Advertising adaptation: The impact of local culture on strategies implemented by multinational companies

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Abstract

Globalization has lowered the barriers between countries, allowing to reduce both geographical and cultural distance. With this convergence of distances and rapid access to information, a phenomenon of transnational culture has emerged, enabling multinational companies to standardize their communication. However, cultural specificities still remain, and brands must find new strategies to communicate effectively with a global, but culturally different audience.

This study analyzes the adaptation of international advertising to local cultures. It aims to understand how international companies communicate with different cultures and how they adapt to them. This thesis begins with a reflection on the notions of advertising and culture before defining the relationship between both, to see culture limitations and influences. This study is based on a content analysis of 102 television messages broadcast in various countries by multinational companies. The advertising message of these TV commercials has been studied to determine the adaptation strategy used, as well as to verify the influence of certain factors such as product types and industry.

The results suggest that to counter language problems, international brands will favor non-verbal advertising characterized by an absence of dialogue and predominant use of visual aspect. As for the number of characters illustrated, the results do not allow to establish a relationship with the individuality index of the country where the advertisement is broadcast although it tends to apply for country with low individuality index. Moreover, there seems to be an influence of product types and industry on the advertising message when companies adapt them, but the under-representation of the sample for each product type and industry does not allow us to confirm the nature of this influence.

Through the analysis of international advertisements, this thesis highlights the cultural challenge faced by international brands when adapting advertising campaigns.

Keywords: culture, advertising, adaptation strategy, international campaign, globalization.

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Introduction

"Every year more than 500 billion euros are invested by multinational companies (MNCs) in advertising" (Statista, 2018). This figure grows every year behind an increasing competition in a globalized world where firms continuously expand and innovate to increase their market share. Consequently, perception of the world is modified, and its vision expands internationally. This change of outlook on the world accentuates the connections between peoples and increases exchanges, either economic, cultural or scientific. At the same time, it weakens the cultural identity of some countries as the growth of the international market has pushed companies to move away from national territory. Throughout the years, MNCs such as Procter&Gamble, Coca-Cola or General Motors have expanded around the world and conquered new markets. For those companies, choosing between standardization or adaptation to develop their marketing and communications strategies has been quite challenging, especially with important parameters to consider such as culture.

More concretely, the problem many managers are facing today relates to the choice of strategy for a coherent and long-term development. When a product is developed for a given geographic market, companies can decide to use the standardization approach and apply the same marketing strategy in other countries but sometimes it needs to be adapted to fit the target and the specificities of the market. Indeed, several criteria need to be considered before opting for a particular strategy: personal, social, psychological and most importantly cultural aspects. *

Therefore, conquering new markets must come with an awareness of the cultural context of the targeted countries in order to be able to adapt to its values and ultimately seduce the intended target. To succeed, the company must adapt its marketing and communication actions, as well as its advertising strategy.

The rapid recovery and expansion of the world economy following World War II have been paralleled by the growth of a phenomenon called "transnational culture". This term is the result of the globalization leading to standardization of both development models and cultural forms. Transnational culture eliminates local culture elements, pushing globalized symbols instead (cars, advertising, supermarkets, shopping centers, hotels, fast food chains, etc).

Advertising is one of the strongest symbols and the most impacted by transnational culture, allowing company to use global communication campaigns in some markets. However, although companies usually tend to standardize their communication strategy it is not unusual to face a need to change the strategy and adapt some of the advertising to the local culture.

As Hans Magnus Enzensberger once said: *"Culture is a like dropping an Alka-Seltzer into a glass - you don't see it, but somehow it does something"*.

Some symbols are more important than others, depending on the country where culture can have a stronger impact than any other symbol. What can be considered as a strong advertisement in one country can be interpreted as offensive or weak in another country. That is why it is always important to have in mind each market specificities.

Indeed, in the past years, marketers usually assess the potential of a market depending a on demographic and geographic characteristics as well as economic and political factors. The aime was to determine if and how those characteristics and factors might impact the marketing mix. However, this is only in the past couple years that more attention has been paid to culture.

Over the past decades, many researchers have been working on the role of culture in marketing strategies, exploring the specificities and impact of both standardization and adaptation. In 1983, Levitt argued in his article "The Globalization of Markets" that advertising and marketing could be standardized across cultures. On the other hand, authors such as Kotler (1996) have demonstrated the correlation between advertising strategy and culture by shedding a light on the importance of socio-cultural dimensions.

Most of the work on international advertising focuses on the benefits and disadvantages of standardizing or diversifying advertising messages. However, few studies looked at the extent of the cultural impact on the international advertising campaigns.

This thesis examines how local culture can influence the international advertising strategy of a global organization and tries to answer the question linked to it: *To what extent local culture impacts the adaptation of advertising strategies of MNCs in today's globalized world?*

In the context of this research, the aim is, on the one hand, to grasp the importance of culture in adapting international advertising to local markets, on the other hand, to reveal the dominant characteristics of international campaign advertising, and finally understand what factors can influence the adaptation strategy of these brands. To address the subject and answer the questions raised, a research plan has been established. First, the concept of advertising and culture will be defined based on a literature review leading to several hypotheses of research. Second, the method of analysis used will be clarified along with the process of building and codifying the evaluation grid. Finally, the presentation and interpretation of the results along with the findings will be presented, with recommendations for future research.

1. Literature Review: Advertising and Culture

The literature review will provide a better understanding of the main theories related to the research question. It will also be useful in building up the evaluation grid for the different international advertising campaigns selected. The literature review is divided into three sections: advertising, culture and the connection between both culture and advertising.

1.1 Advertising and brand strategy

Before introducing the terms of culture and cultural dimensions, the concept of advertising and brand strategy will be presented in order to have a better understanding of their specificities and assess how they can have an impact on culture.

1.1.1 Definition of advertising

According to Baynast & Lendrevie (2014), "Advertising is a partisan mass communication, made on behalf of a clearly identified issuer. The latter pays media to insert its promotional messages in separate spaces of editorial content; in order to broadcast them to the selected media audiences ". Advertising is paid by the advertiser and not by the recipient. It is thus diffused in an interested way in the service of a cause, most often commercial, but which can also be political or social. Moreover, advertising is not objective, it is unilateral and subjective. It also seeks to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors, not just spreading facts. Advertising must draw the attention of customers to the product or brand it promotes and seek to create a need in the consumer’s mind, to persuade him that the product meets this need and sometimes to convince him that it does it better than other products (Breduillieard, 2010).

However, not all people respond in the same way to the messages they receive. What is happening in the mind of the consumer between the stimulus due to advertising and the decision can be attributed to several mechanisms: the attention, the attitude towards the brand, the experience following use of the brand's product and/or competition, motivation and degree of consumer involvement (Kotler, 2012). These filters allow consumers to sort information, process it or distort it.

1.1.2 Brand identity and equity

In the context of market globalization, some organizations have taken advantage of the borders' opening. They have expanded or continued to grow internationally. In marketing, the brand is "a name, a term, a sign, a symbol or a drawing, or a combination of all, which aims to recognize the goods and services of a seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from those of competitors "(Kotler, 2000). The mission of the brand is to make sense of its product and establish an emotional relationship with the customer. To buy a product of any brand is to adhere to a whole system of values. According to Kapferer (2007), the brand is made up of three elements that must be managed together to ensure the brand uniqueness: its name or sign, its values and its products or services.

At its creation the brand is only the name of a product but to acquire autonomy and meaning, it is important to have in addition an identity. Defining the identity of a brand will help to better understand its role within the company. According to Kapferer (2007), brand identity is different from the image or positioning. The image is the result of the decoding that individuals make of the different signs coming from the brand (colors, names, visual symbols, etc.). With identity, it is "to specify the sense, the project, the self-concept of the brand ". The identity of the brand comes before its image. In other words, before being decoded, the mark must be codified. Brand identity can be represented by a six-faceted prism.

A brand identifies itself first with a set of physical characteristics followed by its positioning. In addition, it's a whole cultural universe that reflects fundamental values and principles. It is also a reflection of a certain type of consumer it seems to be addressing.

Finally, the brand acts as an internal mirror that gives a clue to the individual who makes the purchase. These six facets define the identity of the brand. In terms of positioning, identity will define the brand's being, while positioning will promote its competitive advantages. It is mainly through advertising that the brand will be known. This is one of the most important types of communication for the brand. It is by intermediate advertising that the brand will display its identity, image and positioning.

1.1.3 International brand and branding strategy

In the current context, globalization has never been stronger, and companies are trying to enter new markets and new territories. Just like companies, brands have to internationalize to face the competition. The launch of several local brands can sometimes be too expensive, and it becomes more advantageous for a company to have an international brand allowing it to increase its notoriety and reputation. To be international, a brand must meet three characteristics described by Usunier (1992).

First, an international brand must have a long-term vision to be sustainable. Then, it must have acquired a certain notoriety. International brands have the particularity of having built this capital of notoriety for several years now and they are often preceded by a very strong business history. Finally, international brands are defined by important advertising investments they have accumulated over the years both abroad and in their country of origin. Internal companies' positioning in their country of origin must be strong and stable enough to finance their entry into new markets (Karsaklian, 2007). Many of these brands have credibility that is based on a national image.

This is the case of Coca-Cola which is an American drink, or Dior which is a French luxury brand. Managing an international brand is complex. For Prime and Usunier (2003), "A brand is a symbolic capital of symbols, offered and maintained by diversified communications." These communications must be developed and managed with care to maintain the loyalty of the individual to the brand.

In times of growth, a company can use different branding strategies to make a better use of each one. Depending on the branding strategy used, a company will have several parameters to consider before implementing its advertising strategy. Thus, it is important to analyze those strategies, understand their specificities and come up with adapted solutions.

Kapferer (2007) identified several different brand strategies directly connected to advertising: product branding, line branding, range branding and umbrella branding.

1. Product branding strategy

The product branding strategy consists in giving a single brand name per product. The identity, image and positioning of the brand are only being linked to this product. Each new product has a different brand name and the company end up with a portfolio of different products and brands. This is the case of the company Procter & Gamble for example which manages a multitude of different products that are all attached to a specific brand and have their own positioning strategy.

This strategy has the advantage of increasing the company's market share in a particular sector. It also allows the company to launch a brand in new markets without fear of harming other brands if it does not work. The failure of one brand will not fall on others. However, this is quite an expensive strategy because the company has to support each brand individually (launch plan, advertising campaign, different packaging, etc.).

2. Line Branding Strategy

As part of a line branding strategy the company offers several complementary products under a single line with a common concept. This is the case of L'Oréal's Studio Line, which offers a range of products for young people: structuring gel, lacquer, etc. The brand targets a well-defined segment of the market who are sensitive and responsive to the brand concept. Line brands usually start with one product later declined to other complementary ones. This strategy creates distribution facilitation, launch costs decrease and a consistent and strong image for the brand. However, company should be careful not to include products that are too far from the starting line.

3. Range Branding Strategy

It is common for a product brand to evolve into a range brand. The company then offers a set of products under the same name and brand. The range brand strategy can be commonly found in the food industry (General Mills with Green Giant for peas and corn) or in equipment (Moulinex with its iron and mixers).

