (Johnnie Walker, Airbnb, Molson), colorful but low saturation colors (Coca Cola, <i>America the Beautiful</i>), Hyper-reality: dark tones with bright color (Coca Cola, <i>Holiday's are Coming</i>)

Visibility as Threat

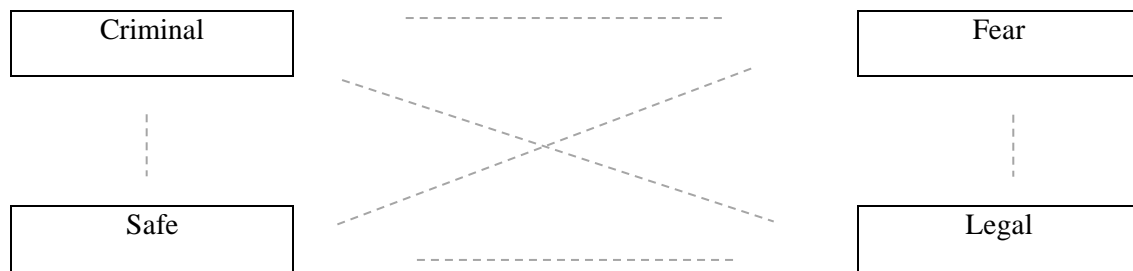


Figure 4.9. The Semiotics Square, Visibility as Threat

The fourth observation from the analysis of the commercials underlined immigrants through Visibility as Threat. The commercials focus on the contrast between “criminal/legal” and “fear/safe”, with the prior concepts to be in relation to the immigrants’ illegal characteristics. Therefore, the interpretations belonging to this category represent the immigrants as threats or dangerous individuals. The latter contrast highlights the feelings of being alarmed and suspicious towards the immigrants due to their illegality and ambiguous status. However, this tone is later on changed in the texts and it is mostly executed in an ironic way with humorous elements to emulate how the immigrants are portrayed in the media and by the Trump administration. Thus, “us” is associated with being on the secure side, while “them” is expressed concerning the construct of dangerous immigrants (Appendix A).

Corona’s *The Wall* commercial takes a stance from the perspective of the Mexicans to emphasize on how they are perceived by the society deriving from their representation in the media. The male protagonist is followed throughout the commercial with his voice-over, encouraging the Mexicans, the migrants, with certain empowering statements. The male protagonist appears with a suit, at least a blazer which depicts him as a serious person who should be taken seriously by what he says. The “wall” reference is made throughout the commercial with people climbing on the walls, the protagonist walking on the walls and multiple more images of walls around the city. The wall reference is executed in association with the current debates made by the Trump administration. Consider the following:

“All of us are angry at the wall that mad man wants to build”

On the representational level, various Mexican people’s success stories are told, such as opening a restaurant or climbing a pile of objects. These successes carry the attributed

symbol of important triumphs. Within the statements the protagonist highlights, the commercial aimed to encourage the Mexicans to take actions for their personal goals and purposes in life, rather than feeling sorry for themselves, no matter how they are depicted in the media.

“Enough playing the victim”, “Focus on yourself and fight for what you want”, “Grab life by the horns”

Not only the commercial directly targets Trump as the “mad man”, but also addresses the wall discussion about immigration. Thus, the commercial takes a pro-immigration stance straightforwardly. Through interactive meaning, the protagonist conveys eye contact with the viewer by demanding their attention. While making his point, the protagonist looks directly into the camera which shifts the focus onto him and his words. Furthermore, the close-up shots increase the intensity of the connection between the actor and the viewers. In these shots, the background usually becomes blurry which strengthens the attention he gets. It is, further, easy to follow what he says, as he says sensational, brief and on-point sentences when he looks directly into the camera.



Figure 4.10. The Wall (1:07). Corona.

