

## Children and Mobility in TV Commercials

*Nilüfer Pembecioğlu\**

### *Abstract*

*Children's issues are considered to be more problematic in nowadays. Due to the increasing number of commercialized channels, children are more under the impact of media. Screen technologies tie the children into the computers, televisions, and videos. Apart from all these facts, the children represented in the media are getting more and more mobile and this creates a kind of pseudo-reality as if children have something to do with reality. Most of the commercials nowadays concentrate on children as consumers and they seem to give more importance to 'adult-like decision making strategies' for children. These ads provide behaviours which could be taken as the role-models for children in general. This paper aims to discuss the concept of children and mobility in commercials and idealization of the role models.*

*Keywords: children, mobility, television commercials, media, identity, children as consumers, idealization, role models.*

---

\* Dr. Nilüfer Pembecioğlu is Associate Professor and Teacher Trainer Educator, in the Faculty of Communication, Radio Television Cinema Department, of Istanbul University (Turkey).

## 1. Introduction

The meanings attributed to childhood and the concept of child is getting more and more important in the modern world. Children are getting much more attention in nowadays not only in Turkey, but also in all over the world. Apart from the social and traditional values, how the child and childhood issues got more importance is a bit related to the marketing dynamics of the modern – western world. As the production systems get better and cheaper, the life standards of the countries increased yet the number of the children at home got lesser and lesser. As the countries in Europe have lower population increase rates, the children in the average families got better standards at home, at school and in all over the society. As a consequence of these developments on one hand most of the children have better opportunities, better roles and a higher status in the family and society, but on the other hand they mainly lack the care and time the older generations were provided just a generation ago.

The use of children in the commercials and making them the target audience was something new coming through the impact of the world wars. Throughout the years after the Second World War, the giant companies emerging and their automatic mass production systems created not only feasible, accessible products but also similar types of people, having the same stereotype qualities and behaviour tendencies. The growing technological systems brought the mass production techniques requiring mass consumption strategies as well. Thus, in nowadays, wherever you live, you may have the similar standards of life as the popular society dynamics 'force' them. At the end, even if the modern people seem to have more choices than ever, they tend to act in similar ways, buy similar products and have similar ideas as the media forces them. The production and consumption dynamics try to create new cycles aiming to find new markets in the same society. Thus, the same society is divided into smaller clusters to emphasise their unity and uniqueness as well as their particular needs for a specific product. Through this approach, the new target groups are defined depending upon their new minor qualities. People are given classes, identities and qualities and they are made to believe in it. Once they believe in their unique qualities they tend to follow their own path and begin to produce and consume in the way they are urged. This kind of identification gives them also a special kind of identity which nobody could resist to its charm. Since the modern world forces

people to be in one group or in the other, they begin to live in the clusters produced for them and they internalize this identity. Usually, the best way of introducing and cultivating the identity is to visualize it through the films specifically through the commercials.

Having such dynamics beyond the seen screen, the people have more time and money to consume whatever they are introduced. Most of the statistics show that even if people have better laws to protect their rights to be paid more and to work less, they tend to spend this spare time either in front of their multi-channelled digital television sets or in the shopping malls. Actually, an average American citizen is watching five hours television every night reaching up to 1.825 hours every year to be spent in front of television (De Gaetano, 2004). Even in the colourful world of the shopping centres, the world beyond is much more an image world, a virtual world rather than the physical world, at least the money side of it is digital as it is in the television serials or in the internet sites. It also implies that the commercials target the children as the real decision makers and try to enable to motivate and mobilize them to participate into the process. Thus, the main idea of the commercials become as to introduce a certain aspect of life rather "imposing and teaching" the audience how to live, how to behave, how to sacrifice, how to love, hate and fight as well as how to obey. These deductions lead the masses, the audience, to shape themselves as to become the ideal "audience" of the films they watch or the "members" of a "zero-institution" as Levi Strauss calls it. Specifically, when the age is lower, the consciousness to realize this inclusion process is less. That's why, children are mainly influenced by the media, specifically by the commercials. Psychologically, they are ready to feel like 'a member', since they need to feel that they become a part of something, some kind of society and this sense of belonging to a certain group, motivates them to buy whatever they are introduced in the commercials.

Although people found out many other ways of spending free time and making use of their spare time, watching television is still popular and respectable in any society. The values associated with the watching activity could be summed up as the wealth/power or well-being, social/respectable status, education/or being skilful and communicative. Furthermore, most of the people make use the knowledge they gathered through television in their real life. In most countries television is seen as the main 'source of information' and people tend to believe in what they see rather than what they hear or read. Thus, the topics discussed in television channels could easily become the main issues of real lives. Through the

research in communication theories such as agenda setting, it's been proved that the impact of the television on the audience is becoming more and more effective. The television watching action itself could also be associated with the individual values such as love, respect, existence, unity, dignity, sharing, sacrifice, modelling, leading, etc. Referred to the activity, as it is associated with being open to the world, being knowledgeable, etc. the activity grasps so much of a world that could be reflected in many different words and concepts. It seems that any activity or concept is somehow related with one or more aspects of this watching or cultivation experience. Actually, in many societies such as Turkey, television watching is not only an individual decision but also a social habit or activity. In fact, in its core it also has a kind of a conscious or unconscious tendency to escape from the reality and even from the society and the self. But, contrary to the belief that this escape is never towards out of the society, but into a smaller and rather ambiguous society to share the similar values. That's why the individuals force themselves to buy the products they've been introduced.

Today the child is one of the leading forces in economy, in society, in media. Their economic power is increasing through the working parents and lesser hours spent for the child at home. The child has a better source to rely upon now, it's the new media. The child seeing his representation in the media is easily influenced to act in the similar way. The subconscious behaviours at the beginning turn to be the life style and made decisions up to the level of the consumer loyalty in the throughout the upcoming ages.

## Purpose and Methodology

Most of the communication research in the field of children and communication concentrates on the way the children depicted in the television serials or television commercials. Yet, nowadays, there is an interesting case that the adults are becoming more and more childish in these digital worlds. The commercials targeting the adult audience make use of children a lot. There is also the case that not only the child image but also the childish behaviours are commonly used in the commercials. Even in the television serials it is possible to come across with many comical characters act-

ing childishly and making the audience laugh. This causes some kind of infantilization of the adults and expect them to behave like children. The commercials may have this kind of a function on the masses as well.

The paper aims to exemplify how most of the commercials concentrate on children as consumers in nowadays and how they seem to give more importance to 'adult-like decision making strategies' for children. These commercials aim to provide enough visuals to make the audience, especially the children believe that they are mobile enough and they have the opportunities to behave just like adults. These ads provide behaviours which could be taken as the role-models for children in general. This paper aims to discuss the concept of children and mobility in commercials and idealization of the role models.

As the main source of data to have a content and discourse analysis, the commercials of the three months in 2005 broadcasted in Turkey were taken. These commercials give us an invaluable source to see, how children are depicted in the family and society contexts, how they are interrelated with the idealized world, how much they were used as the target audience and how far they were related with the objects advertised. Apart from all, the data also proves that most of the commercials provide the settings for the adults in which they become children again or act childishly as if it is not a real world. The statistical data gives us how the adults are put into the chairs of children and how the children are put into the centre to represent decision-making bodies. The data is also analyzed through the discourse they provide and how far the real or the pseudo world is reflected through the discourse is discussed throughout the paper. The paper finally concentrates on some ethical issues regarding the national and universal broadcasting regulations. How far these issues were considered and how new concepts occur through the industry – oriented commercials. Regarding the types of mobility, the commercials were also classified and coded to see what kind of mobility issues they gather.