This strategy has the advantage of focusing on a single name and creating a single brand equity that will be reflected on all products. However, with the growth of the company and the launch of new products, the company's offer ends up diluting. With a hundred products under the same brand, it is impossible to communicate a specific offer for each product and thus communication is often standardized because it is too expensive and difficult to customize the speech for each product.

4. Umbrella Branding Strategy

In this case, the same brand will support several distinct products in similar territories. For example, Canon sells both cameras, photocopiers and office supplies. The main advantage of this strategy is the possibility of economies of scale at the international level. By capitalizing under a brand name, the company can more easily enter a market with a new product. Moreover, the notoriety already acquired on the other products will be beneficial for the launch of a new product. On the other hand, a company should not just rely on this acquired reputation to avoid the banalization of the brand. In addition, if an incident occurs with one of the products, the entire product range will be affected. Attention must be paid to the consistency between advertisements as campaigns are managed individually.

1.1.4 Theories applied to advertising

1. Motivation theory

The consumer has a decisive role in the formation of advertising. According to the theory of motivations, "the behaviors of individuals cannot be explained by a mechanical response to external stimuli" (De Baynast & Landrevie, 2014). The actions are governed by the personality that is specific to each. Some motivation drives people to act a certain way and the purpose of advertising is to get people moving in the direction desired by the advertiser. "Advertising must therefore be a stimulus that will excite motivation or that will reduce a break (a fear, an inhibition)" (De Baynast & Landrevie, 2014).

Consumers do not only take into account information that allow them to make rational and optimal choices, they rather want to reassure themselves with information which comfort them in their opinions. They want to be reassured instead of being rational.

2. Dissonance Theory

The dissonance theory (Baynast & Landrevie, 2014) explains, "How the consumer reacts to diverging information. It is a theory of the treatment of information and decision”. The term dissonance applies when the consumer perceives information that disturbs his opinions and his attitudes. If the dissonance is high, the consumer will be able to question his past or future choices.

Dissonant information must come from credible sources. If not, the consumer will fail to consider the information and instead seek to reduce the dissonance. It will avoid rationally solving the problem caused by dissonance. The consequences of the dissonance theory on advertising are important. According to De Baynast & Landrevie (2014), five elements must be considered. First, the goals set by advertising must be realistic. A dissonant advertising message is not to be seen, and if seen, not to be believed. Second, the advertising information must be as credible as possible; the use of opinion leaders is a good asset to achieve this goal. Third, rational codes are used, which is the alibi of purchases and whose motive is irrationally dominant. Fourth, if the will is to profoundly change behavior (for example when the consumer offers a lot of resistance) it will play on the duration and continuity of the advertising effort. Finally, the dissonance is more important in the period following a purchase with a high degree of perceived risk, for which the consumer has long hesitated.

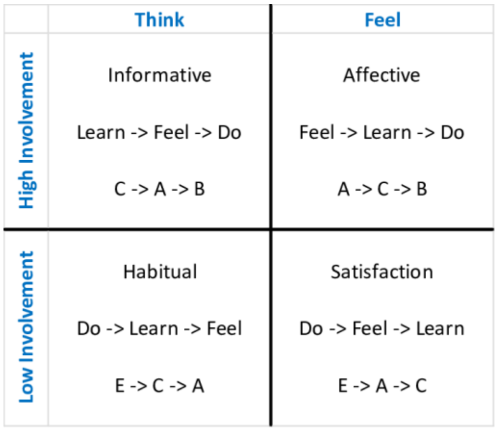
3. Involvement Theory

The involvement theory of Baynast & Landrevie (2014) says that "involvement is a state of motivation, excitement or interest. It is favored by external variables (nature of the product, context) and by internal variables (ego, values) ". It affects behavior, information processing and decision-making. The implication depends on the characteristics of the consumer: his / her interests, needs, knowledge and experience with the product. Involvement also varies according to the utilitarian and social function of the products. People will not be involved in the same way for all products. For example, for the purchase of a bicycle, some people will see this it as a means of transport, while others will perceive it as a satisfaction for their leisure. Finally, the implication also depends on the context of the purchase. It can be different for two identical products, one bought for itself, the other for a gift.

4. Vaughn's Matrix

Vaughn's matrix shows that it is possible to take other paths. It considers different situations according to the buyer’s degree of involvement and type of purchasing process. "**Think** refers to thoughtful buying, even if the reflection is minimal, for example, when the implication is very low. **Feel** refers to emotional purchases, often not very rational (Baynast & Landrevie, 2014).

When the implication is strong, and people are in the think part, they follow those steps: cognitive, affective and conative. This is the case of purchasing a car or a computer, for example. It is also possible to follow a conative, cognitive and emotional process for example when a consumer buys everyday food products. In this situation the implication is weak, and it still refers to the “think” part. The third option is to have a weak implication and the ‘feel’ area leading to have first affective then conative and finally cognitive attitude. For example, when buying sweets, there is no need for a lot of information, but if consumers really want the product, he will buy it. Last scenario involves a strong implication and a purchase feel. The affective plays the first role, then comes the cognitive stage and finally the conative stage. People follow this process when buying luxury or cosmetics, for example.



	Think	Feel
High Involvement	Informative Learn -> Feel -> Do C -> A -> B	Affective Feel -> Learn -> Do A -> C -> B
Low Involvement	Habitual Do -> Learn -> Feel E -> C -> A	Satisfaction Do -> Feel -> Learn E -> A -> C

Figure 1: Vaughn's matrix

This definition of advertising and its components shed a light on the importance of using the right brand strategy to protect the equity of the brand and preserve its image on the long run. In the end, purchase decision depends mainly on five parameters: the degree of attention, the type of product, the attitude towards the brand, the experience following use of the brand's product and/or competition and the degree of consumer’s involvement.

1.2 Culture and cultural dimensions

This section aims at giving a better understanding and definition of what is culture by analyzing different theoretical concepts that will be applied in the second part of this research.

1.2.1 Definition of culture

There are various definitions of culture, but the most widely accepted definition may be the one given by Tylor (1881) who described it as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, laws, custom and any other capabilities acquired by a man as a member of the society.” Others have defined culture as “learned, shared, compelling, interrelated set of symbols whose meaning provides a set of orientations for members of a society” (Terpstra and David 1991).

In total, there are more than 160 different definitions of culture in the anthropological literature according to Kroeber and Kluckhohn. Even though they are all different definition, there are some commonalities between them. First, most of the authors agree that culture is learned rather than being inherent or innate. Second, culture is something shared by a group of people that defined themselves behind it and separate them from the other groups. Cross-cultural communication between groups – thus countries and region - can be very difficult because they are lacking shared symbols.

1.2.2 Transnational and local culture

“Transnational culture can be defined as a shared pattern of learned, transmitted socialization (symbols, values and experiences) generated from a setting characterized by multiple participants, languages, and ethnic backgrounds” (B. Willis 1992). Members of transnational culture groups usually see themselves belonging to either bicultural or multicultural groups rather than monocultural ones. Those cross-cultural groups appeared along with the globalization and the various symbols that came with it such as cars, advertising, supermarkets, shopping centers, hotels, or fast food chains. The development of transport and communication facilitated trade and reinforced transnational culture.

According to Levitt’s research, the world is becoming a “homo-cultural” marketplace thanks to globalization and advertising could be globalized to target all consumers, no matter their culture and values.

According to Levitt, standardization could be operated on both brands and brands image without having a strong impact on different countries. Thus, adaptation in local market wouldn't be required or only at a low level, saving significant costs for the company as additional production costs would not be required.

However, some research and case study have shown that this "homo-cultural" market is not adaptable in every region. Despite these homogenizing effects creating a global culture around the world, it can happen that globalization reinforce local cultures. This term refers to "a group of people in a particular place who see themselves as a collective or a community, who share experiences, customs, and traits, and who work to preserve those traits and customs in order to claim uniqueness and to distinguish themselves from others" (Sima, 2018).

In India, for example, the development of satellite TV increased the number of regional channels, leading to the creation of telecast Indian content. This gave to Indians new opportunities to identify themselves with their regional ties, reinforcing local culture. It is also observed that the homogenizing effect of globalization on national cultures can sometimes create the opposite effect by leading people whose culture is threatened to reaffirm their own traditions, such as indigenous people. Overall, even though transnational culture tends to expand with the globalization, it is mandatory to take local culture into account.

1.2.3 Hofstede's cultural dimensions

When companies expand internationally, they want to know how the target market differs from the original market and both advertising professionals and international marketers want to understand the impacts of cultural differences. As Zhang (2010) once said, "cultural orientation influences decisions for the creation of advertising, as well as consumer responses to advertising stimuli."

To analyze impact of cultural dimensions, cultural dimensions first need to be considered by using Hofstede's research. Hofstede (1997) defines culture as "the collective mental programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another." He conducted research with IBM between 1967 and 1973 to study how values and behaviors are influenced by culture.

Four dimensions were identified followed by two additional few years later: *Power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long vs. short-term orientation and indulgence vs. restraint.*

Power distance

Values related to people's relationships with their elders and the authority or values of dependence and independence are part of the dimension of hierarchical distance.

Countries with a strong hierarchical distance have a strong respect for the hierarchy. In addition, the social status must be clear so that others can show respect to socially important individuals. The social position is defined by the clothes, the shoes, the posture or the makeup unlike countries with low hierarchical distance where people pay less attention to their appearance. (De Mooij, 2014). In low scoring countries, these members consider themselves equal to other. The countries of Asia, Latin America, Africa but also the Latin countries of Europe (Spain, France, Italy, Greece) have high scores and the Anglo-Saxon countries and North of Europe have low scores relative to the distance.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

This dimension reflects the importance of the group rather than the individual. De Mooij (2014) argues that: "There are different collectivistic and individualistic patterns and not all individualistic or collectivistic cultures are the same ".

In individualistic cultures, the individual wants to differentiate himself from others. "A so-called individualistic society is based on criteria contrary to those of collectivism such as the consciousness of the "me", the search for pleasure, independence, self-realization" (Breduillieard, 2010). Achieving personal goals comes first. Advertising in countries with individualistic culture places a great deal value on individuality, independence, success and self-realization (Mueller, 2010). On the other hand, in collectivist cultures, group goals are more important than personal goals. Identity is based on the group to which the person belongs. "A collectivist society is based on the consciousness of the "we", the obedience to the ideology of the group, the identity of the group, the collective identity, the emotional dependence, the solidarity to the group "(Breduillieard, 2010). Identity is based on the social system.

"In a general way, we can say that collectivist societies value the time spent for the group, the personal goals of the collectivist are superimposed on those of the group to which it belongs" (Schwartz, 1990). Harmony with the people in the group and the notion of consensus are important.

"Between 70% and 80% of the world's population is more or less collectivistic (De Mooij, 2014). The Anglo-Saxon countries and those of Northern Europe are individualists while the states of the South and East are collectivists. Individuals of individualistic cultures believe that they have universal values that must be shared by all. On the other hand, collectivist countries accept that other cultures may have other values (De Mooij, 2014).

