THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE TRANSLATION OF ADVERTISEMENTS:
A COMPARATIVE INVESTIGATION OF SELECTED TEXTS
WITH GERMAN AS SOURCE LANGUAGE AND
SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH AS TARGET LANGUAGE

Olena Matviyenko

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DECLARATION

I, Olena Matviyenko, confirm that this work submitted for assessment is my own and is expressed in my own words. Any uses made within it of the works of other authors in any form (e.g. ideas, equations, figures, text, tables, programmes) are properly acknowledged at the point of their use. A full list of the references employed has been included.

Signed: ……………………………

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .................................................. 2
Declaration ......................................................... 3
Table of Contents ................................................ 4
Key Words .......................................................... 7
Summary ............................................................ 8

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION ..................................... 9
1.1 Rationale .......................................................... 9
1.2 Research question ............................................. 9
1.3 Purpose of the study ......................................... 10
1.4 Methodology and data collection ......................... 10
1.5 Chapter organisation ......................................... 11

CHAPTER 2 – THE LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING .......... 13
2.1 The role of advertising in society ......................... 13
2.2 Discourse of advertising texts (language, image, culture) 14
2.3 Peculiarities of text structure and organisation ........ 16
   2.3.1 Structural level .......................................... 17
   2.3.2 Lexical level ............................................ 18
   2.3.3 Stylistic level .......................................... 19
   2.3.4 Syntactic level ........................................ 20
      2.3.4.1 Sentence type .................................... 20
      2.3.4.2 Sentence structure ................................ 21
   2.3.5 Grammar level .......................................... 22
2.4 Language of advertising in particular languages .......... 23
   2.4.1 Advertising in German ................................ 23
   2.4.2 Advertising in South African languages ............. 24
2.5 Advertising and legislation .................................. 24
   2.5.1 European and German legislation on advertising . 25
   2.5.2 South African law on advertising ................. 26
KEY WORDS

Advertising
Translation
Cultural dimensions
Culture-Specific Item
Localisation
Globalisation
Communicative Translation
Summary

The globalisation of economies and trade growth have made it necessary for international companies to communicate with consumers of different languages and cultures, since a major objective is to sell a standardised product to consumers with linguistic and cultural backgrounds which are different from those to which the manufacturers are accustomed. Once brought to a foreign country, the sales of a product must be promoted by way of advertising.

To begin with, the method of advertising depends on the kind of product to be marketed. In addition, persuasive texts, which are characteristic of the language of advertising, not only employ particular pragmatic strategies, but are based on the values and cultural traditions of the relevant society. In different cultures different signs, symbols, names and customs will be used in different situations. In the case of the translation or localisation of advertisements, a translator must be very sensitive to the loss and gain of cultural elements. These could include objects, historical references, customs and habits that are unique to the source culture and not present in the target culture. The main focus of the research is on the culture-specific elements in advertising texts and their depiction in translation.

This treatise investigates certain aspects of translation theory (such as theories of equivalence, Skopos theory and other similar theories) to form a basis for conducting this study and then adapts them to the process of translation. In addition, two main opposite techniques known as standardisation or localisation of the advertising message are discussed. The number of source texts (original) and target texts (localised) are examined closely to reveal any misrepresentations and to identify the method of translation applicable in each case.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

This topic was selected in view of the increasing importance of advertising in today’s world. Indeed, the intensification of international exchange is bringing about a growing need for communication and thus for translation. The incidence of advertising translations is already substantial, and on the increase. The media (i.e. the press, the radio, television, and the Internet) are becoming increasingly diversified in dealing with the needs of advertising. Multinational advertising agencies, cross-border television networks and the success achieved by multilingual publications have contributed to the expansion of this phenomenon. In fact, advertising translation is the means of communication par excellence of a company exporting its products. Yet, for an advertisement to become a success abroad, it must be adequately translated, in other words, adjusted to the target culture, as standardisation of advertising language across linguistic and cultural barriers is made difficult by the peculiarities of each language and each society.

1.2 Research question

How do we translate advertisements, with special emphasis on the translation of cultural elements?

It is often required that translating cultural texts should involve re-writing rather than simply translating a text. The basic idea or message has to be retained, but the cultural context and references very often have to be newly created. In order to convey signs (linguistic and non-linguistic) successfully, a translator must use a translation theory, consciously or otherwise, that meets the requirements of the discourse and its function.