Throughout the first three months of 2005, almost all television channels broadcasted 24 hours and they usually had 20 minutes breaks between the commercials in average programs. Apart from the other advertisements and insertions, every 20 minutes there were commercial clusters of up to 10 minutes. These commercials were coded depending upon if they have any mobility factor in it.

Specifically in the last decade, the concept of mobility has become an increasingly important issue in relation to social disciplines as well as communication. New global issues, social dynamics, networks, human

relations, identities and all related other issues take the concept of mobility into its core as an important issues to be discussed. Mobility becomes one of the key terms affecting the content, the organization and frequency of the message and it is frequently associated with the concepts such as politics and power as well as the consumerism and globalization as the main issue underlying them all. All seem to be affected by mobility: today the mobile seem to be the powerful, more powerful than the immobile.

Though there seems to be a kind of a dilemma here. On one hand mobility is encouraged in the modern society emphasizing that one "should be physically and intellectually mobile" "ready to transfer" and be able to respond to the call of "a moving world"; but on the other hand, a kind of stability, non-changing behaviours, stereotypes are expected. A certain consumer loyalty, not changing minds so quickly, not driven by the desire was aimed. Thus, the continuous and never-ending dilemma is inevitable. As individuals you need to choose either to change and a kind of transmutation is inevitable or you choose not to change and thus, you become a stereotype. It is possible to handle mobility in different forms and functions, such as inspiration, the market regime, opinion, believes or values of the people. The paper discusses how the children image is affected by the concept of mobility and how mobility is introduced as a form of modernity or nomadism, as a part of network or a form of individualization. This paper aims to question the concept of mobility in the frames of TV commercials.

Regarding the mobility, this dilemmatic face of consumption is affected through the mobility of the people, mobility of the goods and products, mobility of economy, mobility of the information via media and the mobility of ideology. What would be the impact of the use of the concept of mobility on the society, system, culture and on individuals? Each new commercial is a trial to establish a little camp in the society. In this part of the given society, the values and the actions have a different code and the ones watching this piece of virtual reality, specifically children, share all these values. Thus, the made up one, the created culture or the culture of exception in the commercial film turns into reality throughout the time. This may be seen as a kind of flow. The idea of flow is welcomed by some social theorists. For instance, drawing on Mol & Law's work (1994), John Urry argues that "much of what happens in a 'society' is influenced by flows or fluids" (1997:3). Another sociologist, Rob Shields (1997: 2-5), summarizes the characteristics of social flows as follows: (1) they are spatial, temporal, and, above all, "beyond merely being processes", that is,

having a content, they are material-or, as Deleuze and Guattari paraphrase it, a flow is "material in movement"; (2) they have rhythms, intensity, and tempo, and move according to certain frequencies such as week, day, second, etc.; (3) they have intentional, vectoral directions, but not origins or end-points, causes or purposes, or a transcendental direction. Thus they are relational, without being positional in the structuralist sense; (4) they have viscosity, like ice-flows, and can move at different speeds and in different shapes. To these qualities, Urry adds the following: (5) flows are channeled by territorial scapes or networks, which also organize the flows in relational terms; (6) they facilitate the diffusion of relations of domination/subordination and the exercise of power through their intersections; (7) thus, thanks to the flows and the scapes through which they are channeled, new forms of social inequalities proliferate; flows signal new opportunities, new desires, and at the same time new risks (Urry 1997: 6, 8-9).

When we associate mobility with the social activity, we do not usually count on the individual in front of the television. However, the modern sense of mobility also involves this individual as the one who is virtually mobile and perhaps intellectually mobile one. New "mobile epistemologies" of "the social" can be analysed by means of four components: (a) positions; (b) movements; (c) relations/change; and (d) virtuality/possibility.

Thus, we could figure out three main components of child when it comes to the concept mobility in television commercials.

- a. The child used in the commercials regarding adults products such as commercials of banks, automobiles, communication technologies, etc.
- b. The child used in the commercials regarding the children products such as commercials of toys, kid's magazines, food, etc.
- c. The adults in the commercials acting childlike or having childish behaviours
- d. The image of child is used commercials having neither the child nor the childlike behaviours but a sense of child used in the commercial, such as an IVF center announcing that "it's not too late" implying that it's not too late to have a baby.

The commercials were also analysed depending upon their message and its relevance to the real world. The chosen commercials were coded again to see how they position the adults and children and their relevance of actions into the real social situations. The total video recordings of the

whole commercials were exceeding 18 hours. The discourse analysis of such an audio-visual text might seem to be so complicated. Yet, considering only certain values and positioning in the social circumstances, the educational and real world value of these commercials were scaled. The main question here was how the children would perceive the world (the childish world and the adult world) through watching these commercials.

## Findings and Interpretation

Depending upon the collected data, the commercials seem to be a very rich source regarding the examples of children and concept of mobility. In order to interpret the data in comparison to the real life mobility and mobility exemplified in the commercials, we need to have some other findings. Although these data differ a lot from one group / city / society to another, mainly the findings are expected to have a meaningful data to cover a wider perspective. For example, according to the main findings, the children tend to sleep and eat less as they grow up and spend the rest of the time just like adults (Robinson & Bianchi, 1997: 20-24). Of course, the children spend some time for shopping, spare time activities, reading, socializing, etc. When their actions were considered, regarding our theme, the tendency of watching television could be seen as more a female activity and it tends to cover a larger amount of time as they grow up (American Demographics, 1997:32).

When we consider the ideal number of children in each family in Turkey is shown as 2.14 by HUNEE, in 1988 (HUNEE, 1987-1989:65). However, this was 3.03 in 1978 and 2.7 in 1983. The decrease in the number of the children in the family appearing in the last decade shows us that the number of the children is getting lower but the opportunities provided to each child is getting higher and higher. A more recent research shows that the 59.8% of the married females prefers two children as the ideal, whereas 17.4% of them rather three children, yet some 9% prefer not to have any (Türkiye Aile Yıllığı, 1991:24). The effectiveness of these preferences could be seen as the birth rate represented as 6.3 in 1960's lowering down to 2.99 in 1990's. In 1998 it was 2.38 (1989 DIE).



## Children's Access To Television

In order to assess the importance of the concept of children and mobility, the access to television is an important point to be considered. The amount of time devoted to television viewing is highly related with the access to the television set and the television channels and the rate of access could be changing depending upon the social circumstances and vules shared in that society.

Different societies might have different variable concerning the access to television as well as these rates could also be changing when it comes to the topic of children's access to television. The accessibility of the television to children has never been a problem until the very recent years. Yet, the issue of children's choice of certain television programs and the increasing hours of their watching time is gaining much more a problematic aspect in recent years, not only in Turkey, but also throughout the whole world.

The statistics show that the average child is watching five films a day, mostly having inappropriate content. Not only the time but also the money available to children would have a certain meaning on the side of communication and mobility. The amount of money given to children as the pocket money has also a kind of influence on how they spend it and how much they spend regarding certain expences.

Pecora claims that in 2000 the children's pocket money reaching up to a sum of 155 billion dollars has also a rather different way of spending it, because the children now are facing the media and they also have a media shaped life (Pecora, 1998). The more money the children have, the more possibilities of mobility occur on the side of the child. Having their examples via the media and commercials, the child, becomes ready to act to be mobile any time s/he wishes to. The statistics also show that the modern children has better trust and self-confidence to himself-herself in comparison to the older generations. The unofficial records show that regarding the ones for example escaping home, could go as far as another village or town in the past or another district of the city at most. But, the children escaping home now could go as far as another country or even continent.