Masculinity vs. Femininity

Breduillieard (2010) explains that this dimension "makes it possible to know if a society is more sensitive to emotional factors (feminine) or factual (masculine)". The dominant values in a society with a high masculinity are ambition and success (De Mooij, 2014). They are male-oriented cultures. On the other hand, low-score countries are more focused on quality of life, modesty, and interest in others.

This dimension can explain the differences in household roles such as cleaning, cooking, caring for children, shopping, but also differences in working time between men and women (De Mooij, 2014). In women's cultures, for example women spend more time at work, whereas in men's cultures they are more likely to engage in domestic activities.

The German-speaking countries, those of Latin America (Venezuela, Mexico and Colombia), Japan and Italy are male cultures, unlike the countries of Black Africa and the Latin countries such as France, Spain, Portugal, Peru and Chile, and Scandinavian countries with high indexes of femininity (Breduillieard, 2010).

Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is "the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and try to avoid these situations", Hofstede and De Mooij (2014). In cultures with a strong aversion to uncertainty, there is a need to establish rules, structure life and believe in experts. People have a greater level of anxiety and conflict and competition are threatening.

A great aversion to uncertainty leads to intolerance, low confidence, inflexibility and dogmatism People are more interested in knowing how things work than in the results In a culture with a low aversion to uncertainty, people think there should be the least possible rules. People are more result oriented than process oriented. (De Mooij, 2014)

This dimension can explain, for example, differences in the adoption of innovations, travel desires, learning foreign languages and contact with foreigners (De Mooij, 2014).

The Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon countries have an aversion to low uncertainty. "Members tend to feel safe, they like to take risks" However, countries with Latin cultures (France, Italy, Mexico, Peru) and Japan are, on the other hand, companies with a strong aversion to uncertainty. "Members seek to conquer the future, do not like conflicts, the population has a higher degree of anxiety that manifests itself with greater nervousness, emotionality and greater aggression "(Breduillieard, 2010).

Long vs. Short-Term Orientation

The values of a short-term culture are national pride, traditions, low savings, self-esteem, religion, magnanimity and generosity (De Mooij, 2014). People are religious, often with a great belief in a god who will solve their problems without worrying about what they are doing themselves. Most East Asian countries have a big score. By contrast, Anglo-Saxon society, Latin America and Africa have low scores (short-term orientation). Overall, the countries in Europe show great disparities.

In a long-term-oriented society, people think in the longer term, save, are persevering and pragmatic. In addition, parents are more lenient towards their children than in short-term oriented cultures (De Mooij, 2014).

Indulgence vs. Restraint

This sixth dimension is relatively new not as used in management compare to the others. De Mooij (2014) argues that "other dimensions, [...], yet, that do not contribute much to explaining differences in consumer behavior, are indulgence versus restraint, [...] ".

Indulgence includes the degree of happiness of people, the control that people have over their own lives and the importance of leisure. Restraint includes values like saving or working hard. People buy something only if they really need it. A low score also includes traditional values such as the fact that a woman's first priority should be her family.

On the other hand, people in countries with a high score want to pay for more quality and afford the latest "gadgets" (De Mooij, 2014). Many Latin countries have high scores in this dimension. The low scores are found in the countries of the former Soviet Union. (De Mooij, 2014).

One interesting example would be to compare two very different culture such as the USA and Russia. The USA have a relatively indulgent culture and when it comes to customer service, employees quite easily demonstrate their happiness towards their customers. On the opposite, in Russia, which is considered as a restrained culture, such a behavior would be considerate as inappropriate.

Overall, there is fewer information about this sixth dimension as it is quite hard to define happiness which is subjective. Happiness is viewed very differently across cultures and it is represented and discussed quite differently.

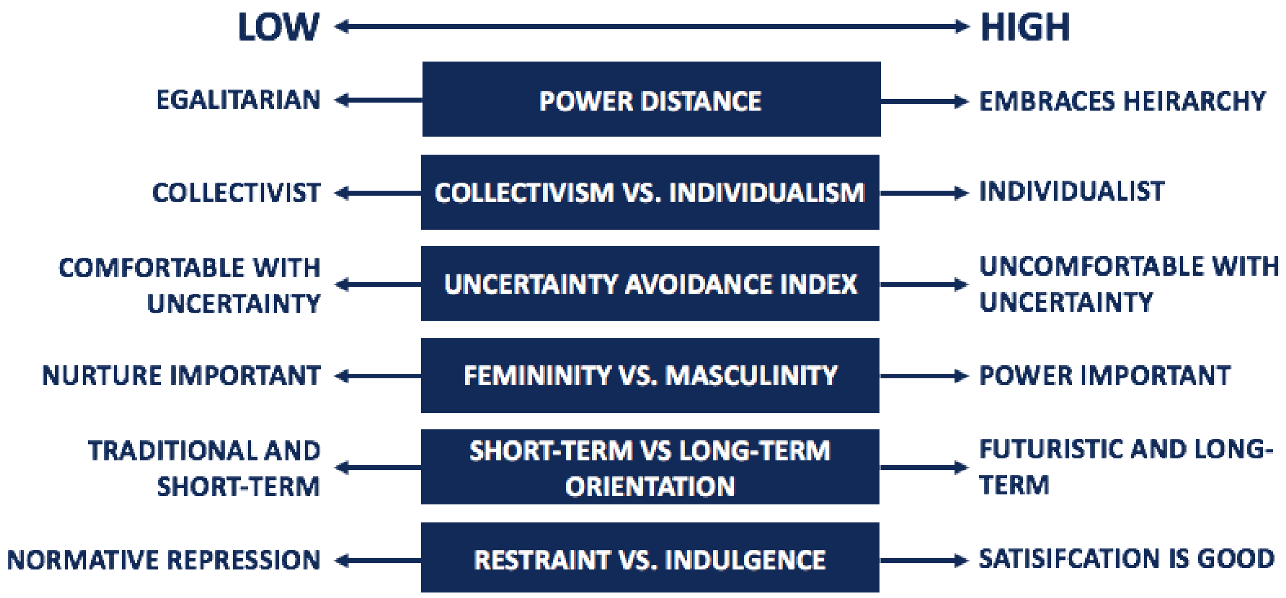

LOW
HIGH
EGALITARIAN
POWER DISTANCE
EMBRACES HEIRARCHY
COLLECTIVIST
COLLECTIVISM VS. INDIVIDUALISM
INDIVIDUALIST
COMFORTABLE WITH UNCERTAINTY
UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE INDEX
UNCOMFORTABLE WITH UNCERTAINTY
NURTURE IMPORTANT
FEMININITY VS. MASCULINITY
POWER IMPORTANT
TRADITIONAL AND SHORT-TERM
SHORT-TERM VS LONG-TERM ORIENTATION
FUTURISTIC AND LONG-TERM
NORMATIVE REPRESSION
RESTRAINT VS. INDULGENCE
SATISIFCATION IS GOOD

Figure 2: Hofstede's cultural dimensions

1.2.4 Cultural factors

Edward T. Hall was an anthropologist who made early discoveries of key cultural factors. He explored cultural and social cohesion and tried to describe how people behave and react in different types of culturally defined space. Three main cultural factors were identified in his research: context, time and space.

High Context and Low Context Culture

Differentiation between a high context culture and a low context culture is important for advertising. Differences in communication styles and the use of symbols or facts are best understood. The concept explains how communication is transmitted and perceived. Words, sentences as well as images have different meanings depending on the context in which they find themselves. "The high and low context cultural aspect articulates the different communication styles of each culture" Cho (2010). In high-context societies, verbal communication is only considered part of the whole message. Messages tend to be implicit and ambiguous.

"Context is the information that surrounds an event and is inextricably bound up with the meaning of that event. The elements that combine to produce a given meaning-events and context-in different proportions depending on culture "(Hall & Hall, 1987). Thus, a person outside a culture with strong context can’t correctly interpret the message because it does not know, for example, the symbols.

Countries with a strong culture are mainly located in Asia, Latin America and around the Mediterranean Sea. "These countries emphasize the relational framework (preliminary activities, habits and customs), promote the importance of contextual information, nonverbal communication, indirect communication/implicit messages, [...], the low importance of writing "(Breduillieard, 2010). On the other hand, the messages in a low context culture are transmitted explicitly. Information is disseminated directly, accurately, completely and unambiguously. "What is important is what is said, not how it is said or the environment in which it is said" (Mueller, 2006). The United States, Switzerland or Germany are low context cultures. "These countries emphasize results, promote the importance of argumentation, verbal communication, direct communication / explicit messages and the strong importance of writing" (Breduillieard, 2010).

Monochronic and Polychronic Culture

Time is an important dimension of culture and cultures differ on this notion. Hall (1990) observed two systems of time according to culture. He distinguished the monochronic and polychronic cultures. But as Mueller (2006) says, "like oil and water, the two systems do not mix". People in monochrome cultures can only do one thing at a time. They are organized, methodological and their workday is organized to do one task after another (De Mooij, 2014). This type of behavior corresponds to Germany, the United States, Australia and Switzerland. Polychronic people tend to do many things at once. Time is flexible. "Strict planning is neither necessary nor possible, because everything changes at any time and the accomplishment of tasks depends largely on the relational factor" (Breduillieard, 2010).

This form of behavior is found especially in Mediterranean countries such as Italy or France, as well as in Latin America, Asia or Africa; the states of these parts of the world are considered polychronic.

According to Bleudorn (1992), it is not possible to make a clear distinction between monochronic and polychronic cultures; it is rather to see them as a continuum. Spanish are polychronic compared to Swiss or Germans, but they could be considered monochronic compared to Chinese.

Proximity

The concept of space may vary according to the culture the same way it can for context and time. The relationship of an individual to space determines encounters, often unconsciously. In the context of intercultural encounter, the different critical structures can produce irritation and even cause discomfort among those concerned.

Space is defined as "the personal territory of each individual." It is from its relation to space that the individual will keep a certain distance from a person or, on the contrary, will approach him. Edward T. Hall introduced a term that gathers all the researches of this aspect of behavior: "proximity." He used this term to designate "the set of observations and theories concerning man's use of space."

As for the French, it is generally observed that they keep less distance in the meetings. In other words, they "let themselves be approached much more than the Germans", as an example. Their German neighbors prefer well-defined personal territories and expect "everyone's personal sphere to be rigorously respected." This difference is shown, for example, in the way of saying, "Hello": the French habit of kissing one another in non-professional contexts can provoke difficulties or discomfort for the German, who has more tendency to shake hands with each other.

1.2.5 Manifestations of culture

“The foundations of culture are embedded in our societies and directly affect human behavior" (Breduillieard, 2010). For Hofstede (1994), culture manifests itself in four ways: symbols, rituals, heroes and values. It has grouped symbols, heroes and rituals under "naming practices, because they are visible by an outside observer." These various manifestations are reflected in the advertisement. The symbols represent the most superficial manifestation of culture and values are the deepest, with heroes and rituals lying between the two.