However, defining translation as a mere tool or even as another type of international marketing is restrictive in a way, because an essential fact is then disregarded: communication becomes effective abroad only after the message has been translated. Without this prior translation, it is unlikely to have an impact on the foreign consumer.
1.3 Purpose of the study

The central research problem could be formulated in the form of a question, namely “What is the role played by cultural elements in the translation of advertisements and how does it affect methods of translation?” Prior to the discussion of the translation methods, the values and norms of the cultural dimensions should be looked at. From the analysis, the researcher hopes to:

- Identify the characteristics of the language of advertising, both in the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL) under investigation.
- Describe the role of cultural communication in advertising.
- Identify the potential translation difficulties of cultural elements in printed magazine advertisements in the SL.
- Present an introduction to methods and techniques used in their translation (standardisation and adaptation).
- By focusing on particular samples of advertisements in the target language, determine how the translators coped with potential translation difficulties (possibly suggesting the researcher’s own interpretation of the text).
- Identify any misrepresentations in the translated texts.
- Arrive at a common method or methods of translation for this genre.

1.4 Methodology and data collection

The research is of a qualitative nature. Subject-related information was obtained from relevant studies, such as academic books, published and unpublished theses, websites, and research articles.

Advertising reaches people through various forms of mass communication. These media include newspapers, magazines, television and radio. Texts of advertisements for analysis in the German language and English language were obtained from different printed magazines. There are various reasons why this study focuses on advertisements which appeared in magazines. Magazines have a number of advantages in comparison with other printed media, such as newspapers, as an advertising medium. Firstly, they are usually read in a leisurely manner and are often kept for weeks or months before being discarded. In many cases, several
members of a family read each copy of a magazine. Another advantage of magazines is that they offer better printing and colour reproduction than newspapers do. Thirdly, advertisements from magazines represent solid texts of considerable length, which may contain many challenging sentences for the consumer-oriented text translator. As it is practically impossible to examine all the fields of advertising, it was decided to concentrate on automobile advertisements, as the automotive industry plays a very important role in Germany, as well as in South Africa. Another group of advertisements which plays an important role in this research is beauty products from magazines published in South Africa and Germany.

It is important to investigate certain aspects of translation theory (such as theories of equivalence, Skopos theory and other similar theories) to form a basis for conducting this study and then adapt them to the process of translation. The source texts (original) and target texts (localised) are examined closely to reveal any misrepresentations and to identify the method of translation applicable in each case. As pointed out before, the main focus of the research is on the culture-specific elements in advertising texts and their depiction in translation. Cultural elements can be found in verbal as well as in non-verbal communication and include meanings of different colours and numbers, images and associative meanings, differences in terms of address in various cultural contexts, and so on. The chosen texts will be analysed in consideration of these differences, and the relationship between verbal and non-verbal elements will be examined. The role of cultural dimensions in the translation process will also be investigated.

1.5 Chapter organisation

This study is organised into seven chapters. The present chapter provides a motivation for the study, a description of the methodology and an overview of the structure of the treatise.

Chapter 2 deals with the role of advertising in society. The language of advertising in general and in certain specific languages is examined, and the role of legislation in international advertising campaigns is considered.

Chapter 3 discusses the relationship between culture and advertising. Attention is given to cultural values and dimensions, norms and traditions. These assumptions are based on two different models.
Chapter 4 focuses on culture-specific items in advertising in verbal and non-verbal communication. Different groups of culture-specific items are identified and examples provided. Potential translation vs. interpretation challenges are considered from the point of view of diverse cultures and languages.

Chapter 5 deals with definitions of translation and provides an introduction to translation methods and techniques. It also reflects on the pros and cons of standardisation and localisation in advertising.

Chapter 6 analyses certain examples of advertising texts from various printed magazines, identifies potential challenges and describes methods of translation in practice. Diverse types of adaption or localisation are identified.

Chapter 7 presents certain recommendations and specifies the limitations of the study while a conclusion is arrived at on the basis of the analysis.
CHAPTER 2
THE LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING

Advertising is part of daily life. We see, hear and talk about it every day. It appears on television, radio, in the newspapers and magazines and on the streets. The prevalence of advertising in modern societies is strong and growing continually, with television, radio, the Internet, newspapers and magazines being the most used platforms.

2.1 The role of advertising in society

The root of the word ‘advertisement’ goes back to the Latin verb ‘advertere’, which means ‘to turn towards.’ A very general definition of the term advertising is “the promotion of goods and services for sale through impersonal media” (Collins English Electronic Dictionary, 2008). Dunn and Barban (1974:5) suggest in turn that “advertising is a paid, nonpersonal message from an identifiable source delivered through a mass-mediated channel that is designed to persuade.” Even so, advertising is not just about the commercial promotion of branded products. Goddard (2002:8) states that its messages can also be used to “enhance the image of an individual, group or organisation.” Every day, we come across numerous advertisements that are supposed to catch our attention or to “make us more favourably disposed in general terms to the advertised product or service” (Goddard, 2002:9).