The access to the media on the side of the children has a lot to do with the time spent with the media. For example, when there were almost 100.000 television sets all over USA in 1948, nobody was aware of the risk

for the children regarding the physical, intellectual and emotional impact this could have throughout the time. When there was a television set in 7 houses out of 8 by the 1959, around 50 million children met the television for the first time (Öcel, 2007: 211). Thus, the television programs started to shape the lives of the children then. Thus, even if they are accepted as the main medium to the modernity, accessibility to the knowledge, the television shapes the culture, language and thinking styles of the children as well as the adults. It is easy to argue that before the television programs, the flow of information could be under control of the adults and the educationalists, yet, with the impact of television, the parents and the teachers lost their control over the children.

It seems that the access to television is becoming a point of problem specifically in the western countries. Regarding the time devoted to viewing, the access to television plays an important role. Regarding the American statistics, an average student of the 6th grade, was spending his/her 3 hours for television and 15 minutes for the radio in 1950's; just after a decade, this range of time changed as to reach up to 4 hours for the television and 2 hours for the radio. Nowadays, we estimate an average 6 hours for television and 5 hours for radio. When the time passed with the other media is also considered, the children of the modern time are spending more than 8-10 hours with the mass media (Roberts & Foerh, 2004: 11). As the media availability is considered, an average American child between 2-7, has 3 televisions, 3 cassette players, 3 radio, 2 video players, 2 CD players, 1 video-game console and 1 computer (Roberts & Foerh, 2004: 31). As the age gets higher, such as 8-12, the media availability gets higher as well. According to the 2001 data, the 67% of the schooling children have an access to internet at home; 15-17 years youth have it 83%. It is interesting to note that the media availability of the children is not affected by the criteria such as the economic income, social status, being white or black or Hispanic, etc. Only, in some cities, the lower income groups have less media availability overall in home-access, yet, they are still available and accessible to children (Roberts & Foerh, 2004:37). The children between 2-7 and 8-18 having media access in their room could be seen in the following table.

Access	2-7 age %	8-18 age %
Television	32	65
Video Cassette Player	16	36
Radio	43	86
Cassette / CD Player	38	88
Video-Game Console	13	45
Computer	6	21

To Roberts and Foerh, gender locates a meaningful difference in access only to video-game consoles (Roberts & Foerh, 2004: 38). However, the percentage of the girls (69%) having television sets in their rooms is higher than the boys (61%). It is the same for the radio (88% for girls and 85% for boys) as well as for CD players (90% for girls and 86% for boys), yet when the video-game consoles were considered this is just the opposite (girls 30% and boys 58%). Of course there are the family factors regarding the children's access to the media in overall household and having an individual access.

## Children's Preferences

Media is growing up to the higher levels in the dreams of children as well. The computers, digital channels, thematic channels seem to be too challenging for the successful students. It is usually one of the three wishes of children. When they are asked about the three things to have in future, the main almost classical answers are a home, a computer and a bicycle. Regarding the computers, it is easy to find it out that these stand for not only computing facilities any more but they stand for all kind of digital media, including radio, television and film facilities as well as the musical rescourses. The parents are encouraged to buy these products for their children and the children were encouraged to ask for these from their parents. Even if the promotions seem to be higher, the statistical data shows that the individual pc availability reaches up to 1.8% in all around Turkey whereas the individual internet access is only 1.2%. Of course, the percentage goes higher in big cities (Yeni Yüzyıl, 8 August: 10). The preferences of children play an important role in many statistics and collected

data. The researchers, Kubey, Shifflet, Weerakkody, and Ukeiley, worked on the assessment of children use of cable television and internet and they found out that children between 5-12 ages were using more independent and thematic channels. The rate of the children having a high frequency of internet usage reaches up to the level of % 1.5 among all the adults (*Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 1995:467).

In Turkey, the situation is somewhat similar. A two and half year old child could discriminate between the brands of about 600 and they may have specific choices regarding the television channels out of 500 different channel. When we consider the children preferences regarding the Turkish media what they choose to watch could be summarized as below (Öcel, 2007: 341).

Program Types	5-11 ages %	12-19 ages %
Turkish Serials	24	27
Turkish Films	17	16
Humour	5	4
Foreign Film	10	13
Foreign Serials	8	5
Children Programs	1	
News	11	14
Sports and sport related news and magazine	5	4
Religious	1	1
TV plays	4	4
Cartoons	8	1
Musical Entertainments	5	3
Talk shows	1	2
Documentaries		1
Theatre shows		1
Weekly Magazines		3
Reality Show		1
Total	100	100

The choice of content is somewhat related to the availability of spare time. Regarding the education schedule of children, it is easy to believe that the weekends are more accessible. However, this is not the case. It seems that the week days are considered to have a cumulative effect on children. Specifically, concentrating on the television serials occur on the weekdays. They follow specific serials on the television channels and these are given more importance than the individual choices made at the weekend, since the content of what's been watched usually discussed with the peers during the class time or other spare time. Having the socializing effect of these serials, make the children of certain age groups become the fans of certain television serials.

Time	5-11 age %	12-19 age %
Week Days	60	65
Weekend	40	35

(Öcel, 2007: 343)

For many years, the increasing number of the children, the growing youth was seen as the target audience for the television messages, yet, in the last decade, the role of the commercials had an interesting turn. The place and importance of the children in the family and in the society has been valued and even exaggerated. However, it is not only the children but also the adults who are introduced a fairy tale world through the commercials. It is a world of infantilization and idealized circumstances. The relationship and the function of children within the system and family have a distorted value in this pseudo-world.

## Impact On Children

Both the access to television and the preferences have an important role when it comes to the point of impact on children. The images flowing through the screen have an important and invaluable impact on children. This pseudo-world has a lot to do with the concept of image formation. The television refers to the brain through the audio-visual signs, images it cre-

ates. Actually, the memory is central storage place in the brain. Observations made by people by means of their senses (eyes, ears, smell, taste and touch) form the input. Signals are temporarily stored through the sensory register in the short-term memory (Van Raaij & Antonides, 1994: 262) or in other words a kind of working memory. The information in the short-term memory can, for example, be used to categorise the objects or products (by grouping them under a known denominator). The information is then stored in the long-term memory. This can be used, for example, in recalling memories. The information is absorbed in chronological order, but is not saved in chronological order. Instead it is spread over the cerebral cortex; in which packets of information are mutually linked to each other (Romjin, 1991: 74) Linking of information with the other information registered in the brain happens very frequently. This happens, for example, when one memory calls up another. The industry – oriented commercials use the human brain in the most effective way. First, the television messages are classified in the form of images. Millions of nerve cells (neurons) receive and transmit messages even automatically. Once they have a large number of synapses that connect them mutually to complex circuits, they can carry billions of messages of similar types. One nerve cell can have thousands of synaptic connections which form the neural circuits in which some nerve cells can function in various circuits. (Bloom & Lazerson, 1988: 31-32) In the case of a memory, large numbers of neural circuits, spread over the cerebral cortex, can be activated at once.

The brain waves and the images create the schemes in the brain. Bartlett introduced the concept of schemes or schemata in 1934. It explains the structure of the memory influences the attribution of meaning. A scheme is a cognitive structure representing organised knowledge about a concept or a stimulus. Knowledge structures can be formed with schemes which allow people to construct their own reality. The activation of a scheme may be conscious or unconscious (Meertens & Von Grumbkow, 1988: 84-85).

Usually, the consumption behaviours of the people today seem to be more enjoyable and more fairytale-like. With the digital money, the credit cards, they are able to buy whatever they want, wherever they want. Regarding the mobility concepts they can go wherever they want and they can do whatever they want. Everything is possible, available, affordable, even the highest experiences could be divided into instalments as many months as they wish and everything is affordable for the average person. As Firat states, as members of the market system, and having adopted its rep-

resentations of consumption and production, consumers of modern capitalist society have largely behaved to fulfil their roles as "consumers." This means: rest your body and mind, just relax and enjoy, reenergize yourself for "work." Consumption is a break from creative activity. (Firat, 1999: 290).