Additionally, the “victim” part can be associated with the presentation of the immigrants often as the victims who are voiceless and suffering (Horsti, 2013). Alternatively, the commercial brings the word “desfronterizte” that can be translated as un-frontier-yourself and break your barriers by empowering. This is also symbolized in the end of the commercial, as the protagonist engages in a violent action and destroys a wall by a wrecking ball. Overall, the protagonist seems very dynamic and active, as he often jumps from the

building or hops on from the windows. This creates an action-packed setting with the scenes of glass shattering and people taking the others down the ladders, which carry the symbols of aggressive masculinity traits. The saliency of the commercial is further established with the contrast between the dark tones of the night and the city lights (blue and red) in the background. White is also used as a contrast with the dark night reflected on a building and as a spotlight following an actor as he runs towards his goal. The violent and active frames (jumping from/walking on the wall) constitute a hyper-reality feeling connoting that the Mexican immigrants are angry with how they are usually depicted, and it is time to overcome these barriers firmly.

Another wall reference is made in the commercial by Tecate which was aired during the 2016 presidential debate. The commercial's star, the wall, is inspired by Trump's articulation of building a wall during his presidential campaign. In the beginning of the commercial, a suspenseful music welcomes the viewers that creates the dramatic feeling with the skull of an animal. The distant frames with long shots are visible in the commercial, such as the initial bird view shot. These frames are helpful to detect the context of the commercial. The inclusion of the following statement in the corner of the screen, "U.S./MEXICO BORDER" with the letters appearing one by one creates a feeling of a serious documentary, as well as suspense. In the following frame, the landscape is set to be a desert with a lengthy wall beyond what the camera captures, as seen from above.

On the representational level, 4 men on each side are seen, as they are ready for a face-off who stay on different sides of the wall (United States and Mexico). In the shots of each group on the focus, it can be argued that the people on the Californian side appear to be more laid-back deriving from their physical appearance, while one of the members of the Mexican side is seen to cross his arms that creates a more threatening image. This "dangerous" feeling is, thus, unsurprisingly attributed symbolically to the Mexicans, who are the immigrants represented in the mediascape. The voice over accompanies these frames with an aggressive tone:

"The time has come for a wall, the best wall, a tremendous wall: the Tecate beer wall"

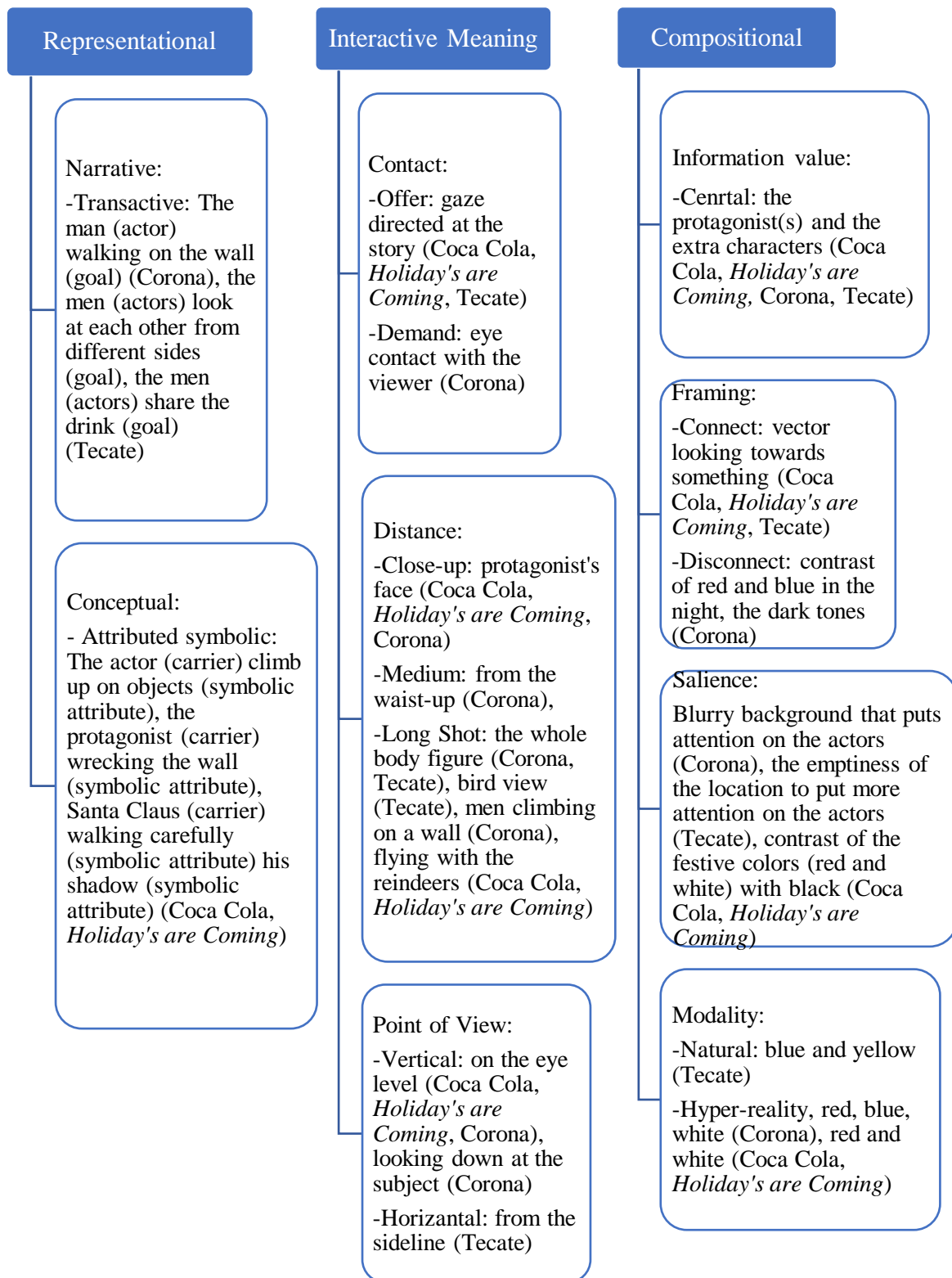
However, the commercial takes an unexpected turn, as the tone and the scale shifts. As a Tecate beer can is put on the wall, it is revealed that the wall is actually low and can be crossed easily. This way, the commercial ridicules the talks about building a wall and chooses to adopt humor. The close-up frame of the beer puts the focus on the brand and stresses on