Advertising is used by commercial firms trying to sell products and services; and by politicians and political interest groups to sell ideas or persuade voters. Non-profit organisations try to raise funds and find volunteers; governments try to encourage or discourage particular activities, such as wearing seatbelts, participating in the census, or not drinking while driving a car.

As pointed out by Wells, Burnett and Moriarty (2003:13), advertising can be explained in terms of the roles that it plays in our society:

- Marketing
- Communication
- Economic
- Societal
Since marketing’s main concern is to satisfy consumer needs and desires through goods and services, it needs to communicate its offerings - product, price, and place - to the clients. This is done through marketing communication or promotion. Advertising is one of the communication techniques used. Its role is to convey convincing messages to actual and potential customers.

In its communication role, advertising is a form of mass communication that notifies the public about the product and creates an image that goes beyond straightforward facts.

The economic role of advertising lies in its persuasive function and in featuring positive attributes of the product or service, such as quality, location, regardless of the price charged. On the other hand, advertising can help customers to assess the value through price, thereby creating a more rational economy. Tipper (1919:19) highlights this role of advertising as follows: “Advertising, because of its mass appeal, can reach an individual at a sum which is from 1/100 to 1/300 of the amount which would be required to bring the information to the customer in any other way.”

The societal role of advertising can be described as informative. It tells us about new and improved products, as well as helping us to compare them. In addition, advertising mirrors fashion, designs trends and contributes to our aesthetic evaluation of commodities.

The review of advertising functions in daily life shows that advertising influences us, the consumers, in many different ways and its primary goal can be summarised as “to increase the probability that consumers exposed to an advertisement will behave or believe as the advertiser wishes” (www.encyclopedia.jrank.org).

2.2 Discourse of advertising texts (language, image, culture)

Different cultural assumptions and various ways of expressing them within and across cultural and geographical boundaries motivate representatives of different cultures to communicate with each other to achieve both personal and global objectives. Cook (1992:15) states that advertising can be seen as one of those global objectives, as well as being an index of cultural changes and differences between diverse cultures. Advertising was very rare in the former Soviet Union or East European countries, for example. It was not to be found on the walls of underground stations; there were no booklets and circulars delivered with the daily mail. As these societies have changed, new discourse types have appeared, among which advertising is well known. Advertising comprises an interaction of elements and a dynamic combination of
many components that can reveal a great deal about the psychological and cultural aspects of society. It contributes to the creation of global culture and reflects societal differences.

Many studies of advertising identify separate components, for example there are studies of the language of advertising, which do not say anything or very little about the people who created the advertisement, or about music or images; there are studies which deal with images without paying special attention to the language; there are studies which concentrate on the audience or receivers of advertisements. Describing advertising and advertisements as discourse is “more complete, for it means trying to describe all the elements and their effect on each other” (Cook, 1992:3). For the purpose of this treatise, it has been decided to follow the definition by Hatim and Mason (1997:216), of discourse in its wider sense as “modes of speaking and writing which involve social groups in adopting a particular attitude towards areas of sociocultural activity (e.g. racial discourse, bureaucratese, etc.).”

Different approaches exist for analysing discourses. Although some researchers state that the main focus of discourse analysis is on language (“discourse can be defined as a stretch of language consisting of several sentences which are perceived as being related in some way” (Nunan, 1993:5)), it embraces much more than language alone.

It (i.e. discourse analysis) also examines the context of communication: who is communicating with whom and why; in what way of society and situation; through what medium; how different types and acts of communication evolved, and their relationship to each other.

(Cook, 1992:1)

In other words, when sound and graphics are added to language to add or change the meaning of the text, then discourse analysis must also take these modes of communication into consideration, as it “looks at the way language communicates meaning and social and power relations” (Munday, 2001:89).

Because advertising can have different objectives and aims, there exist various types, which are likewise communicated through different channels: TV, newspapers, radio, email, Internet, magazines, etc. With the various channels of communication are associated different structures, composed with a view to capturing the attention of consumers. In radio advertisements, the text is not visible and there are no images – What is said and how the text is presented vocally, is vital, not its depiction on paper. In TV commercials, images are obviously more important. Printed advertisements, on the other hand, mostly combine written text and images. In this treatise, the discussion is restricted to an analysis of the features of printed advertisements. However, it must be mentioned that those characteristics apply to all ‘texts’ in this genre, i.e. persuasive texts.
As mentioned above, printed advertisements are characterised by the combination of text and image. Pictures are combinations of lines and shapes and colours on a piece of paper or a movie screen or a video monitor ... that are able to recreate the kinds of visual information that our eyes and brains make use of when we look at the real world. (Messaris, 1997:3)

The term “text”, on the other hand, “is used to mean linguistic forms” (Cook, 1992:3). Nevertheless, text and image in an advertisement are interdependent and very closely connected. In many advertisements sound and graphics play a more important role than language in communicating the message. It is therefore not wise to study language in isolation, “because it rebounds against both picture and music, gaining and giving new meanings and connections” (Cook, 1992:37).