As Davis puts it, usually, there is the ideology behind a certain way of consumption. To understand ideology the best way to begin is with the experience we have of it every day, experience that often goes undetected and derives much of its accumulating power from that fact. Many people talk about the infantilization of the adults when it comes to most serious topics such as consumption, politics or elections ([http://rc3.org/2004/10/entry\\_6589.php](http://rc3.org/2004/10/entry_6589.php)). To some people, even religions are also a part of this infantilization process. As Benefiel states, when we think of infantilization, a similar process occurs with rituals, symbols and beliefs. Rituals, symbols and beliefs which were originally appropriate representations of core religious ideas also deteriorate. As they take on a life of their own as well, "magic" is introduced to the religious group. The rituals are just like the schemes. Schemes function as an observation and interpretation framework. The images and associations give meaning to the original object. A product or brand can be associated with characteristics and experiences. (Van Raaij & Antonides, 1994: 131-132) As the editor in chief at MWC News, Davis, puts it 'the collective consciousness in the mindless bliss of endless happy talk', the messages of the commercials, the conscious or unconscious images curved into the brain would mean a lot in the decision making process of the consumers.

To sum up, we may say that the impact of a single scene or a single film will be seen not only immediately after the viewing activity but throughout the lifetime. The question of how and when this impact will occur is not yet known. Depending upon the concentration time, age, sex, educational or social level and other demographic issues the variables will be innumerable. How this impact is lived or passed through would be another question to be dealt with since every child has a different strategy to deal with the impact.

## Children's Watching Television and Mobility

Mobility and children are inseparable two concepts. Every child is expected to be mobile, physically, intellectually, socially, culturally, linguistically, economically and virtually. The physical mobility of children will be depending on their physical development. These are studied throughout many decades and starting from the first days of pregnancy the parents are knowledgeable enough to follow their children's development.

The intellectual development of children will be depending upon much more on the flow of intellectual information around him/her. The children develop 80% of their intellectual capacity during the first eight years and the 20% is left to develop up to the adulthood around 20. Thus, the intellectual mobility of children will be developed through the first images curved into their brain and these images are usually implemented through the media. However, media has a side effect as to prevent the children to be kept by those images so much that the child could sit in front of the television for hours. This fact implies the underdevelopment of the children both physically and intellectually. The lack of physical mobility, causes a kind of physical weakness which will effect the child in the upcoming years. On the other hand, the brain of the child used to the high frequency of the images and the changing scenes will need to be alerted in real life situations as well. The hours locked by the viewing activity will mutate the children's brain as to cause some permanent underdevelopment of the brain in some cases. The children having heavy load of images and getting used to the frequent alerts sent by the television program will be seeking this similar amount of frequent alerts in almost every activity and the lack of it would be causing unwillingness to take part in, reluctance to be a part of it or uneasiness, attention disorders etc. Thus, the television viewing on one hand would be encouraging the mobility of the children and on the other hand causing terrible and non-reversible impact on them both physically and intellectually.

Social mobility is also encouraged throughout childhood. This period is the one in which most of the friendships and values are established. That's why the socialization period of children would mean a lot to them not only in their childhood but also in adulthood. Television viewing would have a serious impact on children so much that, they might feel accompanied by television. This accompany of the television would mean even more than their friends or social surroundings. Thus, on one hand, the images and



messages send through the television encourages the children to take part and function better in social settings, but on the other hand, these social settings never occur as long as the children sit in front of television.

The linguistic mobility of the children is important and to many linguist, television is one of the sources of information that could help the children develop appropriate linguistic structures and functions. The children develop a new language level during their first years, and the stratifactional grammer regarding this competence would lead them to acquire the language through the settings and structures provided by the source of information. The children are expected to reach to a better and higher linguistic level during their acquisition period. The level of the language is expected to change every six months. This linguistic mobility would lead the child to develop the concepts, vocabulary and four language skills; namely reading, listening, speaking and writing. Through the statistics and reasearch done for many years it's been proved that television viewing does not help the children to acquire the language in the way it's been proposed at the beginning. Contrary to the belief that the language skills will be developed by viewing television is not proved, however, there is a great amount of data showing that viewing television would only help children on the way to learn only the phrases used in television serials, copying the structures provided by the role models on television programs, lack of development of reading, writing and especially speaking. Even the listening skills are not improved at all, since the children expect the dialogues as the occur frequently and usually miss the real meaning in between the lines. It is a fact that through the visual images, television hinders the linguistic development of children and prevents their mobility.

Cultural issues are getting more and more bounded to the virtual mobility in the age of technology. The children watching television are under the bombardment of the visual images. Specifically in the developing countries the programs broadcasted on television are bought from the outer sources, introducing many cultural aspects to children from the very early ages. This kind of a cultural mobility would lead the children to be virtually mobile as well. Through the programs they watch, with the impact of globalization, children are stereotyped and many children have similar tastes and similar expectations all aronud the world. The children who were exposed to the foreign culture and values through the images would be starting to live in a kind of a virtual reality which would cause problems of orientation to real life situations. Heavy doses of foreign culture would also lead to misleading expectations or standards of life that may cause both positive

and negative motivation. On one hand, having higher expectations the children might also have greater ambitions and better motivation, yet, on the other hand being conscious enough that they might never reach to their goals and expectations would lead pessimism and weakness, lack of self-confidence that might have temporary or permanent impact on them.

Economical mobility is a new concept for the children, specifically triggered through the commercials. The commercials, targeting children are very much aware of the fact that they have also an impact on the way to shape the life standards and expectations of children. The advertisers in nowadays are after the pocketmoney of children which is reaching to high amounts when calculated in a given society. Due to the hard working parents, most of the children are left alone, not only in front of the television but also in their decision-making processes on the way to lead to their spending habits. The advertisers also know that once established these spending habits would accompany the children throughout a lifetime. That's why, most of the commercials are full of children images even if the children have nothing to do with the product itself. Having a child in a commercial, will distract the attention of the children even if they are not the target audience. Regarding the cumulative effect of these, it is easy to assume that children develop a kind of acquaintance with the product. This acquaintance will lead them to buy the product when it comes to that. Although the children are very choosy and difficult to convince, they are easily grasped by the images and their brains are conquered through the frequent repetitions. To sum up, the commercials have a certain impact on children as lead their economical mobility.

In a way, the people are just living the luxury of the mobility in its real or virtual sense, so much that they do not have enough time to question what they do or why they do it. They have so many choices so much that they do not question the things they choose or do not really bother where their choices take them. The television commercials introduce us a world of nowhere. Just like the dream world of the past fairytales or the hectic Las Vegas atmosphere. In the new millennium, all the market places and malls are just like the theme parks we step in and as Belk puts it (Belk, 1999; 109) are apt to leave us with the impression that we have just stepped into a three-dimensional television set with a wild agenda of disparate programming. It is a feeling that has been called kaleidoscopic (Baudrillard 1988)-a feeling familiar from theme parks, television, and shopping malls. Theme parks like Disneyland where Fantasyland, Frontierland, Adventureland, Mainstreet, Pirates of the Caribbean, and the

Jungle Cruise all about one another, are a further preparation for the improbably kaleidoscopic nature of the shopping places and commercials (Langman, 1992: 49). If we would like to have a look at the messages in the commercials, the cumulative image they try to create and main messages seem to be so striking. One of the main facts they try to establish is that, rather than buying no-name products, most of the people would like to buy famous brands and keep it as a kind of umbrella for their identity. The type of consumption and the act of buying might have several sub-meanings in the culture, it may be regarded as a show off for most of the people to state nonverbally that they are able to afford to such a brand. In short, with the things you buy, you become.