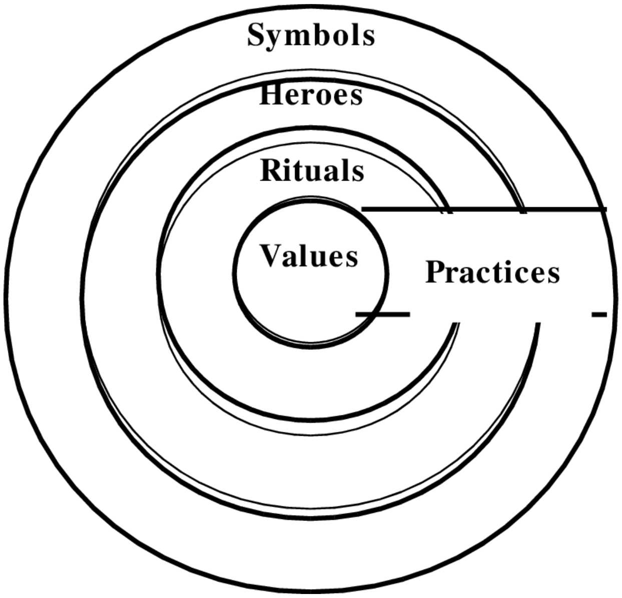


Figure 3: Manifestation of culture by Hofstede

Marieke de Mooij (2014) defines these manifestations as follows: “Symbols are words, gestures, pictures, or objects that carry a particular meaning recognized only by those who share a culture".

The symbols of culture are regularly taken over by others. If we turn to brands, Coca-Cola, Apple, or Nike have become for example global symbols.

Rituals are defined as collective activities more or less superfluous and considered as essential within a culture. The way to greet, the social or religious ceremonies belong to rituals. An example is cheerleading, a sport very present in the United States whether for ice hockey, American football or baseball games. The performance of the cheerleaders is taken very seriously in the country and competition is strong whether in Europe those rituals are not relevant. Heroes (living or dead, real or imagined) possess highly valued characteristics and serve as models of behavior. Lastly, values are the heart of culture. Steward (1972) proposes a definition of values: "they represent a resolving conflict ". Values are the first thing children learn implicitly; most have a firm value system before the age of ten (De Mooij, 2014). In addition, the central values go much further than the behavior or attitude. They determine people's choices and desires and are intrinsic to the identity of somebody. "By appealing to people's inner selves, it is possible to influence their outer selves – meaning their purchase intention "(Miller, 1998).

Values are the expression of culture that will be privileged in this research. In advertising, the object of communication considers the cultural values that the product manifests and symbolizes. Values allow the effective identification of the particularities of a culture, its preferences, its behaviors, its ways of thinking, etc. According to Schwartz (1992), the values of a society are the key element of a culture that makes it possible to understand all aspects related to different aspects of behavior.

This first approach on what is culture and its specificities has permitted to draft a first vision of its role within a globalized world and how it affects behaviors. Terms such as transnational and local culture have been defined to understand the difficulties companies can face when going global. The research on Hofstede's and Hall's work – among others – shed a light on the cultural factors to consider to successfully enter a market and develop the correct strategy. Finally, the analysis of De Mooij's work on cultural manifestations raised awareness on how cultural differences manifest themselves in different ways and to different levels of depth.

1.3 Advertising and culture

As previously mentioned, culture influences the way people behave and act, as well as the representation of advertising. Priorities are not the same coming from a collectivist or individualistic country with a masculine or feminine tendency. Advertising must take into account these differences to be able to seduce its target.

1.3.1 Cultural effects on advertising

In their studies on culture, Johnson (2008) support this finding: "Cultural distinctions have been demonstrated to have important implications for advertising content, persuasiveness of appeals, consumer motivation, consumer judgment process and consumer response style". Thus, to do marketing is to think of the consumer first.

In addition, according to Cathelat (2001), "what matters most in any advertising is that the message is first and foremost "in tune" with the socio-cultural model to which it is addressed" and that "any advertisement, for who wants to decode it, offers a model of culture". For an advertising message to be decoded accurately, it is important to know the receiver well. And to get to know a consumer well, focus needs to be on the consumer's needs, values and culture. Needs are closely related to values (Lambin and Chumpitaz, 2002). Indeed, research has shown that some values are closely associated with certain behaviors of the individual. For example, some people will enjoy a cup of coffee for the taste, because they attach importance to the values of pleasure. Other people will perceive coffee as a stimulus to improve productivity because they emphasize the feeling of accomplishment. Finally, for people who place great importance on interpersonal relationships, having coffee with others will be part of a social ritual.

Values are acquired through socialization exposing the individual to a culture (Lambin and Chumpitaz, 2002). The conduct and behavior of an individual will therefore be oriented by different cultural influences and that is why the encoding of the advertising message must consider the culture of the receiver. Cathelat (1987) explains that an individual's behaviors, thoughts and feelings are shaped by the culture that surrounds them. The individual appropriates certain cultural patterns or forms of conduct. For an advertisement to be able to symbolically satisfy the needs of the individual, it must take into account these cultural models.

The publicity is thus strongly influenced by culture. For De Mooij (2005), it would even be a form of expression of its manifestation. Therefore, it is important for companies, when they globalize, to avoid standardizing their advertising. An advertisement that will work well in a country (for example China), may not have the same impact in another country (Brazil). As De Mooij (2003) points out: "ignoring culture’s influence has led many companies to centralize operations and marketing which, instead of increasing efficiency, has resulted in declining profitability.” When a company moves to a foreign country and successfully want to communicate with its customers, it needs to choose wisely its brand name, select the text that will be written on the packaging but also develop a slogan and a message for the development of its advertising.

1.3.2 Language and culture

Language plays a role in advertising because it reflects culture. As Mueller said, “The art and manner in which one understands the world is determined to a large extent by language; but language, at the same time, is an expression of a specific group-experiencing of the world, and therefore may itself be shaped by the hopes, expectations, and motivations of the group using it”. Words do not all have the same meaning according to the origin and differ in their level formality. Mueller (2006) gives an example with the word you in English, used indifferently for you (family and friends) and you (people we do not know) in French.

The importance of translation is significant for developing an advertisement in another language. Errors in the translation of the name of a brand, the packaging or the advertising message has caused financial losses and undermined the credibility and reputation of companies.

Language and culture have close ties that can be seen in two different ways: language influences culture or language is an expression of culture. For Usunier (1992), language influences the way of perceiving the world, describing reality and interacting with others.

An individual will build his reality according to different categories built in his mind by the language. Language is no longer just an instrument to describe the world around it, it shapes it. Benjamin Lee Whorf, an anthropologist and linguist, goes further by claiming that language structures the worldview and determines the social behavior of the individual.

Language can also be perceived as reflecting a culture. It is then an integral part of the culture in which the individual evolves. Metaphors are very useful to show how language is the expression of a culture. For example, in Egypt, the sun is perceived as cruel. A woman will not be described as a ray of sunshine, but rather as a moonbeam. The language is not just verbal, it has a cultural dimension.

It is based on the history of a nation, a cultural background, and a whole culture-specific way of life and culture. Learning a language is also learning a culture because it is impossible to learn a language without knowing the context in which it is used (Karsaklian, 2007). The language conveys a whole symbolic expression specific to each culture.

Language and culture are closely linked and that is why language is a strong constraint when developing an international advertising campaign (Prime and Usunier, 2003). A study done by Duncan and Ramaprasad (1995) shows that only 11% of international brands opt for standardization of the language across all countries. Bad translations are often the cause of phenomenal failures in advertising. Mental categories activated by a word in one language does not necessarily activate equivalent categories in another language. The transmitter and the receiver do not necessarily share the same communication codes, the same repertoire of meanings.

The expression of the notion of trust is an example. Its meaning is different in four languages (Usunier, 1992). In English, the concept of *trust* means to trust the truth and the reliability of a person or a thing. In German, the notion of trust is expressed with two different words: *trauen* and *vertrauen*. The former is used in a negative way when an individual does not trust someone or something. The second is used in a positive way by claiming to trust someone or something. The French concept originates in the Latin *confidentia*, which expresses the sharing of beliefs, opinions, religion or belonging to a social group. Finally, the Japanese use the word *shin-yo* which implies sincerity. Trust develops thanks to the sincerity of the partners.

Some words can also be difficult to translate. This is the case of the word upset in English. Although this word means to be upset or preoccupied, there is really no equivalent in French. The word upset expresses above all the idea of feeling emotions and experiencing them internally. The French are not upset because they are famous for showing their emotions without embarrassment.

The mastery of the language must go beyond the simple ability to translate correctly. It must know not only the meaning of terms, but also their meaning within a given culture. The translation of an advertisement is in fact "rewrite that implies a search for equivalence of meaning "(Prime and Usunier, 2003). To avoid these translation problems, international advertising will often reduce textual content and increase the visual part of the message.

1.3.3 Identity and culture

It is not only important to take into account verbal communication (speaking and the written word) but also nonverbal communication (gestures, time, space). Nonverbal communication represents about 70% of the communication between two individuals from the same culture (Mueller, 2006). It sends signals about attitudes and feelings and also makes it easier to understand verbal communication.

The concept of identity is very broad and there are several definitions. Identity refers to "what is specific to an individual or group and what makes it unique" (Dictionary of Sociology, 2007). In the concept of identity, there are two perspectives to consider: the individual identity that refers to the personality, and the collective identity associated with culture and the sense of belonging to the nation (Francesc, 1989).

In addition, the identity of an individual varies over time and is built in the social interaction, events and experiences that the individual will have. Personal identity refers to all that is unique in a person, to his individuality, his tastes, his preferences, his aptitudes. Social identity encompasses all attributes that identify an individual from the outside. It is sometimes an obvious association such as sex, nationality, age group, professional category, or less obvious categories like identifying with supporters of a football club. The social identity of a person can then be defined as the set of social categories to which he is likely to identify himself (Jacquemain 2006).

In advertising, advertisers will bet on this notion of identity by giving the consumer the opportunity to recognize or identify with the characters. Usually, ads for women will use female figures and those for men will contain a male reference. However, even if an advertising character is not representative of the target, it can still fulfill its identification function (Guidère, 2000). In the context of intercultural communication, the notion of identity is also important for better understanding of cultural minorities.

A study by Koslow (1994) highlighted the reactions of the Hispanic cultural minority in the United States when their language is used exclusively in an advertisement or combined with the English language. It turns out that the combined use of two languages in the same advertising message is more optimal. The results indicate that the exclusive use of the English language causes some problems of understanding and identification. The combination of both languages avoids a feeling of exclusion and respects the cultural identity of the Hispanic minority.

In other words, in a multicultural context, language can act as a symbol of ethnic identity (Blomart and Krewer, 1994). Identity is therefore above all a conceptual link between the individual and his culture. And when an advertisement incorporates all these notions, it becomes a reflection of a cultural identity.

1.3.4 Image and culture

The image occupies an important place in the society today. It is almost impossible to understand a society without considering the image (Messaris, 1997). The images are found on television, in the cinema, photography, advertising, magazines, etc. They contribute to the flow of information and they shape the society. For Dupont (2000), this is a real cultural phenomenon where television, cinema, photography, magazines, advertising mark social relations and the organization of culture.