Even though advertising is a relatively young form of discourse, in comparison with literature, for example, “it is old enough to have a history in the same way that literature has” (Goddard, 2002:52). As modern writers base their stories on traditional texts, advertising copywriters can base their copy on older versions. The effect of this approach can be the same as in any other discourse: we feel better if we get the connection.

2.3 Peculiarities of text structure and organisation

The advertising industry uses diverse methods and devices to get consumers’ attention and to try fixing products firmly in their memory. At present, for example, talking micro-chips are inserted in the copy of a weekly magazine or a sample of a new shampoo is found in the mailbox.

The question whether advertising appeals are universal or must be specifically adapted or tailored for individual countries is often debated by the marketing and advertising community. Some argue that world markets are so different that a common appeal “transcending national boundaries is never as effective as one based on local marketing conditions and opportunities and geared to local tastes, customs, and idiom” (Schleifer and Dunn, 1968:69). Others feel that the marketing successes of one geographic area can usually be applied elsewhere because human motivations and needs are so much alike throughout the world. The advantages and disadvantages of localisation and standardisation will be discussed in Chapter 4.

As this treatise investigates advertisements appearing in magazines and other printed media only, the focus will be on how copy, the text of an ad, is written. In other words, the
investigation will be concerned with the peculiarities of text and language structure, as well as the organisation of printed advertisements.

2.3.1 Structural level

In accordance with Wells and Burnett (2003:335), the following elements are the key components of a print advertisement (though not all elements are used in every single instance):

- **The headline** is a phrase or a sentence that serves as the opening to the advertisement. It is usually characterised by a larger type or a prominent position. Its main purpose is to catch the reader’s attention. The headline combines with the image to catch the reader’s attention.

- **The overline or underline** is a phrase or a sentence that links on to the content of the headline. It can serve as a transition to the body copy and also to strengthen the idea expressed in the headline.

- **The body copy** is the text of the advertisement. It is generally set in smaller type and is written in paragraphs or multiple lines. The core function of the body copy is to explain the idea, to state the argument and to present details regarding the functions of the product or service and its benefits.

- **A call-out** is a sentence that floats around the visual part of an advertisement. It usually has a line or an arrow, pointing to some specific element in the visual and explains it, i.e. describes the positive attributes of the product.

- **The caption** is a sentence or a short piece of copy that explains the contents of a photo or an illustration. Captions are not used in advertising very often as images are assumed to be self-explanatory.

- **A tagline** is a short phrase that wraps up the key idea. As a rule, it appears at the end of the body copy and refers back to the headline.

- **A slogan** is a distinctive catch phrase that serves as a motto for a campaign, brand or company. It is used across a variety of marketing communication messages over an extended period of time.

- **The call to action** is a line at the end of the advertisement that encourages viewers and readers to respond, as well as providing contact information such as an address, a phone number or a Web address.
2.3.2 Lexical level

The choice of vocabulary plays a key role in advertising. Goddard describes it as “carefully chosen to promote positive associations in the minds of the target audience” (2002:74). Advertising tends to use simple vocabulary and familiar language, as it conveys a sense of personal relationship between speaker and listener, a kind of face-to-face communication. On the other hand, technical vocabulary is essential for emphasising the scientific aspects of products, such as computers, medicines and cars.

A further crucial element of the analysis at lexical level could be the way audience or consumers are being addressed by the advertising industry. For instance, personal pronouns are very frequent in the language of advertising. ‘You’ works because it suggests a one-to-one relationship, direct address:

- So unterstützen Sie... den natürlichen Aufbau Ihres Hautschutzmantels. (Pond’s Cosmetics)
  
  Translation: So you support the natural regeneration of your skin.

‘We’ is a little bit problematic because it can be used in both inclusive and exclusive senses: “one use produces a sense of solidarity with the customer, the other projects the image of the company as personal” (Meyers, 1994:81):

- Business knows no boundaries. Neither do we. (The Economist)
- Wir verkaufen Kälte. (Samsung)
  
  Translation: We sell coldness. (Fridges from Samsung)

The next common technique is the use of so-called ‘weasel’ words. These are words which suggest a meaning without actually being specific. One type is the open comparative:

- Brown's Boots Are Better.