For the children this kind of atmosphere is not that much different from their imaginative world. This world of fantasy helps them to activate their physical energy as well as mental energy. Through the commercials not only the children but also the adults are introduced a fairy tale world through the commercials. In other words, it is a world of infantilized and idealized circumstances. The relationship with the family members and the function of the children within the system has a distorted value in this pseudo-world. The main source of data to have a content and discourse analysis - the commercials of the three months in 2005 give us an invaluable source to see, how children are depicted in the family and society contexts, how they are interrelated with the idealized world, how much they were used as the target audience and how far they were related with the objects advertised. This might seem to be very dangerous and unhealthy. Even some of the most serious commercials follow the similar codes of humour and infantilization.

On the other hand, accompanying the commercials, the mainstream media do not give the news; they give the ideological directions on how to receive it. As Hegel said long ago, the daily news is the morning prayer of modern man. One other fact to be mentioned is that even if there are more than 140 channels broadcasting locally and nationally, the way the commercials position the audience resemble to each other and there seems to be no difference between the channels when it comes commercials.

Regarding the commercials it is interesting to note that fear appeal is used a lot: If you do not buy this product you are 'excluded'. Thus, inclusion and exclusion becomes the core of the interest. Considering the actions performed in the commercials, it is easy to note that the people do a lot in this circus-like world is to consume, to sing, to act and to be happy. It is also very striking to see that they try to make themselves happy-not

the others. Some commercials make use of such slogans openly as if it is a duty to make oneself happy. The more selfish the people become, the better their standards become. The commercials are full of examples of stealing candies, running after ice-creams or cold drinks or competing with one another for the sake of testing a new product, etc. As the main idea all the commercials emphasise that the audience have choices and through their choices they BECOME. The commercials also feed the concept of inclusion and exclusion and the importance of being *in touch with the others*. This helps them to be in touch with their audience as well. The values of the materialistic world are emphasised frequently. For example, life is a kind of gambling: There are bonuses if you can catch.

The commercials in Turkey reflect children in many ways. Children can be seen in many different commercials sometimes promoting the products not even actually referring to children. The first three months of 2005 provide us the types of commercials cycling throughout the year. It is interesting to see that all these commercials could be classified under different titles yet; only 11% of them really refer to children. However, the child appearances in the commercials reach up to the level of 87 %.

From the semiotic part of the view, these commercials are considered to be the referents of the emotions, happiness and importance of the relationships, sometimes enriched with the beliefs and superstitions. When something is mobile, it is somehow changing throughout the time. Here, we may question a lot of things, such as what is changing, why it is changing, how it is changing, how long this change will last or what would be the impact of this change on the society, system, culture and on individuals.

Regarding the mobility, these multiple faces of consumption are affected through the mobility of the people, mobility of the goods and products, mobility of economy, mobility of the information via media and the mobility of ideology. The level of the media literacy of the individuals/societies - which was considered to be something positive until very recently- function now as the gates of permission of the audience -which turns to have a negative impact in nowadays. With this new aspect, not only the concepts of sociology, but also philosophy, history, anthropology, education and many other disciplines had an influence on the media and films. Specifically, the commercials, which are easily accessible, are used to create a different world to be shared universally.

What would be the impact of this change on the society, system, culture and on individuals? Each new commercial is a trial to establish a little camp in the society. In this part of the given society, the values and the actions

have a different code and the ones watching this piece of virtual reality share all these values. Thus, the made up one, the created culture or the culture of exception in the commercial film turns into reality throughout the time. What is more striking is that, mostly, not only the addicted television audience but also the high percentage of the non-watching people in the developing countries were somehow affected by these virtual exceptions.

## Discussion and Conclusion

As Firat points out, (Firat, 1999: 290) largely shunned by intellectuals and controlled by commercial interests, television has become the most powerful communication medium since the Second World War. Corporations controlling the medium have constructed it in their image of a consumption process. It is now seen basically as an entertainment medium, part of a consumption process, and to be used to relax, "watch," pass time with for recreational purposes. Consumers expose themselves to this medium in a passive way. Anything "too serious" is shunned because, after all, people are supposed to use it to *escape* from daily chores, not to produce ideas and be creative through it. It is there to entertain us, take us away from reality-although often reality replicates it-and make us rested so that we can build up our energies for the next day's "productive" work. Since it has been represented as such a "consumption" tool, its viewers come to largely expect programming that will fulfil such a purpose. Yet, television is arguably the most influential medium in instilling values, lifestyles, and goals for life, as well as images of success and achievement, for a majority of those exposed to it (Gitlin 1986; Williams 1986).

## Branding and Becoming

As Baudrillard pointed out, consumption is not a passive activity but a system of producing sign-values (Baudrillard 1981 and 1993). The conflict between the purchasing or not is somewhat a good example to see the how the habits and traditions are re-formulated in these new created cul-

tures and societies. For example, in the last decade, branding has exploded, with scores of brands a new lifestyle, new expectations and new identities were introduced. It should be kept in mind that "branding" a product or anything comes with a price--usually a higher cost than a non-branded is that the satisfaction of knowing a "brand" should add value and maintain some consistency. In our case, the purchases themselves are the means of communication between the two parts. This is a type of communication having no words in it but the symbols. In other words you could easily see the rule in action: "It is not what you say, but how you say it." But sometimes the rule changes a bit and it becomes: "It is not what you say or how you say it, it is how you look when you say it." And "how you look" is more important for the others in the society, creating a more communicative atmosphere. You may look like degraded in the ads but it's better to be prepared for tomorrow and have a better image in real life. So they purchase the item advertised. There is the fear factor to be mentioned. The consumer usually thinks as follows: 'If I buy the wrong thing... The result will be a kind of shame... Therefore, I must buy the best I could because the thing I buy will represent me in the eyes of the society and the individual.'

Reflections of such a change could be found in different degrees considering the differences of age, education, gender and income in the decision making process of the individuals. In its wider sense, this is a matter of mobility. The mobility of the society or groups causes the mobility of the values. In this mobile world 'Naming' and 'Labelling' is an issue. The people, their income, their attitude is all standardized and classified. The 'named' or 'labelled' one is recognized easily. It is a matter of 'being' a member of one of the groups or not. You may be labelled or 'identified' in this way or in that way. The problem of who is labelling the others and why it is never been discussed. The main thing is just to have a clue, something to help us think in terms, numbers.

Becoming a member of the group is important however, what is also important is staying as a member of the group. This new metaphor brings the ideas such as 'encouraging inclusion' vs. 'discouraging exclusion'. In today's world it is easy to be somebody. Having a label is enough. Anything would do. Smokers, non-smokers, women-men, children-adolescent. Once you are labelled, there seems to be no way to change it, yet, it is impossible to be the other.

## Neutralisable Opposition

Here we may mention the concept of 'Neutralisable Opposition'. For the brands in Turkey, or more concretely, the battle between the branded products and no-name ones seems to be a kind of Neutralisable Opposition. In fact, there is no opposition between the two concepts seeming to be too different or opposite to each other on the surface structure. In the deep structure, the two items and their various brands do not seem to be too different from each other. In any case the audience will be the consumer. But in commercialized new product and new marketing strategy, the main action is maximized whereas having ordinary products reduced to different subsidiary actions, such as meeting with friends or having a dinner with the parents, etc. The connotations of the non-branded ones could be summarized as the ordinary, humble, unimportant, outdated, and old-fashioned, etc. However, the connotations of famous brands could be associated with the concepts such as extravagant, special, important, unique, modern, in, precious, etc. Although the ads never compare and contrast these traditional and modern two worlds, it is done in the minds of the spectators. These events in the ads seem to be so innocent and ordinary. Yet, all these pseudo-subsidiary actions in fact establish the nesting for the isotopy in the society. The communication in those embedded environments, the anaphora created gives the messages of main consumption as well as the culture. The recursive elements of the consumer culture as well as the compact conflicting messages give the chance of an obligatory transformation equalizing the neutralisable opposition.