As a cultural phenomenon, an image can be studied as a set of signs (Eco, 1992). Indeed, a sign "is only a sign if it expresses ideas, and if it causes in the mind of the one or those who perceive it an interpretative approach "(Joly, 2005). The image is therefore one of many signs and it expresses ideas through a process of interpretation. The different possible levels of interpretation are then dependent on the culture of its interpreters. The image can also be considered as a specific and heterogeneous language composed of different signs.

One of those signs are colors. Perception and interpretation of colors are cultural. When an object is considered red, it means that the individual has a vocabulary that includes the term "red". The individual has learned to recognize this color as "red" through a learning process both linguistic and visual. This color is associated with a specific meaning.

Over time, the origin of this association is forgotten, but the meaning remains, and it is spread in society through advertising, education, media. Culture intervenes several times during this process of perception and interpretation.

The colors can then have different meanings depending on the crop. For example, white is the color of birth and most often symbolizes happy events for the Occidentals. However, it symbolizes mourning in China (Usunier, 1992). In the United States or Europe, a mint candy will probably be wrapped in blue or green, while in Africa it will be packed in red. Red is a symbol of luck in China, but suggests death in Turkey (Copeland and Griggs, 1985, adapted and translated by Usunier, 1992). There are therefore different symbolic interpretations of colors.

In addition, it is often mentioned that images travel better across cultures than words. To this statement, De Mooij (2005) responds that images, like linguistic content, must be adapted to the visual language of other cultures. Indeed, a study of 586 pan-European television commercials reveals that the visual predominates over textual content (Toporkoff, Mun and Croutsche, 2004). For Debec and Romeo (1992), visual advertising promotes short and long-term memorization. They also make it possible to develop an emotional bond with the brand and to be more persuasive.

The recognition of an advertisement is highly determined by the visual component. If there are advantages to visual advertising, it is necessary to carefully evaluate the images used. Knowing that the perception and construction of images vary from one culture to another, it is possible to think that predominantly visual international advertising may not work well. An image must be chosen wisely because it is the culture that makes it possible to recognize and decode the signs and symbols that compose it.

1.3.5 Stereotypes and culture

The term "stereotype" was used for the first time to designate a new reproduction process from a fixed model and the stereotype was the duplicate printed object. The first attempt to define this term would have taken place at the beginning of the 20th century with the publication of a book entitled *Public Opinion* by Lippmann (1922). Subsequently, the concept was taken up by several sectors in the research area and the stereotype was no longer to be defined only in terms of images, but also in terms of received ideas.

In sociological or psychosocial approaches, the stereotype is defined as the set of "clichés, preconceived and fixed images, summary of the things and beings that the individual makes himself under the influence of his social environment (family, environment, education, profession, associates, mass media, etc.) and which determine to a greater or lesser degree his ways of thinking, feeling and acting "(Morfaux, 1980).

According to this definition, cultural stereotype takes the form of a generalized opinion and most often concerns a type of individual, a social group, a culture. Stereotypes can reduce the difference and that makes them dangerous. They are both a simplistic representation of each other, but they are also a defense against the difference of others. Stereotypes contribute greatly to the formation of character representations.

Advertising must be careful when choosing and describing characters as it is often accused of perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing traditional social models. Advertisers often remain in sex stereotypes, believing that they are present in all cultures. However, it has been shown that women and men do not necessarily have the same role in different countries (Hofstede, 1994).

1.3.6 Hofstede's cultural dimensions and advertising

As discussed in the first part of this literature review, time is a cultural criteria that plays a role in advertising. Mueller (2006) gave an example to show the importance of time orientation according to culture: A telephone company did not consider the relationship to the Latin American public's time perception when creating a television advertisement. In the advertisement, the woman asks her husband to "go down and call Mary to tell her that we will be a little late".

This advertisement contains two major cultural mistakes. First, no Latino-American will feel obliged to call to warn of his delay because they are expected to have one. Second, Latin-American women rarely give orders to their husbands because it is not in their culture. In addition, several cross-cultural researches have suggested differences and similarities in advertising according to culture.

For example, in collectivist cultures, the purpose of advertising is usually to build a relationship of trust between business and consumers, unlike individualistic cultures where persuasion is the main role of advertising (De Mooij, 2011).

Milner & Collins (2000) advance in relation to feminine cultures that television advertising has more representations of male-female relationships than in male cultures. Research made by Gardial (2005) has also shown that: “National culture significantly influences consumer innovation, consumer decision-making, intentions, persuasion, product attribute importance, and even the relationship between interviewer ethnicity and survey response quality”.

1.4 Conclusion on the literature review and hypothesis of research

The literature review provided a better understanding of the theories related to the purpose of this research. First, the concept of advertising was presented by focusing on the notion of brand and brand equity. Kapferer (2007) defines the identity of a brand according to six facets: its physical characteristics, personality, cultural universe, the reflection of the type of consumer to whom it is addressed and its capacity to act as an internal mirror. In a context of globalization, it is necessary to clarify what characterizes an international brand (Usunier, 1992) and how it can be managed according to different strategies (Kapferer, 2007). Different types of products have also been defined based on consumers' buying behavior and habits (Vaughn’s Matrix).

In a second part, culture was defined by specifying how cultural differences are manifested through symbols, heroes, rituals and values (Hofstede, 1994). The typology of the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1994) has also permitted to observe that cultural norms and values are not the same in different countries.

Finally, the relationship between advertising and culture was highlighted. It has been demonstrated how culture has close links with different components of advertising discourse: language, stereotypes, identity and images. Language is a strong constraint when developing an international advertisement. Learning a language is learning a culture (Karsaklian, 2007). Choosing the characters of an advertising message is also a very important step because they can easily represent cultural stereotypes or affect their identification function. As for images, they are a set of signs that can affect the interpretation of an advertising message.

To conclude, this literature review permitted to better understand the main concept of the research and elaborate the following hypothesis linked to it.

Linguistics and visual component

To minimize the amount of television spots to be produced for each country, in addition to reducing the risk of misunderstanding caused by poor translation, international campaigns will mainly focus on non-verbal advertising. An advertisement is said to be nonverbal when it does not involve dialogue, or speech in music and narration.

On the other hand, visual communication is important in international campaigns. By using universally known images and symbols, visual communication can bypass several cultural problems that are common in language-based communication. Indeed, language is not only a communication tool, it is also the expression of a culture. When it is used, language is an essential factor of adaptation. To counter these linguistic problems, advertisers will increase the visual part of the message to the detriment of textual content (Usunier, 1992). The images would travel across cultures more easily than words and would require less adaptation. Based on the results of studies by Toporkoff, Mun and Croutsche (2004) who have shown that pan-European advertising favors a strong visual, we can assume that a majority of international brand advertising will focus on the visual component rather only on the text.

First hypothesis can be summarized as follow:

H1*: *In an adapted international advertising campaign, the advertising message will be characterized by the predominant use of non-verbal elements and visual message.

Characters

In advertising, the character represents the target targeted by the advertiser. Its presence makes it possible to sell the product associated with it, but it also serves as an identification for the consumer. The choice of the character is therefore very important and always judiciously chosen. The number of characters can be determined by the cultural dimension established by Hofstede and the opposition between individualism and collectivism. Several studies have shown that the degree of individuality of a society is reflected in advertisements (Alden, Hoyer and Lee, 1993) This dimension could be an important explanatory factor when adapting international brand advertising to local cultures. Therefore, we can assume that the number of characters staged will depend on the index of individuality of the country where the advertisement is broadcast.

Commercials broadcast in countries with a strong index of individuality would be more numerous to display a single character. On the other hand, in countries with a low index of individuality, a larger proportion of advertisements would feature three or more characters. Thus, second hypothesis can be summarized as follows:

H2*: *In an adapted international advertising campaign, number and type of character varies depending on the degree of individualism/collectivism.

Influence of external factors

In addition to culture, other factors could influence the adaptation of advertising discourse of international brands: the type of products and the sector of activity. The consumption of a product underlies a specific lifestyle associated with a rich cultural context (Usunier, 1992). Purchasing behaviors are partly determined by culture, but they also vary by product types (Kotler, 2000).

While product types are associated with different purchasing behaviors, it is possible to think that the type of products will also influence the adaptation of advertising discourse. In addition, consumers' needs, choices and preferences are partly determined by culture (Lee and Carter, 2005) but products are classified according to different sectors of activity and some would be less influenced by culture than others.

Based on these assumptions, last hypothesis can be summarized as follow:

H3: In an international advertising campaign, the degree of adaptation can be influenced by external factors.

Hypothesis	Topic
H1	In an adapted international advertising campaign, the advertising message will be characterized by the predominant use of non-verbal elements and visual message.
H2	In an adapted international advertising campaign, the number and type of character varies depending on the degree of individualism/collectivism.
H3	In an international advertising campaign, the degree of adaptation can be influenced by external factors

2. Methodology

This chapter will discuss the approach and methodological choices made in order to answer the question raised. First part will describe the analytical method used to respond to the three hypotheses made following the literature review. In the second part, selection and constitution of the corpus will be explained. Third part will finally present the analysis grid and the process data coding.

2.1 Method of analysis

To verify the adaptation of international brand advertisements, this research will be based on an analysis grid. This is not a statistical analysis but rather a first observation to validate the analysis grid in order to apply it later to a more representative sample.

This analytical grid is based on a content analysis that can be defined as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1971). Content analysis aims to systematically describe data on a multitude of research objects. It has a strong interest for researchers who are aiming at analyzing the communication content of various documents such as newspapers or magazines. It is often used in communication-marketing to describe the variables used in advertising messages. Content analysis is used to describe the content of a document for the purpose of interpreting it and it is based on a classification and interpretation of pre-defined categories in a coding plan.

As explained in Berelson's definition, content analysis is objective, systematic and quantitative. Content analysis must first be objective in a way that all analyses must apply the same rules to avoid biases related to the researcher's subjectivity. Another researcher must achieve the same results by following the same procedure and with the same sample. Content analysis is also systematic as all content must be codified according to the chosen categories and only the elements related to the problem studied will be retained. Systemic analysis ensures that the data are relevant to research objectives and hypotheses.

Finally, the quantitative aspect is also an important feature of content analysis as it is not just about making a comment on a text or image but instead to measure the absence or presence of a variable. Significant items are counted in order to verify the initial assumptions.

Content analysis aims to analyze scientifically the content of a message, regardless of the advertiser or receiver.

2.2 Selection and constitution of the corpus

The selection and constitution of the corpus was organized in four steps: the selection of the international brands to analyze, the selection of media support and period analyzed, and the selection of advertisements.

2.2.1 Selection of international brands

This research will be based on a list of companies within the top 100 international brands published in the American weekly advertising magazine *The Advertising Age* in December 2018. This list shows the global brands that invested the most in advertising in the entire world. These international brands have been selected and analyzed from monitoring in 90 countries and provided by firms such as Nielsen.

In order to have a selection that fits the purpose of this research and answer the question raised, a first selection has been made to keep only the brands that are frequently creating global advertising campaigns and that can afford strong advertising budget.

2.2.2 Selection of media and period analyzed

Television advertising will be used for this research. According to a study by *WARC,* the international authority on advertising and media effectiveness (2017), television is the world's largest advertising expenditure, representing 139B$. Despite the rapid growth of the Internet in the advertising landscape, television still plays an important role in the media strategy of an advertising campaign as it makes it easy to reach thousands of viewers around the world.