the beer as the common point to get together the people on different sides of the wall. In the next frames, the previously seen ready-to-fight feeling of the eight men transforms into a friendly tone with hugs and fist bumps. With high modality, the dominant color appears to be rusty yellow denoting the desert context. The protagonists are depicted focal in the frames which are bolstered with the emptiness of the location. Therefore, the viewer's attention is captivated by the actors. As the man on the side of the Mexico border throws Tecate beer cans to the Californians, the beer is shared cheerfully, as the beer becomes the common point of these men. These images carry the symbol of solidarity and inclusion, rather dividing them.

“A wall that brings us together”

The viewpoint towards the immigrants as threats is also aimed to be reflected by Coca Cola, *Holiday's are Coming*, through defining Santa Claus as a “stranger trying to sneak across our lands” and “after learning information about us, with the intention to sneak into our home while we sleep”. This way, while the opposition of “us” and “them” is bolstered, migrants are emphasized to be criminals who try to steal and harm the locals. Furthermore, a state of fear is also constituted towards the immigrants with the mentioned statements and the images of Santa Claus walking carefully, to not to be seen or heard as he has something to hide. The shadow of Santa Claus, who represents the immigrants, also produces suspense and fear. Nevertheless, these representations are deviated into welcoming actions, as discussed before. Thus, reflecting Santa Claus in parallel the immigrants as threats is used to construct a connection between the two parties and serves the end goal of the commercial with the unexpected turn at the end.

Table 4.5. Visual social semiotic resources and elements for Visibility as Threat.



Chapter Summary

With a critical discourse analysis through visual social semiotic analysis, 10 digital commercials are analyzed and the explicit, as well as underlying meanings, are discovered. The results on the representation of immigrants are sorted into four categories, namely: Visibility as Gender, Visibility as Empathy, Visibility as Hospitality and Visibility as Threat. By recognizing various semiotic resources in the commercials, language, images, and sound elements are interpreted based on inter-semiotic translation. The findings suggested that there are gendered differences in the portrayal of immigrants in the commercials. Additionally, the different depiction strategies of immigrants are observed to highlight diversity and create responsibility by presenting the immigrants as vulnerable and capable. The further discussion of the findings is offered in the next and final chapter by explaining how marketing exploits (women) migrants through commercials.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Chapter Overview

This final chapter intends to answer the central research question which focuses on the representation of immigrants in advertising with the specific attention on the portrayal of migrant women due to the intersectionality. This chapter further discusses the main findings of the analysis based on the strategies followed by global brands in their commercials to represent (women) migrants. Moreover, with the critical discussion of the theoretical implications, it outlines how the current study contributes to society and practice. Lastly, this chapter discusses the limitations of the current study and shares suggestions for future research.