## Purchasing As A Decision Making Process

To Engel, Kollat, Blackwell purchasing is an end of a decision making process. Throughout this process, the dynamics would be changing from one individual to another, as well as from one country to another. Yet, there are some steps followed at each case. These could be summarized in five steps. The first one is the definition of the problem and specification of the needs and requirements. In this respect, the branding and pur-

chasing actions in the commercials create a world in which there are real purchases and real products as a must. It degrades the individuals who do not cope up with it.

The second step involves the information process in which the commercials provide information about the symbolic value of products, as symbols never die. This immortality effect the purchase decisions due to the fact that mostly in our society images and relationships are valued for a lifetime. The third step is the evaluation of the alternatives, which is a bit of the tricky part since; any brand will be imposing its genuine products and claim that they are the bests of the market. However, the audience had a wider chance to evaluate once they are convinced to purchase diamonds yet the brand is not that much important and comes in the secondary level. The choices are made on the fourth step. It is interesting that who is making the choice is always a dilemma since it's usually the men purchasing but the women choosing or stating the likes and dislikes. As the last step comes the feedback of the purchases and consequences. In the last few years, being affordable, the genuine brands could also be replaced with the fake ones and thus could easily be substituted with the most valuable ones. This dimension could bring a multiplication effect and could cause more purchases such as wearing one in the ordinary days and a more precious one in the special occasions and ceremonies. It is inevitable to deny the importance and impact of the classes or the groups of social status. The public opinion and the common sense are shaped not only through the concrete facts but also by the made up supernatural believes and the traditions of the given society. It does not matter how high the educational or the economical level of the society is. The dynamics of the society, in a way forces the groups and the individuals into a "Conspicuous Consumption" habit. Considering the TV commercials, this kind of an idea is cultivated. The youngsters trying to be more modern and rather non-traditional, different from the adults of the past with their creativity, intelligence, beauty and uniqueness, they are given the opportunity to add new meanings to the ordinariness of life, such as using the diaspora of the liquidity in an unusual way.



## Questioning Viewing

There is a psychology of viewing that has long been recognized and exploited by governmental and educational agencies as well as by commercial interests. The experience of seeing a film emphasizes the vivid visual presentations in which images are already fully established, easily identified and easily followed, even on the elementary levels. Garth (Garth, 1980:89-90) states that film is an unusually strong type of communication process, because the viewer is willing, even eager to receive what the communicator has to offer.

On one hand, cinema going is an action, a mobility requiring both "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" motivation. There are many factors and problems in the context, starting from the process of control and production mechanisms, up to the level of consumption. It has its own participants, objections taking place in certain situations. It has its base values, strategies and outcomes. On the other hand, watching a film at home is somewhat different from cinema going. Especially when the viewing is frequently cut by the commercials. In such a platform, sometimes commercials have more impact than the film itself because, films are viewed only once but commercials several times. Especially, this frequency and use of signs have more impact on children than the adults. Children in this case are not only seen as the target audience as the consumers but also the potential consumers of the future as well.

As they develop their childish reflections about the commercials, they become more and more taken into the commercials that at the end leave no way out. Popularity and the other effects of the media chain should show all its impact in a certain time limit. Time factors are as important as the economical, political, social, geographical scope of the broadcasters. The advertisers risk their time and money for the audience and in return what they want to see is the immediate reflection of the audience: the product they advertised should be sold immediately to get the most benefit possible. That's why, they need to mobilize the audience as soon as possible. The group which could be mobilized very easily is that of the children's. They are ready to act and move and show their reflections as they appear. That's why it seems to be a very quick challenge for the advertisers to target the children and for the children it's mutually activating because they feel like more adults as they are able to move and act when possible. Most of the advertisers are well aware of the fact that they

are always the winners, over a considerable period of time, profitable returns are waiting for them. Accordingly, most of the broadcasters and advertisers run from one to ten years through the main products or related concepts and products.

However, the policy concerning the duration have certain expectations requiring the motivation and mobility of the masses through the ads convincing them the popularity of the commercials just to lead higher sells. From the point of view of the advertisers it is almost inevitable to create a kind of a pseudo-demand for the popularity of the product as it is also irresistible for the pseudoaudience since it is a kind of an expected encounter after having all the information through the other products such as the news and ads surrounding them. Regarding the children in this case, it would mean a lot for them on the way to establish an identity. The peer pressure on having the certain brands, purchasing the cool items that their classmates would like and the feeling of inclusion that would be accompanied are the rewards for such a consumption.

It is believed that the recycling ads put such a pressure on the audience, become so informative that the audience is forced to buy the product, at the end in order to fulfill and complete the previously given information all about it. But all this should take place in a certain time cluster. This is another force for the audience. In a way, the audience is forced to view first before the other friends, to prove that they are updated and popular. It is a way of meaning themselves through the brands and products they use. It is so much associated with the social and cultural values that the product is associated with the self and identity. It is not only getting the current information or keeping themselves updated but also to have something to say about their own self and experience. It's not only going with the stream, it is more prestigious to have the information before anyone-else. Only in this way they could keep their places in certain upper groups of the society. By going with the stream, the individual feels himself getting ready to get the drop on someone. Because in the competitive, aggressive nature of man's world, where the threat of defeat is never-ending, only the lucky to survive. The competition is so strong and the lifestyle often depends on learning to be the fast, being the first to move with the starting signal. It's just keeping a steady eye on the surrounding circumstances; the victory goes to the one who gets the drop on the other. The struggle for success is perhaps more competitive than in the channels they choose. It may seem to be a very innocent detail but it has a very cumulative effect when you get the jump on the others.

The exposure to the message or rather the popularity of the message becomes more effective with the media combinations. People in the developed countries usually do not rely upon a single medium for their information. But, the media combinations make the messages seem to be more effective than they are in fact. In this case, television and radio provide more instantaneous coverage, but the print medium provides the detail that fleshes out the story.

### Viewing – The Individual and The Society

Whether for instructional, persuasive or purely commercial purposes, film provides many advantages as a mass medium. The concept of mobility is so much involved with the society that usually a question is asked if it would be possible to talk about the pure relationship between mobility the individual without being shaped by the society. On one hand, the more mobile the individual is, the harder it becomes to be shaped by the society. On the other hand, the individual is expected to be mobile as much as possible. The commercials create a common culture and stereotyped audiences and consumers. Thus, they could be considered to be the “public places” rather than the places for the individuals. It is not the choice of the individuals any more, it is the public sphere where the individuals should pass through everyday.

Perhaps, the ironical point or rather a dilemma should be underlined here is that television viewing might both have the function of escaping from the social realities for the individual, yet bringing the individual into another pseudo-society that everybody experiences the same adventure throughout the viewing action. But nobody knows each other or talks to each other apart from accepting this silent membership of the secret intrasocial enjoyment.

## Popularity of the Images: Children as Decision-Makers

It is frequently expressed that commercials are “pure entertainment” providing a means of escape from the world of reality, providing a pseudo atmosphere for the audience in which they satisfy their needs and expectations. An opposing view pretends to put the commercials into a point far from being “just/mere” entertainment or “escapist” entertainment; commercials have definite and presumptively bad effects on the population.

Their main function is to provide “dreams” for millions. Since the essential role of commercials is to entertain and amuse or to afford an opportunity for a harassed and anxiety-ridden population to “get away from it all” by escaping into a land of phantasy. The term “entertainment” is psychologically ambiguous. (Fearing, 1972:122). It might be very interesting to see that different cultures and societies show different reactions to the same advertising.