Moreover, since the production of television commercials requires large financial resources, television is rather reserved for large companies with big advertising budget. This type of media also aimed at an audience sharing different cultures and values. For these reasons, the corpus will be made up of advertising messages televised.

The analysis corpus will be restricted to advertisements broadcast between 2000 and 2019 for two main reasons. First, the collection needs to be recent in order to be the most up to date with current advertising strategies. Second, it is necessary to choose a fairly recent period in order to have access to the advertisements on the Internet and find the necessary research material.

2.2.3. Selection of advertisements

As explained above, the collection of advertisements will be done through the Internet. The websites of each company will be consulted, and search engines will also be used combined with media platforms such as YouTube. Since the objective is to determine how the advertising discourse adapts to a local culture in an international campaign, it will be important to find a minimum of two advertisements from two different countries that are part of the same advertising campaign.

To determine if the commercials are part of the same campaign, they will have to promote the same product under the same brand name and display the same signature. Products need to have the exact same characteristics, same positioning and satisfy the same need. The signature is easily recognizable by its short and concise form that usually appears at the end of the commercial. The Publicitor defines the signature as "a sentence, often presented in the form of a slogan, associated with communication of a brand or company and signifying its values or project" (Lendrevie and Baynast, 2008). It is created in accordance with the strategic decisions taken during the launch of a media advertising campaign.

Based on those elements, a corpus of 102 ads (combined with 102 ads for benchmark) from 10 different countries and for a total of around 17 international companies has been established. No matter how long the advertisement lasts, whether it is thirty seconds or a minute, it still counts as an advertisement. All the advertisement links have been saved and downloaded when possible to make sure they would still be available for consultation in the long term.

2.3 Analysis grid

To analyze how the advertising message adapts to local cultures, an analysis grid will be used and composed of variables related to the execution and adaptation of the advertising message.

Visual signs, voices, presence of text or characters, main message and many other elements will be analyzed in detail through the analysis grid. In addition, influencing factors such as product types and industry will be considered in the analysis to evaluate their potential impact on the degree of adaptation. All these variables will be codified to verify the initial assumptions and hypotheses made in the first part.

2.3.1 Codification process

Data coding will be done in three steps: identification of advertising, codification of advertising message and codification of television messages according to influencing factors such as the type of product and industry of the international brand. The television messages from each country will first be analyzed independently of each other. This will allow to determine the descriptive characteristics of the advertising discourse. Then, a comparative analysis will be conducted to highlight eventual patterns and variations. Advertising in the countries where companies' headquarters are located has been defined as the benchmark advertising, most of them located in North America (highest advertising spending in the world, WARC, 2017).

2.3.2 Advertising and country identification

First, in order to facilitate analysis, each advertisement will be identified according to the following information:

- Advertising number
- Name of the international brand
- Country of distribution
- Year of distribution

Separately, an analysis of each country selected for the research will be made, drawing conclusion in relation to Hofstede's cultural dimensions and individualism/collectivism.

2.3.3 Codification of the advertising message

In this research, we try to determine how international campaign advertising message adapts to local cultures. Based on the literature review, we have broken down the advertising discourse into several variables. These variables can be grouped into three categories: the linguistic component, the visual component and characters.

Language Component

According to Prime and Usunier (2003), it is important to consider the language constraint when an advertising campaign is developed. Language is not just a tool for communication but also the expression of a culture. For this reason, the language remains a strong constraint when adapting international campaigns. It is even more true knowing that language plays an important role in advertising by nuancing and clarifying words even if it's not always apparent.

In an advertising speech, the language is displayed through the narration, the dialogues between the characters, the text on the screen, the words of a song or the signature. Regarding the language legislation in force in several Member States and countries of the world, the translation or adaptation of these variables will not be evaluated since it is sometimes unavoidable and mandatory. Instead, the focus will be done on the presence or absence of these variables in the advertising discourse, as well as the potential changes in these variables depending on the product type and industry sector. This will allow to assess how culture can influence the linguistic elements of the advertising discourse as well as other factors.

Dialogue

The influence of culture will first be analyzed through dialogues between characters, thus using language. A dialogue can involve two or more characters appearing in the commercial message. This variable will be codified according to its use in advertising discourse:

- Using dialogs
- No dialogue
- No character

Narrative

Narrative refers to the voice of a narrator or more precisely of a person who does not appear on the screen. The absence of narrative facilitates the internationalization of the message advertising. This is the case of several multinational campaign, choosing narrative to avoid adding voice over on characters in their commercials. Narrative variable will be analyzed according to its use:

- Use of narrative
- No narration

On-screen text

On-screen text includes all text information appearing on the screen, excepted the signature. Due to the use of language, the text on the screen is subject to change depending on local cultures, legislation and can therefore be an additional constraint to adaptation when it is used. The text on the screen will be coded according to the following categories:

- Using on-screen text
- No text on the screen

Second step regarding on-screen text is to verify if a change has been made by coding this variable as follows:

- Adding text to the screen
- No text added to the screen

Music

Music plays a central role in the development of an advertisement and selecting the right music is even more important. This use is based on the belief that music adds energy to the message, stimulates the listener and creates an advantage over the competitor. Emotions are also more easily transmitted through music than words. Music is also appreciated for the favorable association it creates with the product or brand (Gorn, 1982).

According to Usunier, music "is at the same time language, institution, production and finally a carrier of symbols and sacred". It is therefore self-evident that we focus on this component of the advertising discourse by focusing on its linguistic and linguistic nature. Consequently, Marketers need to understand their message, select music that conveys the same or similar message by considering the presence or absence of words in the music. Words are important because they improve in some cases the understanding of the message by communicating attributes of the product. By using words, it becomes necessary to translate or adapt.

This is an additional constraint in the adaptation of international advertising campaigns. On the other hand, the use of music without words allows to avoid the cultural barriers of language but may not ease the understanding.

The categories used to code this variable are as follows:

- Using music with lyrics
- Use of music without words
- No music

Visual component

Visual communication does not face language barriers unlike textual content, but it is not immune to cultural change. To determine how culture affects the visual component of advertising discourse, four variables will be analyzed: the logo color or signature color, the decor, the signs and the link between text and image.

Logo Color

According to Prime and Usunier (2003), colors must be judiciously chosen according to local culture. As explained in the first part, colors are open to multiple interpretations and what is interpreted in a positive way in a country may lead to a negative reaction in another one. Analysis will focus on the color of the logo or signature to determine if a change has been applied:

- Color change
- No color change

Scenery

The scenery refers both to the overall visual context in which the story takes place and to the image in the background. Its importance may vary from one advertisement to another, but it always conveys meaning. Changing of scenery will be analyzed as follows:

- Change of scenery
- No change of scenery

Signs and symbols

For Guidère (2000), any change in the image can lead to a change in its meaning and interpretation. In this context, we will use signs, as defined by Joly (2005), as a variable to determine whether images have been modified:

- Change of signs
- No change in signs

Relationship between text and image

Finally, relationship between text and image will be analyzed in order to understand the relationship between these two variables. "Strong visual" advertising is defined as an advertisement where visual elements are dominant, with little or no dialogue. On the other hand, if dialogue is very important, the advertising will be defined as "strong verbal" with a strong text. When verbal and visual are distributed fairly in advertising, the advertising will be defined as "50%-50%".

- Strong visual
- Strong text
- 50 %-50 %

Characters

Treatment of characters and change in their composition in television commercials will be evaluated. Indeed, characters are very important in advertising discourse because they help the consumer to better identify himself with the message (Guidère, 2000). Analysis of the characters will be done by looking at their number, use and changes made to them.

Use of Characters

First, the use of characters will be determined by observing their presence or not in the advertisement. The characters must be human beings (animals and animated characters will not be taken into account). Variable will be codified as follows:

- Use of character(s)
- No character

Number of characters

The number of characters illustrated in each television ad will be analyzed to measure Hofstede's (1994) individualism/collectivism dimension. Indeed, several studies have used the number of characters to measure this cultural dimension of Hofstede. This is the case with the work of Frith and Sengupta (1991) and the multicultural study of humor in advertising by Alden, Hoyer and Lee (1993). The results of their study were conclusive and corresponded to the country classification established by Hofstede (1994).

Other studies have also measured Hofstede's (1991) individualism/collectivism dimension based on the use of personal pronouns. The singular form of the pronouns "I", "you", "he", "she" referred to a country with a high index of individuality. In contrast, the plural form of the pronouns "we" and "you" is used, "they", "they" was associated with countries with a low degree of individuality. Based on the variable used by Alden, Hoyer and Lee (1993), the study will focus on the number of characters to measure the dimension individualism / collectivism in advertising speeches.

If the same person is represented several times, only one individual will be recorded. This variable will be codified according to the following categories:

- 1 character (illustrating individualistic values)
- 2-3 characters
- More than 3 characters (illustrating collective values)
- No character

In addition to this coding, ads will be grouped according to the individuality index of their country of distribution based on the classification established by Hofstede. According to this classification, detailed in the literature review, a country with a numerical index of less than 49 (on a scale of 1 to 100) is collectivist, while an index above 51 is specific to individualist countries. The 50 index would show the central point of the individualism / collectivism dimension. Television messages will be coded in this way:

- Countries with a low individuality index (less than 49)
- Countries with a high individuality index (index higher than 51)

Changing characters

Finally, attention will be paid to characters to analyze whether they have been substituted by other actors or simply deleted. Characters can easily be associated with several symbolic representations, whether through age, gender or clothing (Usunier, 1992). In many cases, it is easier to remove them from advertising discourse than to replace them. For this analysis, the dimension of masculinity/femininity (Hofstede) can be used partially. In a country where femininity is dominant, characters such as women will be considered in the advertising whereas in masculine culture, men’s presence will be dominant.

Moreover, the presence of characters does not guarantee the presence of dialogue. The modification made to the characters is therefore not necessarily related to linguistic constraints of the broadcasting countries. We consider any change to be a modification if gender, ethnic group or actor change to one or more characters as well as any deletion of one or more characters. This amendment will be codified as follows:

- Changing characters
- No character changes
- No character

2.3.4 Codification of influencing factors

In addition to culture, other factors can influence the adaptation of advertising discourse. Among these can be considered the type of product and the industry. Several authors have stated that the nature of the product was the most important factor in determining the degree of adaptation of an international advertising campaign (ex: Harvey, 1993). Therefore, television ads will be analyzed by coding them according to the type of product and sector of activity of the international brand in order to determine the influence of these factors on advertising messages.

Type of Products

The development of an advertising message is largely governed by the type of product. Depending on the nature of the product, the purchase behavior will not be the same. For this study, product typology of Kotler (2000) will be used. The aim is to check whether the nature of the product also influences advertising messages during an international adaptation strategy. Following products typology was selected:

- Convenience products
- Shopping products
- Specialty products
- Unsought products

Industries

For this study, the list of industry established by Advertising Age (2018) in the ranking of the 100 global brands will be used:

- Automotive
- Personal Care
- Electronic devices
- Food/Beverage

All advertisements will be coded according to these industries but to simplify the study, focus will only be made on four of them: Automotive, Personal Care, Food & Soft Drinks and Electronic devices. The study from Zandpour & al. (1994) has shown that the product category can influence the strategy of creation. It can also be linked to Vaughn's matrix analyzed in the literature review. According to De Mooij (2005), the product category would also influence the strategy for adapting an international brand. Some industries, such as the electronics sector, would be less influenced by a country's culture, because the needs of the country would be more homogeneous.