Here are some of the weasel words which frequently occur in advertisements (www.putlearningfirst.com):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>helps</th>
<th>like</th>
<th>virtually</th>
<th>tested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enriched</td>
<td>worth</td>
<td>fresh</td>
<td>guaranteed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.3 Stylistic level

Copywriters use a number of literary techniques to create catchy slogans and memorable taglines. Among them are:

- Alliteration
- Metaphor
- Synecdoche
- Metonymy
- Repetition

Meyers (1994:32) claims that the simplest and one of the most common techniques used to draw our attention to the slogan of the advertisement is repetition of a sound. When the repeated sound is a consonant, the effect caused is called alliteration:

- Don't dream it. Drive it. (Jaguar)

The term ‘metaphor’ comes from the Greek ‘to carry over’ and is one type of figurative language. “It sets up a relation of similarity between two referents, as if they were the same thing. X is described in terms of Y” (Meyers, 1994:125):

- Bombay Sapphire. Pours something priceless (an advertisement for gin)

In synecdoche, “the name of the part is used to refer to the whole thing” (Meyers, 1994:127). When we say we need a hand with cleaning or washing up, for example, we in fact, want a whole person to help; or when the dashboard instruments stand for the whole car in a car advertisement, we are using synecdoche. The converse could also apply, where the whole stands for a part, such as the law for police officer.

In the case of metonymy, something related rather than a part of the whole stands for the whole thing. For instance, referring to the Queen as the Crown or using heads for ‘(number of) people’.

- Intelligenz auf Rädern (Citroën)
  Translation: Intelligence on wheels
Repetition is the deliberate use of a word or phrase more than once in a sentence or a text. Its function is to create a sense of pattern or form; or to emphasise certain elements in the mind of the reader or listener. “Repetition makes connections in text clear, though it may be at the expense of brevity” (Cook, 1992:152). On the whole, slogans are repeated through the whole campaign.

2.3.4 Syntactic level

Another technique which is used in advertising to catch the consumer’s or reader’s attention, is an unusual sentence structure.

2.3.4.1 Sentence type

All sentences can be divided into statements, commands, questions and exclamations: “Statements assert facts about the world; commands seek to make the hearer act; questions seek information from the hearer; and exclamations express the speaker’s surprise” (Meyers, 1994:46).

In written English, for example, statements prove to be the most common type of sentences. In everyday life, though, we use more commands, questions and exclamations, as they are largely aimed at interacting with other people. In this respect, advertisements are more like everyday conversations.

Meyers (1994:47) points out that the general sentence type to be found in advertisements is the command because all advertisements urge consumers or readers to some action. Commands are addressed directly to readers and create the impression that someone is addressing them from the printed page. The form of the command can be recognised in writing by the absence of the subject: *Brush up your tan! Give yourself a second chance!*

The question may arise here why the politeness marker ‘please’ never occurs in these directives, since this would be the natural way to turn a command into a request. One of the reasons may be that “we cut out politeness devices if we are asking somebody to do something that benefits the hearer, not the speaker” (1994:48). Directives in advertising are presented to the reader as beneficiaries:

- *Drive the new Paseo. Fall in love. Your future awaits down the road. (Toyota Paseo)*
Questions, like commands, imply a direct address to the reader or to the listener and require an answer. They are regularly brought into play as a hook in the slogan, as “the initial piece of attention-seeking verbal language used to draw the reader in” (Goddard, 2002:74). The hook identifies the problem, which is expanded in the body copy of the advertisement. It can play on certain insecurities of the reader, and various audience groups are targeted in an appropriate way.

Here are some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hook</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinning hair? Dandruff?</td>
<td>Hair product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still shaving with soap and water?</td>
<td>Shaving foam or gel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreaming of a new “You”?</td>
<td>Diet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another form of sentence that is well-represented in advertisements is that of exclamations. This can be explained by the attempt “to recreate the intonation and facial expression that go with face to face interaction” (Meyers, 1994:51); exclamations suggest personal contact. In their structure, exclamations often can be read as statements, though the exclamation mark requires an emphatic reading:

- **Geiz ist geil!(Saturn)**
  
  *Translation: Greed is cool*

### 2.3.4.2 Sentence structure

The next main aspect of the analysis of advertisements at the syntactic level is the structuring of sentences.

It is common to use **elliptical sentences**, “where elements of language are left out altogether” (Goddard, 2002:107) and where omissions can be recovered from a previous sentence or context:

- **A perfect pairing. A perfect film. (Slogan for a newly released film)**

The aim here may be to show that people who know each other well do not have to be very explicit in formulating the content of their conversation. On the other hand, it allows the advertiser “to achieve two commercially desirable effects: to save space where words cost
money, and to avoid drawing attention to features ... which do not serve the advertiser’s interest” (Cook, 1992:169).