Thus, the popularity and entertaining factor attributed to that commercial or product would be just a vogue one. In fact, the popularity of the commercials mostly owe too much to the decision makers. Here we see not only the promotion of the activity of viewing but also the consumption of the concept introduced and all the concept related products. Thus, commercials are introduced to the society as a kind of industry covering most of the other industries as well as many social, economical and political functions related to the communication areas.

Gans talks about the “*high culture creatures*” (Gans, 1969: 162-171 cited in 1972, McQuail, 381) who are very much concerned about their position in a society in which popular culture

is politically and culturally dominant. To these high culture creatures consumption is not a mere activity but a sign of many other values attributed to this action. Advertisers understand the themes that arouse interest in the viewing public, so they develop products that reflect the general themes and images the viewers are likely to enjoy. They function as gatekeepers by developing themes that appeal to the entertainment and message needs of society. They ask themselves “Will the message sell?”

## Motivation and Mobility

Attitudes regarding the nature of the impact of commercials assume that images have effects but they are reciprocal to the socially determined needs of the audience. This view assumes that there is a broad functional relationship between the thematic content of commercials and the needs of the mass audience. Each commercial is another exposition to the audience to introduce a wide variety of situations, and thus provided with patterns of behavior which the audience may accept or reject. Thus each commercial creates a motivation for the individual and the mass audience to watch for another.

Motivation cannot be observed directly. When we see people eat, we assume they are hungry, but we may be wrong. People eat for a variety of reasons besides hunger: they want to be sociable, it's time to eat, or maybe they're bored. It's the same with the commercials. People could watch the commercials for various reasons. Thus, all the advertisers do not really refer to the motivation of the masses to see that specific commercials. There might be individual or intrapersonal factors influencing the people to have a certain tendency.

The most important function of the advertisers today is to create the motivation to lead the mobility of the audience as to come across with the commercials to be watched. This channel or that channel wouldn't matter too much. Thematic channels becoming more individualized are much popular in nowadays, since they bring together the individuals and commercials they might find useful in the same platform.

Motivation here refers to the factors that determine a person's desire to do something; in this respect choosing, watching, and consuming whatever produced by the advertisers. Children are motivated easily through the visual images they are exposed to. Audience could be affected differently by different types of motivation, whereas there could be different factors affecting different types of audiences in the same society or in different societies.

Two types of motivation are sometimes distinguished:

- a) *Instrumental motivation*: wanting to do something because it will be useful for certain "instrumental" goals. In this case the audience could have some instrumental motivation to go to the cinema in order to reach the instrumental goals such as getting a higher status in the soci-

ety, having something to talk about, proving that s/he could afford such a leisure, etc.

The children are ready to have any instrumental motivation introduced by the commercials.

- b) *Integrative motivation*: wanting to do something in order to communicate with people of another culture. In this case, the audience could have some integrative motivation as to know more about the “other” culture, the “other’s experience” and perhaps to associate or integrate itself to that “other”. Integrative motivation could also show itself as to lead the individuals to be a respectable member of a smaller group which has an “intragroup communication”. In this case, the communication among members of a group could be shaped through the commercials watched, the products bought and experiences gained through the watching activity. In order not to be excluded from such an intragroup communication the group members try to go with the stream; they watch or consume whatever should be consumed. This is a kind of belongingness to a specific group which is rather closed to the other members of the society. Once you’re in the group, you need to have some effort to stay in the group.

Motivation could be given through different ways. *Intrinsic motivation* is the inner motivation of the individual leading him/her to his/her choices and consumptions. *Extrinsic motivation*, on the other hand, is the outer force putting some pressure on the individual as to lead him/her through a previously predetermined path. People are usually affected by their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation types when they are making their choices, giving their decisions or developing their attitudes. Which way has more emphasis on the decision making process of the individual and why has always been the question. In other words, “do the people in the society have ever a chance of making their own choices or are they affected by the others in the society” is the question.

When the consumption of the commercials is considered, viewing a certain television channel is expected to be a “*motion*” and “*mobility*” on the side of the individuals. In its core it requires a kind of “choosing” the right medium. It is a kind of a trip to the virtual world and having access to the appropriate message and the virtual reality.

## Popularity and Advertising

The popularity of the messages is usually associated with the advertisements. Starting by the 1970's advertising is seen as the clever use of media money. Just a decade ago, advertising was considered to be something degraded. For example, the audience in the cinema saloons were used to boo and hiss during the commercials in cinema films, but today studies show that %77 of viewers recall the cinema ads the following day, compared to 20 % of for the TV ads.

Trying to reach to the target audience was always difficult for the advertisers but it's never been so competitive as it is in the last decade. On one hand the audience is mobile and it's hard to fix the messages for such mobile audiences. On the other hand, the commercials need to be mobile, if they are expected to reach to the audience. The commercials should be popular to stay in the cycle. This process is a very critical one: if they stay longer they give boredom rather than the motivation. Yet, on the other hand if they stay just for short time, they have the risk of missing the audience.

Apart from the timing and popularity, there are also some social concepts regarding the commercials and their credibility. In some societies the commercials are regarded in different ways depending upon their popularity and durability. Some societies consider the commercials not reliable and convincing enough if they stay in the media for a long time. In such cases, the advertising company is looked at as if it is having some financial difficulty and they are living hard days and the commercials are looked at the cries of such a difficulty. On the other hand, in some other societies, the longer the commercials are on the media, the more they are dependable. In such a case, the company advertising is looked at as if it has a lot of money as to give longitudinal commercials and this shows the reliability of their presence, success and power. Regarding all these different attitudes of the audience, the advertising companies should balance their commercials depending upon the local understanding of their audience and their sense of reliability.

Although almost all of these factors could be implemented through the society and through multiple effects of use of media, it seems that some of them are just a bit more individual choices and some are more the efforts of shaping the individual choices to a predetermined consumption of certain types of media. Thus, if we may talk about the factors such as the media (television channel, radio or internet) company, product, availability of the product and its accessability (price).

It is difficult to conclude that one medium has more influence on public attitudes than another when it comes to the popularity of the advertisements. People expose themselves more to the medium that they like and trust most. The general tendency is that people watch television but they rely on printed material for in-depth coverage of current events, critical commentary, controversial issues, and opinion positions. Considering the information got through this metacommunication, namely the ads, news and personal experiences of watching the film, it's all "hush-hush". It's just a type of communication on a certain type of communication. As in the lines of Diken and Laustsen (Diken and Laustsen 2001) there is a rule of the consumers club: 'You do not speak about them' but rather treat this knowledge as a secret that unites the members of the smaller prestigious society. Because 'if information becomes all too obvious, its attraction would disappear'. If there is a piece of information you get by the grapevine, it is whispered into your ear with the understanding that you will not pass it on to the others. You feel honored and excited. You are one of the special few to get this information. You cannot wait. You must quickly find other ears to pour the information into! And so the information, secret as it is, begins to spread – nobody knows how far! At the end it's all the part of the metacommunication but not the communication itself!

## Children Identity: Ordinary and Weak Become Star and Powerful

The question is that why the people would like to be the audience? Why they are so ready to consume whatever the commercials advice them to buy. It's just because that people like to be some part of the mysteries and myths. That's why they create myths or contribute to the created ones. At this point, we may consider all the information and the ads and metacommunication of the films as a type of myth creation. And people would like to be part of it through either talking about it or buying objects related to the film themes or actors/actresses. Or perhaps they feel themselves as heros/ heroines when they consume the things advertised. That's why the ordinary people become stars themselves after watching the commercials. They feel that they have the power to make, to buy or to change the things. Specifically the children feel in that way. For them buy-



ing is not only an ordinary action. It is the way to become, to mean themselves, to feel like and adult and individual. From the very beginning they start to change the things around and they feel special through the behaviours, actions and mobility.