2.4 Conclusion on the methodology

To conduct this research, content analysis will include over 102 television commercials. In this chapter, method of analysis was justified followed by the choice and constitution of the corpus. Process of selection for international brands was explained as well as the type of media used, the period analyzed and the method of data collection. In addition, the analysis grid was presented and divided into three sections: advertising identification, codification of the advertising discourse and codification of potential influencing factors.

First, advertisements will be identified with a number, the name of the international brand, the country and the year of distribution. Second, several variables of the advertising discourse will be codified and grouped into three categories: the linguistic component, the visual component and the characters. Finally, the advertisement messages will be codified according to certain influencing factors such as the type of product and the industry of the international brand.

Now that the analysis grid has been presented and detailed, advertisement messages will be analyzed in order to interpret the results and validate the hypotheses mentioned in the first part.

3. Results and interpretation

This final section will present the results obtained following the analysis of international advertising campaigns. A total of 102 television ads from international campaigns has been codified, benchmarked with another one hundred. First part will analyze the advertising message behind each advertisement, second part will focus on external factors of influence not connected to culture and third part will provide recommendations for future research.

3.1 Execution of the advertising message

Since the number of ads found is not the same for each brand, all results have been accounted for a percentage. Thus, for each international brand, the results obtained by variable were calculated as a proportion of the total number of ads collected for the same brand. Thereafter, an average of the results has been calculated.

3.1.1 Linguistics and visual components

This section aims at answering the first hypothesis **H1: In an adapted international advertising campaign, the advertising message will be characterized by the predominant use of non-verbal elements and visual message.**

To test this first research hypothesis, results obtained for four variables will be examined for the linguistic elements: narration, on-screen text, dialogue and music. To assess the importance given to the visual in international brand television commercials, analysis will be focus on the dynamic between text and image.

a. Linguistic elements

Analysis of the advertisements reveals that narrative is often used in international campaigns with an average of 71%. In addition, more than half of the ads analyzed (57%) display text on-screen in such campaigns and over a third (43%) will avoid using text on the screen.

In total, 68% of the ads analyzed do not use dialogue in their advertising discourse. The results indicate that 59% of ads use characters, but without dialogue, and 9% of ads do not use dialogue because no characters are presented. As for the use of music, it is used in almost all the ads analyzed (97%). Table 1 shows that music without lyrics is more common in the advertising speeches of international campaigns.

Indeed, 56% of television commercials give priority to absence of lyrics in their music. On the other hand, 41% of ads will opt for music with lyrics but usually using songs famous worldwide.

Table 1: Summary of linguistic elements

Use of narrative	
Yes	71% (72)
No – No Narration	29% (30)
Total	100% (102)

Use of text on-screen	
Yes	57% (58)
No – No text	43% (44)
Total	100% (102)

Use of dialogue	
Yes	32% (33)
No – No dialogue	59% (60)
No – No character	9% (9)
Total	100% (102)

Use of music	
Yes – With lyrics	41% (42)
No – No lyrics	56% (57)
No music	3% (3)
Total	100% (102)

The hypothesis initially formulated implied that the advertising speeches of international campaigns favored non-verbal communication when adapting to local cultures by avoiding dialogue, narrative and lyrics in music. The results obtained partially confirm this hypothesis. A large majority of advertisements do indeed favor music without words (56%) and do not use dialogue (68%). However, contrary to our expectations, the use of narrative remains 71% of the time, as well as the use of on-screen text (57%).

b. Visual components

The ads were coded according to three types of relationships that may exist between the visual and text: strong visual, strong text or a balance between both (50%-50%).

On average, 91% of ads display a predominant visual, compared to 9% for an equal distribution between visual and verbal. Text is never the main driver in an advertisement. In general, the "strong visual" is superior to "strong text" and to the balance "50%-50%".

These results confirm the hypothesis on the predominance of the visual in international brand advertising message. In a strategy to adopt international campaigns, a greater proportion of advertising will focus on the visual component at the expense of textual content. In addition, only 9% of the advertisements will opt for 50-50% use compared to 91% for a dominant visual.

Table 2: Summary of dynamic between text and image

Use of text on-screen	
Strong visual	91% (93)
Strong text	0
50-50%	9% (9)
Total	100% (102)

3.1.2 Characters

This section aims at answering the first hypothesis **H2: In an adapted international advertising campaign, the number and type of character varies depending on the degree of individualism/collectivism of a country.**

Individualism/collectivism analysis

Since characters play an important role in a television commercial, it is interesting to check the influence of the individualism/collectivism dimension on the number of characters illustrated. Each advertising wad codified according to the number of characters that were staged. They were grouped according to the country's individuality index based on the classification established by Hofstede (1994) and detailed in the literature review in chapter two. As a follow-up to the data collection, an average was calculated for countries with low and high individuality indexes, focusing only on advertisements using characters.

Table 3: Summary of dynamics between individualism and collectivism

	Low individuality index	High Individuality index	Total
Advertising using characters	43% (40)	57% (53)	100% (93)

	Low individuality index	High Individuality index
1 character	8% (3)	40% (21)
2-3 characters	20% (8)	28% (15)
More than 3 characters	72% (29)	32% (17)
Total	100% (40)	100% (53)

Countries with a low individuality index favor 3 or more characters in 72% of advertising message. It can be observe that nearly a tenth of these television commercials (8%) feature only one individual. When the individuality index is high, the proportions of ads with three characters are less important than those with a single individual. Indeed, 32% of advertising speeches feature three or more characters compared to 40% of ads that depict only one individual.

The initial hypothesis was that the number of characters depicted in the advertising message would be related to the individuality index of the country where the advertisement is broadcast. For a collectivist country, advertisements with three or more characters should therefore be more numerous. On the opposite, advertisements displaying a single character would be more numerous for an individualistic country.

As can be seen, 72% of ads aired in countries with a low individuality index feature three or more characters compared to 32% for ads aired in countries with a high individuality index. In addition, 8% of ads from countries with low levels of individuality display a single character compared to 40% of ads from countries with high levels of individuality. These observations seem to explain the relationship between the individuality index and the number of characters staged but only for countries with low levels of individuality. For the others, results are less consistent.

3.2 External factors

Four different industries (implying different types of product) have been selected for this study in order to determine if in addition to cultural aspects, other factors could have an influence on the degree of adaptation for a marketing campaign. Thus, third hypothesis was the following:

H3: In an international advertising campaign, the degree of adaptation can be influenced by external factors.

This part is more focused on an overall appreciation of the analysis grid and on qualitative aspect to determine possible influence of external factors. Table below shows repartition on the advertising analyzed.

Table 4: Summary of types and categories of product

	Automotive	Personal Care	Electronics	Food & Beverage
Change of music	11%	37%	22%	29%
Change of signs	22%	71%	33%	79%
Change of scenery	11%	25%	15%	57%
Change of character	11%	25%	56%	71%

3.3 Synthesis on the hypothesis

Linguistic elements

In terms of the execution of advertising messages, first analysis was made on the use of the linguistic component in advertising. The first hypothesis was that international brand advertisements would be characterized by the use of non-verbal with absence of dialogue, narrative and speech in the music.

The results indicate that 68% of advertisements will avoid dialogue in their advertising speeches. In an international campaign, the use of dialogue underlies the dubbing of advertising into several different versions in order to respect the language of each culture. It therefore seems much more economical to simply eliminate dialogues of the advertising speech.

In addition to reducing production costs, the international brands reduce interpretation problems related to poor translations.

Surprisingly, the text on the screen, which excludes the signature, is used in more than half of them (57% of international advertising). This result can be explained partially by numerous studies showing that information content varies by country (Stern and Resnik, 1991). Advertisements in industrialized countries would be more informative than advertisements from developing countries (Abernethy and Franke, 1996). As information also reduces uncertainty, country advertising with a strong aversion to uncertainty will be more informative (Hofstede, 1994). In addition, according to Hall (1984) and Prime et Usunier (2003), the level of context is not the same according to the country, which influences the communication style. The lower the importance of context for a country is, the more explicit and direct the communication will be. Since the content of information and style of communication may vary from country to country, it becomes important for international brands to find a low-cost way to adapt the level of message information. On-screen text would be a solution to this problem.

Regarding narrative, it is used in 71% of television messages analyzed. This is a fairly large proportion given the linguistic nature of the narration. This result can be explained by the flexibility of changing such narration from a production point of view. Narratives can easily be adapted to local cultures (Usunier, 1992).

As noted in the literature review, music is of great importance in advertising, which is confirmed by the use of advertising in all television commercials. Music is first and foremost a signal to capture attention (Kapferer, 1985), but also a strategy for rapid brand recognition. While music is very present in advertising, it becomes important to focus on the language used for lyrics. Although international marketing usually uses music successfully, it also knows its limitations. It is easier to internationalize an advertising campaign if the music has no lyrics.

This avoids additional adaptation costs. The results effectively confirm that nearly 56% of international brand television advertisements favor music with no lyrics. These results are consistent with those of Toporkoff, Mun and Croutsche (2004) who noted that pan-European ads used the music without words.

This analysis shows that the advertising discourse of international brands seems partially characterized by the use of non-verbal. Indeed, dialogue and lyrics in music are often avoided in advertisements, but narrative and on-screen text play a more important role than initially anticipated in the advertising discourse.

Importance of Visual Elements

To counter language problems in an advertising adaptation strategy, it was assumed that more international brand advertisements would focus on the visual component. The results confirm this hypothesis. Indeed, almost all television messages (91%) are composed of a strong visual. These results are consistent with the study made by Toporkoff, Mun and Croutsche (2004) on a sample of pan-European advertisements. The predominance of the visual is not only a feature of pan-European advertising, it also applies to international advertising.

This is also in line with Usunier's (1992) proposal that international advertising will favor the visual over the textual component. Focus on images avoid certain cultural barriers specific to textual content by minimizing translation needs. In addition, images have a greater capacity for persuasion and make it possible to establish a more emotional relationship with the consumer. Images are richer in imagination than the text.

Moreover, the nature of the media analyzed reinforces the predominance of the image. Indeed, television is a powerful means of visual communication that is strongly inspired by the visual techniques used in filmmaking. However, it is necessary to pay attention because images are not immune to interpretation issues. Images can carry very strong symbols and can use metaphors representing powerful cultural artifacts (De Mooij, 2005). If an image is a language, then it is possible that an image may not mean anything to a consumer of a different culture.

Relevance of characters

Knowing the important role that characters play in a television commercial, the influence of the individualism/collectivism dimension on the number of characters was studied using the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1994) were used.

Based on Hofstede's classification of cultural indexes, it was assumed that the number of characters depicted in the advertising discourse depended on a country's individuality index.