Advertisements often use short sentences or even abbreviate part of a sentence. Certain advertisements even do not contain a single main verb:

- More than lengthening; more than thickening; more than separating
  ... Moisture-Binding Formula Mascara (Estée Lauder)

This can be explained by the fact that images complement the text, and often utilising a full sentence is unnecessary for an interpretation of these phrases. Incomplete sentences can emerge as well from not leaving out anything, but from punctuating with full stops. Parts of the sentences act then as independent sentences and pauses add more impact and brevity to the message.

Another technique to make the reader actually read an advertisement is to use a parallel construction. A parallel construction is “an unexpected pattern of similarity of sound or structure, as it uses repetition of the structure of a sentence or phrase, as in the army’s Be all that you can be” (Burnett and Moriarty, 2003:358). As a word, a part of speech or a phrase is repeated, it adds to the catchiness of the slogan or the advertisement as whole, if used in the body copy.

2.3.5 Grammar level

Copywriters often deliberately use incorrect grammar. The reason for this is that the copy should sound natural: “Breaking the rules and using improper English is acceptable if it fits the context and works better” (Berman, 2007:94). A very famous example comes from Apple Computer’s campaign where the slogan ‘Think different” was used. It caused numerous complaints and comments from school teachers, grammarians and other parties because to be grammatically correct, it should have been “Think differently.” Apple replied that differently, being an adverb, would communicate an unintended message. It would tell the reader HOW to think. ... The word “different” shouldn’t be treated as a modifier, but as a noun. In other words, the message of the tagline tells us WHAT TO THINK ABOUT IT rather than HOW to think. (Burnett and Moriarty, 2003:359)
2.4 Language of advertising in particular languages

Researchers investigating the role of language in advertising have found that significant differences exist across countries and that certain styles are more frequent in some countries and less so in other countries.

Cross-cultural advertising research has analysed a number of different advertising ‘features’, such as appeals, themes used and a number of other, sometimes specific, factors. The variety of the features examined reflects the multiple aspects that make any advertisement unique, as well as the variety of possible approaches that can be used to analyse advertisements.

(Dahl, 2004:3)

In the following paragraphs, the above-mentioned advertising features in particular languages and cultures, namely German and South African, will be discussed.

2.4.1 Advertising in German

German advertising today is characterised by some degree of multilingualism, mainly in the form of English-German code-switching. Piller (2001:154) mentions that in Germany by 1999 “multilingual advertisements accounted for 60-70% of all advertisements released on various television networks and in two national newspapers.”

As mentioned above, slogans are meant to summarise the identity or philosophy of a brand. They become identity markers. Therefore, the language used in the slogan of an advertisement becomes the language of the advertisement's "master voice", the voice that expresses authority and expertise (2001:161). It is remarkable that at least 40% of the slogans in the researcher’s corpus of print advertisements from German magazines are in English, while the body copy and other components are mostly in German:

- **Davidoff: The new fragrance for women**
- **Lufthansa: There’s no better way to fly**
- **Brita: Water Technology**

Sauer gives the following explanation for this phenomenon:

> English heute ist nicht nur die wichtigste internationale Verständnissprache, sondern übt auch einen sehr starken Einfluss auf andere Sprachen aus, nicht zuletzt auf das Deutsche ... Dementsprechend sind englische Wörter und Wendungen auch in deutschen Anzeigen zahlreich.

(Sauer, 1998:96)

There are no concrete guidelines or forms of legislation about the use of anglicisms; and advertising agencies tend to argue that they only utilise English words which are already widespread among the German population.
2.4.2 Advertising in South African languages

Many Third World countries have literacy problems. Unfortunately, South Africa is not an exception here. There are still people in this country who cannot read and write (around 24% of adults over 15 years old); or their knowledge of English is not sufficient. Statistics South Africa (2005:vii) declares that the majority of South Africans, almost 80% of the population, use an African language as their home language, where the home language is referred to as “the language most often spoken at home, which is not necessarily the person’s mother tongue”. Pictures, in the direct and figurative sense, are the solution here, as they can be substituted for the appropriate words. The illiterate audience can be reached by the spoken word, radio, TV or by picture power. Green and Lascaris (1990:110) believe that, if

the communication uses word-pictures, plus music and special effects to create the desired ambience, some powerful messages can be painted on our imagination. This technique has particular power among our middle and lower marketing bands.

It is advisable for advertising companies in South Africa to use visuals to repeat and to strengthen the message. Pictures can be used to entertain as well, as audiences are becoming younger and less sophisticated. Even though “word games and slickness in copy are just not going to work for most of our population” (Green and Lascaris, 1990:175) because of the high illiteracy rate and educational problems, smart communicators and advertisers can use these techniques to get their readership to pay attention to their messages. Green and Lascaris (1990:176) advise that “there are lots of gaps in lots of areas of knowledge, and if you help fill those gaps you will find perceptive audience.”