## Children and Commercials As An Escape

Today, as in most of the other countries as in Turkey, commercials are looked at as the points of escape from real life and real society. Although most of the viewing activities are usually considered to be the “public activities” since the television is in the saloon and in a position requiring common consensus to choose a certain program to be watched by most of the family members. Perhaps, the ironical point or rather a dilemma should be underlined here is that these gatherings both have the function of escaping from the social realities for the individual, yet bringing the individual into another pseudo-society that everybody experiences the same adventure throughout but nobody talks to each other apart from accepting this silent membership of the secret intrasocial enjoyment.

When we look at the commercials from the point of the view of individual, we find out that these commercials tell us stories: Stories of the others. Thus, watching the commercials would be interpreted as a kind of willingness to take part in that storytelling action, rather passively at the beginning and showing the other's choices and activities. Every story would have a certain type of impact on the masses and the individuals. The problem is ‘whose story it is’ and ‘how willingly we accept those stories’ to interfere our own individuality. Each story is a passage leading the individual to communicate with his/her “self” or “identity”, whereas it may make more sense to argue his/her “position” in life, society, his/her identity and “the others”. These are the confessions of the others—or perhaps the “self”. It is a kind of the redistribution of the values arising from an experience: the love, pain, sin and the mistakes or happiness of the others. It is also sharing the better sides of life with the others, talking about the experiences and advice. Thus, the individuals watching the commercials are just the “observers” of the “others” who would also take some lesson from what they have been told.

How do we perceive the world through the commercials is important

since perceptions die hard. Those stories would certainly have an impact on the viewers as being the pieces of the same big puzzle or different puzzles to shape the non-existing world of the individual to lead him/her to built a “better” self and a more pleasant world. Once the perception is achieved there would certainly be connotations and denotations related to it. Thus, the stories are never left behind, but rather added to each other and accommodated just like the *1001 Tales* carried through a lifetime to be revised, implemented, reshaped and remembered. That means every film, and every bit of the film (scenes, colours, characters, music, feelings, moral, etc.), would build a different layer in the world of the individual and the “self” would be the total interpretation of these different stratificational “self’s”. It is frequently expressed that these are the moments of “pure entertainment” providing a means of escape from the world of reality.

An opposing view pretends to put the commercials into a point far from being “just/mere” entertainment or “escapist” entertainment; commercials make people “dream”. Each commercial is another exposition to the audience to introduce a wide variety of situations, and thus provided with patterns of behavior which the audience may accept or reject. Thus each commercial creates a motivation for the individual and the mass audience to watch for another.

Considering the Consumer Motivation Process, motivation refers to the underlying drives that contribute to our purchasing actions (Arens, 1996: 114). These drives stem from the conscious or unconscious goal of satisfying our needs and wants. Needs are the basic, often instinctive, human forces that motivate us to do something. Wants are “needs” that we learn during our lifetime, specifically during childhood through the behaviour patterns observed around. The commercials are in a way putting the world in the orbit of a rather “emotional” perspective rather than putting it into the “power” based position. Similarly, the world we live in, or the world of the future either is reflected optimistically, in which everything is drawn as enjoyable, positive, mature and respectful, or it is reflected rather pessimistically, in which there would be no place for beauty, goodness, or the individual values, yet everything is beastly bad, cruel and ugly. Watching commercials means a journey to some unknown place, culture and identity or rather a world of fantasy where the individuals are as mobile as they could imagine.

## References

- DİE data (1989) (Turkish Statistical Institute <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/Start.do>), 1989.
- American Demographics, 1997.
- Arens, William,F., (1996), *Contemporary Advertising*, Irwin / McGraw –Hill.
- Baudrillard, Jean (1981) *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*. St. Louis, MO:Telos.
- Baudrillard, Jean (1993) *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. London: Sage.
- Baudrillard, Jean (1988) *Selected Writings*. London: Polity.
- Belk, Russel, "May the Farce be With You: On Las Vegas and Consumer Infantalization", *Consumption Markets and Culture* Volume 2, Number 4, 101-124, 2000.
- Bloom, F.E. & Lazerson, A. (1988) *Brain, Mind and Behaviour*, Freeman, New York.
- De Gaetano, Gloria (2004), *Parenting Well In a Media Age*, Personhood Pres, USA.
- Deleuze, Gilles (1986) *Sinema 1, Hareket İmgesi*, Çev. H. Tomlinson, B. Habberjam, Minneapolis: M.N.Minesota Üniversitesi Yayını.
- Diken, Bülent & Carsten Bagge Laustsen, "Enjoy your fight! – "Fight Club" as a symptom of the Network Society", September 2001, Department of Sociology, Lancaster University.
- Fearing, Franklin (1972). (1947), 'Influence of the Movies on Attitudes and Behaviour'.
- McQuail, Denis (1972), *Sociology of Mass Communications*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Firat, A. Fuat (1999), "Rethinking Consumption" in *Consumption Markets and Culture* Volume 3, Number 4, 283-376.
- Garth, Jowett & Linton, James, M., (1980) *Movies as Mass Communications*, 2nd Ed. Beverly Hills, California, SAGE Pub.
- Gitlin, Todd (1986) (Ed.) *Watching Television*. New York: Pantheon Books.  
[http://rc3.org/2004/10/entry\\_6589.php](http://rc3.org/2004/10/entry_6589.php)
- HUNEE, 1987-1989
- Urry, John (2000), *Sociology Beyond Societies*. London: Routledge
- Urry, John (2001), "Mobility and Proximity" in *Sociology*, 2001. Lancaster University.
- Strauss, Levi Claude (1985) *İrk ve Tarih*, İstanbul: Metis Yayınları.

Nilüfer Pembeciođlu

---

- Meertens, R.W. & Grumbkow, J. Von (eds.) (1988), *Sociale psychologie. Wolders – Noordhoof/Ou*, Groningen/Heerlen.
- Öcel, Nilüfer, "Popular Cinema Films in the Context of Turkey: Films of 2000's", 2nd International Symposium Communication In *The Millennium, A Dialogue Between Turkish and American Scholars*, March 17-19, 2004, Proceedings, p. 315-334.
- Langman, Lauren (1992), "Neon Cages: Shopping for Subjectivity" in *Lifestyle Shopping: The Subject of Consumption*, Rob Shields, ed., London: Routledge, pp. 40-82.
- Pecora, N. O. (1998). *The business of children's entertainment*. London: Guilford Press.
- Roberts, Donald & Foerh, Ulla (2004), *Kids and Media in America*, Cambridge University Press, s.11.
- Robinson, John, P. & Bianchi, Suzanne (1997), "The Children's Hours", *American Demographics*, December, pp. 20-24
- Romjin, h. Hersenen (1991), *Neurobiologische, quantummechanische en psychologische aspecten*. Swets & Zeitlinger, Lisse.
- Shields, Rob, (1997) '*Spatial Stress and Resistance: Social Meanings of Spatialization*', in Georges Benko and Ulf Strohmayer (eds) *Space and Social Theory: Interpreting Modernity and Postmodernity*, p. 194. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Türkiye Aile Yıllığı, Türkiye Aile Yıllığı, T.C. (1991), Başbakanlık Aile Araştırma Kurumu, Ankara.
- Raaij,W.F. van & Antonides, G. (1994), *Consumentengedrag*, Lemma, Utrecht.
- Yeni Yüzyıl, 8 August: 1998
- Williams, Tannis MacBeth (1986) (Ed.), *The Impact of Television: A Natural Experiment in Three Communities*. New York: Academic Press.