It was assumed that the higher a country's individuality index was, the higher the proportion of ads displaying a single character would be. On the other hand, a low individuality index should correspond to a greater number of ads with four or more characters. The results obtained show that a large proportion of ads (72%) feature three or more characters in countries with a low individuality index, compared to 32% for individualist countries.

However, when the degree of individuality is high, only 40% of ads will display a single character compared to none for countries with a low degree of individuality.

The results generated by the study of television messages do not fully corroborate with the hypothesis. Indeed, the number of illustrated characters does not seem to be related to the individualism dimension / collectivism of Hofstede (1994) for country with high individuality index, as they are using in majority multiple characters (60%). Other factors could be the reason of these differences.

Influence of external factors

Type of product and industry

Several authors have considered the type of products in their intercultural studies by categorizing products according to the degree of involvement or origin of the product. In this research, advertising message was first analyzed by product types from an execution perspective.

Based on authors such as Mooij (2005) it was assumed that the industry also had an influence on advertising discourse during an adaptation strategy. The data showed that the electronics industry tended to operate few adaptations of their advertising and use text more on-screen.

These results are consistent with those obtained by Toporkoff, Mun and Croutsche (2004) on nature informative of pan-European advertising in the electronics sector, which therefore needs to communicate more information in its advertising speeches. Results also indicate that the automotive sector is the one that makes the fewest changes in the advertising discourse.

However as explained above, those results can only partially confirm the hypothesis as the corpus of advertising is quite small and not fully representative of all industries. Indeed, the number of international brands could vary according to the industry.

Although the results were calculated as a percentage in order to keep the proportion, it remains that some sectors may have been under-represented. The results may therefore have been biased by sample size.

In light of these results, third hypothesis can only be partially confirmed. The type of product seems to have an influence on advertising discourse as well as the type of industry, but this relationship is not clearly defined. The study should be repeated with a larger sample size that would fairly cover the different types of products to validate these results.

3.4 Key recommendations

Multiple elements need to be considered when a multinational company decides to adapt its advertising campaign and wants to successfully communicate to its local market.

First, companies should always push on the visual aspect of their advertising, reducing text as much as they can in order to avoid both translation issues and save production costs with less adaptation. Dialogue should be reduced or not even considered sometimes, using narratives instead as a great alternative to save costs and adapt efficiently the advertising message to each market. Depending on the industry, this step can be difficult to avoid but it appears that absence of dialogue is often possible for Electronics and Automotive sector, as advertising is usually focused on the emotional aspect rather than the rational one.

Another step to have in mind is the change of signs in the TV commercials. Sometimes a company might want to broadcast a global campaign, but changes need to be made as the product is not exactly the same in all countries. For example, brand name and products can be the same but for some reason packaging can be subject to change. In addition, the variant of a product can be different, not satisfying the exact same need or the company might want to decide to communicate on another benefit of the product, matching better with the target market. In that case, production cost needs to be considered in the total budget if the pack shot of the product is used within the scenery itself and not only at the end of the advertising.

Colors are also important. As explained in the literature review, they have different meanings depending on the countries and misinterpretation can happen. Before airing a commercial, the company should always assess first what are the specificities of the market to avoid any mistake.

Characters are also extremely important in a commercial as they are the mirror of the consumer. They need to fit the target enough so the consumer can identify himself within the advertisements.

Western European commercials don't differ so much in terms of characters used as face features are quite similar between countries, but this is not the case in all regions of the world. For example, when Apple develops a global advertising campaign, they usually reuse the same footage with the same characters to communicate both in the United States and in Europe. On the other hand, change of character operates when the company communicates to Asian countries for example. As phone is a personal item, the consumer needs to be able to connect with the characters from the advertising and that is why such companies usually operate character change to have a successful campaign. However, this is not the case for all industries. For example, luxury brands and especially perfume commercials never change their characters as the goal behind the it is not for the consumer to identify himself, but more to create an image behind it.

Music is another additional element to consider in advertising. Following this research, it appears that if music plays a big role in commercials, the company still needs to determine if it will use lyrics or not. Nowadays, the effects of lyrics are still important, but companies are no longer preventing themselves from using them. This applies for all industries, where companies are frequently using top chart music to give themselves a more modern image. It is frequently used in the automotive industry, where they combined innovation with modern music. On the other hand, luxury brands sometimes use old French song as a help to reinforce their image. The recommendation when it comes to music would still be to favor music without lyrics but eventually to use lyrics if the music is globally known and appreciated.

Finally, difference of notoriety will always impact the degree of adaptation of advertising. A brand which is strong enough in terms of brand equity with global signs and messages will face less potential push back from the consumers as they already recall those signs and are clear with company positioning. Depending on the company budget, adaptation can still be made to emphasize the connection with the consumer, but risks are not as important as for a company with less notoriety.

Conclusion

Interests and results of the research

The objective of this research was to understand how international brands communicate to a global audience. To achieve this objective, an analysis of advertising content was conducted to determine how advertising message adapts to different cultures and whether factors other than culture could influence the adaptation strategy.

In order to analyze international advertisements, a literature review was conducted to first introduce the concept of advertising and brand strategy, followed by culture and the connection between both notions. Second part presented the methodology of research. The content analysis was used to validate three initial hypotheses. The choice and constitution of the corpus were specified along with the analysis grid and the data coding process, and results were then presented combined with knowledge acquired in the literature review.

Main conclusions are that advertising message favors non-verbal communication, but only in the absence of dialogue or lyrics in the music. In order to overcome the cultural obstacles of language, international brands will favor music without lyrics and limited dialogue. However, contrary to the hypothesis made and despite their linguistic nature, narrative and on-screen text are frequently used in advertising. The flexibility that these components provide from a production perspective may explain this use. It has also been observed that visual communication predominates in international advertising. International brands rely more on the power of the visual than on textual content. These results corroborate those of Toporkoff, Mun and Croutsche (2004) on the importance of visuals in pan-European advertising.

Then, based on Hofstede's (1994) individualism/collectivism dimension, potential relationship between the number of characters and a country's individuality index was examined. The results obtained were not significant and did not allow to establish a connection between the number of characters and the individuality index of a country such as defined by Hofstede. Finally, other factors than culture were examined to assess their potential influence on the advertising message of international brands. Types of product and industries were defined as influential factors in the advertising message. As expected, advertisements in the electronics sector tend to use narrative and on-screen text, which allows more information to be communicated.

In addition, TV commercials for the automotive industry are the ones that make the fewest changes in the advertising message. However, the sample of advertising analyzed was rather small and number of industries low. Influence is thus confirmed, but because of the size of the sample, the nature of it can't be fully confirmed.

The analysis grid developed as part of this research therefore made it possible to observe how advertising message could adapt to local cultures and whether certain factors, other than culture, could influence advertising messages. In this sense, the analysis grid was conclusive, allowing a first observation to be made on the adaptation of an advertising speech. However, this grid should be applied to a more representative sample to validate the results obtained.

Limits of the Research

First limits regarding this study concern the size of the sample. As exhaustiveness is out of reach, it is impossible to gather all the advertisements that have been broadcast in all languages over the past twenty years. Given the limited resources, it is also very difficult to combine all versions of the same television commercial. The size of 102 ads is not sufficient to ensure a perfect representation of international ads by the type of product and industry. These disadvantages related to the size of the sample also affected some of the results. It is clear that a larger sample would provide a higher quality in research.

Second limit refers to the methodology and risks related to the accuracy of the analysis of content. The analysis categories were developed by a single researcher and the codification has not been validated by another person. Although the data coding process was rigorously followed, it remains that the coding of television messages is based on the interpretation of a single person. The fact that the results were not subjected to statistical calculations is also another methodological limitation. Indeed, the results would have been even more conclusive if a Chi-Square test had been performed to determine if the values obtained for each variable were significantly different.

Third limit concerns the use of the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1994). Hosftede's approach is not unanimously accepted by researchers. For example, Philippe d'Iribarne (1998) considers that "these major comparative surveys have led to characterize each culture by a few numbers, but the portraits remain well schematic".

On the other hand, since the study by Hofstede (1994) was conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, some authors consider the results to be outdated and not very representative of all the countries.

Recommended avenues for research

Through this research, we determined how international advertising message could be adapted to local cultures. However, there are plenty of other possibilities for additional research.

First, this study could be repeated with a larger sample that would ensure a better representation of the different types of products and industries, thus addressing the limit of this research. In addition, the influence of the individualism/collectivism dimension could be validated by analyzing a new variable in advertising discourse. It would indeed be possible to measure the use of the personal pronoun (singular and plural form) in speeches as Cutler, Erdem and Javalgi (1997) did. The addition of this variable would strengthen the results obtained regarding the influence of this dimension on advertising discourse in an adaptation strategy.

It would also be interesting to determine the place of celebrities in international advertising campaigns and the effects of such a strategy on brand’s image. Celebrities are a form of heroes and a manifestation of culture (Hofstede, 1992). However, some celebrities enjoy popularity and international recognition that could help brands overcome cultural barriers. In this sense, what place does local and international celebrities occupy in an international adaptation strategy?

A comparative research between the adaptation of television messages and the printed advertisements would also increase knowledge on the topic. This tracking could assess the influence of media support in the adaptation strategy and determine if an international brand uses the same adaptation strategy for a television message and for a print ad. Moreover, while social media are increasingly becoming an integral part of the development of advertising campaigns, it could be interesting to study how brands take into account local cultures in this type of communication.

Finally, this study helped drawing first conclusions on how to better plan the development of an international advertising campaign. Indeed, in an increasing global competition and with the emergence of transnational markets, companies must be able to transform each international advertising campaign into a successful cultural meeting.

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Appendix 1: Evaluation grid

Advertising identification		
Advertising number:		
Name of the advertising:		
International brand:		
Country:		
Tone of the advertising:		
Codification of the advertising message		
Language component		
1. Use of Dialogue		
YES	NO – No dialogue	NO – No Character
2. Use of Narrative		
YES	NO	
3. Use of Text on screen (signature excluded)		
YES	NO	
4. Text Changed on screen (signature excluded)		
YES	NO	
5. Use of Music		
YES – with lyrics	YES – without lyrics	NO MUSIC
6. Change of Music		
YES	NO	NO MUSIC
Visual component		
7. Change of color in the signature		
YES	NO	
8. Change of scenery		
YES	NO	
9. Change of signs		
YES	NO	
10. Relation between text and image		
Strong Visual	Strong text	50-50

Characters			
11. Number of characters			
1 character	2-3 characters	> 3 characters	No character
12. Changing of Character			
YES	NO	NO CHARACTER	
Type of product			
Convenience product	Shopping product	Speciality product	Unsought product
Industry			
Automotive			
Personal Care			
Food and Soft Drinks			
Electronic Devices			

Appendix 2: List of companies used for the study

1. Coca-Cola Co.
2. Danone Group
3. Nestlé Group
4. L’Oréal
5. Procter&Gamble
6. Renault
7. Peugeot-Citroen
8. Apple
9. Samsung
10. Kellogs
11. Guerlain
12. Dior
13. Ferrerro
14. McDonald’s
15. Canon
16. Nintendo
17. Hyundai Motor Co.