2.5 Advertising and Legislation

Advertising regulations differ considerably among nations. An advertising message considered acceptable in one market might be seen as inappropriate in another. Certain types of advertising are allowed in one country and are banned altogether elsewhere, as, for instance, in the case of comparative advertising. The same applies to various product categories. In this section the various types of advertising regulations international companies may encounter will be highlighted.
2.5.1 European and German legislation on advertising

The European Union has laid down common rules applicable throughout the Union to protect consumers from misleading advertising and its consequences. In brief, “misleading advertising” is defined as

any advertising carried out by a professional which in any way, either in its wording or presentation, deceives or is likely to deceive you in such a way as, for example, to affect your choice from among the products or services which you wish to buy; or that by reason of its deceptive nature, is likely to affect your economic behaviour; or that injures or is likely to injure a competitor. (www.ec.europa.eu)

In addition, the description of the product, its availability, price, the results of tests carried out, and other such features can be misleading. The text of an advertisement can be misleading not only in terms of content, but also in the way the message is presented. A letter or brochure could be phrased in such a way that it makes the reader believe that (s)he has won something, although it is not true.

The protection provided by the European Union is reinforced by the legislation in force in each of the member states. The main source of protection against unfair competition and misleading advertising in Germany, for example, is the Act against unfair competition (Gesetz gegen den unlauteren Wettbewerb, abbreviated as UWG). Its main goal is “to offer comprehensive protection not only for customers, but also for competitors and the public at large, against specific or general risks” (www.ec.europa.eu). The following categories may not be advertised:

- A sale of goods resulting from a bankruptcy
- Trading by means of purchase vouchers
- Special retail sales on certain restricted occasions, such a summer/winter clearance sale
- Presenting the advertiser as a wholesaler or producer to the final consumer when it is not the case
2.5.2 South African law on advertising

In South Africa, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) was founded in 1969. It is “an independent body set up and paid for by the advertising industry to ensure that its system of self-regulation works in the public interest” (Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa, 1987:1). Its code of conduct is based on the British Code of Advertising Practice and on the International Code of Advertising Practice. Essentially, the main purpose of the Code is “to protect consumers, and to ensure fair play among advertisers” (Woker, 1999:25). Besides general principles that apply to all advertisements, certain categories have been singled out for special handling by the ASA to ensure that both the spirit and the letter of those provisions are scrupulously observed:

- Medicinal products
- Slimming advertisements
- Cosmetic and hair products
- Cigarette and liquor advertising
- Advertising directed at children

As consumers become more aware and concerned, the number of complaints on advertising practices has grown in recent years. Moreover, most complaints come from consumers directly. On 29 April 2009, the Consumer Protection Act was promulgated to establish national norms regarding consumer rights and to provide for improved standards of consumer information (Consumer Protection Act 2009).
CHAPTER 3
CULTURE AND ADVERTISING

Advertisements are not created in a cultural void, but are attached to a certain culture with all its sub-cultures. Behaviour, customs, habits, beliefs and norms form the basis of any culture and help us distinguish between one culture and another. Understanding the concept of culture and cultural differences is of great significance in global marketing and advertising, because every culture has its own style of mass communication and advertising.

3.1 Culture and advertising

Each society has its own system of habits, values and ways of classification. In some cases, they are unique to one culture, and sometimes we will find similarities to other cultures. Consequently, advertisers should take these differences into consideration if they want their product(s) to succeed in a foreign country.

To be successful, the international marketer must be sensitive to and have an understanding of the socio-cultural and economic dimensions of each market and must be sensitive to how they ... affect consumer behaviour.

(Pelser, 1996:50)

Goddard adds (2002:60): “[D]ifferent cultures bring different attitudes and values to the reading of any text.” However, before discussing cultural values and differences, it is essential to consider a definition of culture in general, as well as its role in advertising.

3.1.1 Definition of culture

The term ‘culture’ has been defined in many different ways. The Collins Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary (2003:342) sees culture as “a particular society or civilization, especially considered in relation to its beliefs, way of life, or art.” Another definition describes culture as a “learned, shared, compelling, interrelated set of symbols whose meaning provides a set of orientations for members of a society” (Müller, 1996:87). Newmark (1995:94) defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression." He also characterises culture as “Objects, processes, institutions, customs, ideas peculiar to one group of people" (1995:282).
Even so, different schools and researchers characterise the term ‘culture’ from different perspectives, all of them reflecting some common views. Firstly, culture is not inherent or inborn, but learned. It is learned in institutions, such as the family, church and school. Secondly, culture is shared by the members of a group; and this aspect of sharing facilitates communication between individuals within a certain culture. Communication between diverse cultures can be problematic and difficult due to the lack of shared symbols and values because “the way people think and perceive is guided by the framework of their own culture” (De Mooij, 1998:4).