Given the timely debates on immigration with the 2015 refugee “crisis” and the growing complication at the United States-Mexico border due to the Trump administration’s changing policies, this research aimed to investigate how immigration is embodied by brands in their communication efforts through commercials. With the rising importance accredited to feminism in advertising, the research’s aim included bringing intersectionality by focusing on (women) migrants’ representation in commercials and understanding how marketing exploits them. Deriving from the analysis, the research found that due to a gendered difference, women immigrants were mostly invisible, or they were victimized to make the Western people take responsibility towards them. Furthermore, immigrants are acclaimed with vulnerable positions, diversity articulations and encouraging statements that highlight their capability, which all served the target audience, the West, to be responsible.

As the prior research investigated the representation of immigrants in different mediums, such as the news media, this research took the findings of the prior research as the inspiration point to understand the advertising perspective. Most prominently, the typified conceptions of immigrants included them as victims and threats, which either produced messages on their vulnerability in powerless roles or as dangerous, someone to be feared of. While the research observed the victimization, it found that initiating threat notions are counteracted with humor and irony, rather than reinforcing their visibility as threats.

Moreover, this research showed that these depictions were present in the sample which are executed to impact the behavior of the West to take responsibility towards the immigrants (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017), such as to welcome, accept or help them. As expected, within the commercials, the formal responsibility is evoked in the Western viewers

to act upon the obligated feeling deriving from moral values, rather than substantive responsibility based on pure humane sensations (Silverstone, 2006). This is concluded to occur with the feeling of empathy, hospitality, and togetherness. Hence, this purpose is bolstered by underlining the favorable sides of diversity and inclusion, without directly designating the storyline in relation to immigrants. As the topic of immigration is divisive in public which is debated in many spheres, such as through the lens of politics and economics, this research concluded that marketing exploits immigration and immigrants to change the perspectives and initiate actions in the Western society, besides positioning the brands as appealing to take advantage and profit.

The increasing visibility of women in different roles is explained by the accelerating demand for women migrants in the host countries and the expanding number of them migrating due to feminization of migration (Gabaccia, 2016; Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004). Although prior research suggested that women are restricted in dependent domestic roles (Remennick, 2016), the new frameworks are argued to reposition women to be independent as an addition to their domestic characteristics (Pessar, 2003). However, only one example in this research depicted women migrants in independent roles through a more emotional victimized frame, rather than an empowering one. Contrarily, the commercials mostly attributed voicelessness to women migrants with invisibility or showcased them in superficial stereotypical roles.

More specifically, within the different approaches by global brands towards the timely discussions on immigration, gender is found to be an important indication in the changing representation of immigrants in the commercials. Based on the prior studies, it was expected to observe less visibility of women characters (Taylor & Stern, 1997; Marcos Ramos, 2019) even as extras. Thereby, this standpoint is detected in the research, as it was uncommon to build the immigrant story on a woman character. Although feminization of migration is argued to lead to fewer stereotypes with increasing articulations of migrant women as autonomous (Gabaccia, 2016; Petrozziello, 2013), this research uncovered their visibility in relation to stereotypical and objectified characteristics. Furthermore, sentimentality is created through women migrants in victim roles by being passive which opposes the masculinist approach (Hyndman & Giles, 2011).

As an example, the accomplishments or the capability of achieving something were not associated with migrant women, but their male counterparts. Even in the 84 Lumber commercial when they are the protagonists who take the challenging journey by themselves, they can only pass the wall because of the male Western workers. Furthermore, the

invisibility of women in the commercials may be due to the supremacy of beer brands in the sample and their stereotypical attitude towards the women that they prefer beer in different flavors than men (e.g. low-calorie) (Seiler, 2002). Interestingly, another woman protagonist is depicted as a Western character who takes responsibility for the people in need in the foreign lands which focuses on the banal view of women's maternal side (Christov-Moore, et al., 2014). Thus, it is concluded that a savior role to the Western people by mediatizing the sense of responsibility that "they" are the ones to be protected by "us" (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017; Horsti, 2013).

Moreover, the current research revealed that some brands featured immigrant characters in the storylines to construct empathy between the viewers and the characters. In line with the prior studies (El-Enany, 2016; Moeller, 2002), the created images of immigrants featured them in vulnerable and desperate positions to create a sense of empathy and responsibility. To create these images, the hardships they go through along the way or in the contexts where news media usually depicts them (e.g. in the US-Mexico border, in rescue boats) are observed. Therefore, the common use of children as vulnerable characters can be explained based on the prior research (Moeller, 2002) to produce sentiment in the viewers via these innocent characters. Further, these depictions are aimed to create a sense of (formal) responsibility in the Western viewers by "othering" the immigrants (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). It can also be argued as an ineffective and non-durable strategy, considering these emotions may initiate temporarily by feeling guilty. Not granting voice to the immigrants themselves to tell their stories places them in "voiceless" positions as people without any agency and in need of constant help from other people (Pittaway, et al., 2010; Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).

It is also found that many brands preferred to present themselves as inclusive, open and diverse which are still perceived to be under the umbrella of immigration. Although there were certain "wall" references deriving from the timely political discussions, the brands' choice of taking such a position is found to be more passive, in comparison to the brands that showcased immigrant characters, such as the Budweiser commercial. For instance, Airbnb's commercial that was broadcasted during the 2017 Super Bowl showed resistance towards Trump's travel ban and other policies that were not aligned with human values, as an addition to their public statements (Gulbrandsen, et al., 2020). Moreover, Airbnb was found to be one of the aggressive brands to give a response to Trump's policies by taking their actions to the Super Bowl (Benner, 2017, as cited in Gulbrandsen, et al., 2020). However, the images of

people from different backgrounds accompanying encouraging statements solely underlined acceptance through diversity, rather than pinpointing a clear statement for immigration.

This similar approach is observed to be in relation to articulating favorable positions for countries. The different cultural symbols are also italicized to indicate the countries as the land of diversity and opportunity where the commercials take place. Coca Cola, Johnnie Walker and Molson stressed on the importance of being open to one another but abstained from making rigid comments or taking concrete political stances. Instead, by covering hospitality, the feeling of togetherness is conveyed, and the brands consequently produced mild articulations. Considering the increasing trend of the political world with more brands proclaiming political choices to reach a global audience (Manfredi-Sanchez, 2019), the produced messages were expected to be more upright.

Interestingly, underlining the immigrants to be beneficial to society was another strategy by emphasizing on immigrants' unique qualities, their will and determinacy. While the Budweiser commercial emphasized the challenges of the immigrants along the way to success, the Corona commercial directed its attention to specificizing on the capability of the immigrants to encourage them. These positions are thought to be taken to shift the "threat" and "unwanted" notions in the media and society (Makinen, 2017). Additionally, humor and irony are examined within the sample to underscore the absurdity of not being inclusive towards the immigrants with the common discourses of them in the society as dangerous. Therefore, instead of validating "our" self-responsibility to exclude the "others" due to a state of fear (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017), a resistance towards the "threat" image is established. However, these images neglect the facts and challenges the immigrants go through (Gulbrandsen et al., 2020) and minimize the issue to be solved with the brands and their products. This is also concluded to be in relation to brands taking a cursory approach by not underlining the seriousness of the issue which perceives the brands to be self-referential.

Overall, the analyzed sample indicated the need for advertising to embody a detailed and regulated approach in representing immigrants. This is crucial considering advertising's monetary concerns and the possibility that the evaluation of social injustice issues to be in relation to their economic value (Cottom, 2019). Thus, the brands should be held accountable for their activism actions towards a social injustice issue, as they present themselves to the society as concerned and moral, but they do not take an explicit political standpoint. Instead of highlighting their stance firmly, the brands mostly declared themselves to be inclusive, sympathetic and inviting which approached this injustice softly. This may be due to advertising's aspiration to be light and fun while promoting the brand and its products.

Additionally, with the intersectional nature of this research, the stories of immigrants cannot be fully illustrated if the other half of the individuals, women, are silenced and not given a chance to be present. Hence, the stereotypical representations of women and the overall vulnerable positions of the immigrants are prominent for the ethicality concern. Moreover, considering the immigrants to be a sensitive group that may have experienced traumas and violations (Maymon, 2017; Musacchio, 2004), showcasing them in the commercials must be approached carefully. The vulnerable positions to further otherize them by highlighting the West's power and responsibility to protect them are also argued to be discouraging and misleading.

The brands should be in charge of how they depict the images of such a group for marketing purposes, especially when the brands do not show a concrete commitment in adopting activism actions. As the brands have produced the commercials for the sake of marketing purposes, they included the brand products (e.g. the drinks) as a unifying source of people. Consequently, this creates the notion that degrades the social injustice issue into a simple matter that can be dealt effortlessly with the promoted product. Therefore, it is crucial for the brands to not only address the social injustice issues as marketing content but employ their standpoint into their organizational asset through principles (Sobande, 2019). Along with the regulated ethical standards of representing the sensitive groups in media and addressing the subjects in different forms, the concerns towards marketing's exploitation of social injustice issues can be restrained.

In conclusion, it is crucial to mention the limitations of the current study that may guide future research on critical advertising. Firstly, although a diverse dataset is aimed for the research, not many European brands are found to produce a commercial within the time frame. This led conclusions to mostly originate from the Western context, especially North America, which partially neglected the Middle East context. According to the conclusions reached, the immigration issue is commonly tackled from the America-Mexico perspective by the brands, due to the recent news on the immigration ban and the talks on the construction of a wall. Therefore, future studies may select a more specific dataset and analyze the representation of immigration in advertising from the Latinx context.

Secondly, despite not having a restriction on including global brands from a specific industry, much of the data is revealed to belong to the beverage industry (Coca Cola, Corona, Johnnie Walker, Budweiser, Molson and Tecate). Interestingly, the domination of the alcohol brands was noticeable in the sample as well. This is believed to haul the results to follow similar discourses and strategies. Future research may either focus on beverage brand

commercials to reveal a more in-depth analysis or enlarge the sample size and target the commercials from numerous industries to have more exhaustive conclusions.

Thirdly, the prior research covered the portrayal of immigration in news media (e.g. newspapers) which overlooked the marketing perspective. Although the current research has focused on the representation of immigration in commercials as a marketing effort, which filled a knowledge gap in academia, immigration is a topic that requires more attention in academia from the advertising perspective considering the relevancy and the timely need. Hence, the current research results may guide future studies on immigration as a marketing strategy, social studies on immigration or gender studies with a specific focus on immigration. Albeit this research indicated interpretations of men immigrants by acknowledging the invisibility of women immigrants in certain commercials, more in-depth research can focus on solely the representation of men immigrants in advertising.

Furthermore, since the interpretation of the secondary data (commercials) used in this research may vary personally, the results can be a basis for a study focusing on the consumer perspective. Therefore, scholars who aspire to discover the consumer perspective can conduct surveys, interviews, or focus groups to find out about consumers' interpretation of commercials that depict immigrants. Consequently, the consumers can also discuss to what extent their opinion is altered based on the commercials which can highlight the prominent strategies that can be beneficial to use for advertisers.

In relation to the source of the dataset, only the videos from YouTube are retrieved which limited the research not to include other commercials of the brands that are available on other platforms, such as Vimeo. Not all videos were published from the official brand accounts, however, this is explained to be overcome by capturing the ones from the accounts with the highest viewer numbers. Lastly, this research analyzed 10 commercials that took immigration as the main point of focus that have been published since 2016 till to date, with a few exceptions. In future studies, including more commercials in the analysis can enrich the diversity of the conclusions. To have a comprehensive view towards the advertising industry's take on immigration, more advertising formats can also be added to the analysis, such as print advertisements.

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Appendix A

The overview of categories and the underlying concepts.

Visibility as Gender	Visibility as Empathy	Visibility as Hospitality	Visibility as Threat
Women dominated vs Men dominated	Sentimental images of migrants	Emphasis on the West responsibility	Criminality associated with migrants
Sexualized images of women	Emphasis on migrant vulnerability	Migrant stories and experiences	State of fear towards the migrants
Women in dependent roles	Vulnerable characters (e.g. children)	Welcoming actions of the destination country	Destruction of local values
Women in empowered roles	Feeling of unity	Celebration of diversity	
Toxic masculinity traits for male migrants			
Stereotypical roles			