3.1.2 Role of culture in advertising

In 1983, the *Harvard Business Review* published an article on standardising of marketing strategies and globalisation of markets. It became a point of discussion and debate for many years following. The article states that “the world’s needs and desires have been irrevocably homogenized” (Levitt, 1984). In other words, advertising and marketing could be standardised across cultures, and the same values could be used to persuade customers to buy or consume the product.

Different cultural preferences, national tastes and standards, and business institutions are vestiges of the past. Some inheritances die gradually; others prosper and expand into mainstream global preferences. So-called ethnic markets are a good example. Chinese food, pita bread, country and western music, pizza and jazz are everywhere. They are market segments that exist in worldwide proportions. They don't deny or contradict global homogenization but confirm it. (Levitt, 1984)

A completely different point of view is presented by the opponents of the above-mentioned approach who insist that even with the basic needs being the same around the world, the way in which these needs are met, is not the same in different cultures. “Any marketing (and advertising) campaign should ... reflect the local habits, lifestyles and economical conditions in order to be effective” (Dahl, 2001:1).

Furthermore, Anholt (2000:53) argues that somebody who rejects the importance of culture in international marketing and advertising or even fails to recognise that cultural differences in fact exist, commits a huge mistake; and it “is the main reason why, historically, there have been so many more failures than successes in international marketing ...” The researcher personally supports Anholt’s point of view (2000:56) that “really good advertising ... is distinguished by its sharpness: it speaks your culture as well as your language.”
Culture can be seen as an invisible construction that is made visible in symbols, objects and practices. These symbols, in their turn, “often do not travel perfectly across the borders, and when they do, they may not mean there what they mean here” (Fowles, 1996:22). Communicating with people who belong to different cultures is one of the biggest challenges in marketing communication. The study of culture or culture sensitiveness is essential in international marketing and advertising.

3.2 Cultural values and dimensions

In the previous section it was pointed out that culture determines our perceptions and the way we see and understand the world around us. Confusion can result if things appear different from what we expect them to be. For example, in German culture, punctuality plays an extraordinarily important role, either in business or private matters. Having invited guests for dinner or lunch at a certain time, a representative of the German form of culture would expect them to arrive by exactly this time. However, if the invitation is extended to people belonging to a different cultural group, there might be some misunderstanding about the ‘borders.’ In other words, the guests might arrive an hour or two later because, to them that is part of their culture. The hosts, who have never come across this fact before, could conclude that their guests are impolite. We see and understand what we expect to see and to hear, in other words, “we expect and see things from our own cultural frame of mind” (De Mooij, 1998:48).

This phenomenon of cultural differences is present in every aspect of life, including consumer behaviour and reactions to advertisements. If the values of an advertisement, created by representatives of a different cultural group, do not match with one’s own values and assumptions, or are not recognised by us and our culture, they will go unnoticed, be misunderstood, and thus less effective. Such a situation can occur while translating advertising copy from one language into another language.

In the following sections, an attempt will be made to define and explain these values and dimensions of culture that influence our perceptions. Furthermore, attention will be paid to potential challenges in the translation of culture-specific items.
3.2.1 Cultural values and traditions

A number of models have been developed for the systematic comparison of cultures. From De Mooij’s point of view (1998:65),

...for the purpose of global marketing and advertising, the most useful ones are those that distinguish dimensions of culture. They can be used as an instrument to make comparisons between cultures and to cluster cultures according to behavioral characteristics.

3.2.1.1 A model of cultural dimensions

One of the most frequently used frameworks for understanding cultural differences is Hofstede’s model of cultural dimensions. It is aimed at analysing differences in national cultures. The analysis was carried out in the work environment of IBM in 64 countries. In addition, students, elites, up-market consumers, commercial airline pilots and civil service managers from different countries participated in the study. The main outcome of the study was a definition of cultural dimensions, indicating cultural differences. Hofstede (www.geert-hofstede.com) distinguishes five cultural dimensions:

- **Individualism vs. Collectivism**: Degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side, the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents), which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. When advertising products in collectivistic societies, it is vital to remember that people depicted in an advertisement should not be alone, as being alone means you do not have any friends.

- **Femininity vs. Masculinity**: In feminine cultures, the dominant values are caring for others and quality of life, while in masculine cultures achievement and success are the dominant values. In masculine societies, status as a sign of success would be an important motive in advertising, while in feminine cultures this would be a negative motive rather than a positive one.

- **Uncertainty Avoidance**: Degree of risk aversion in a society is central to this dimension. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimise the possibility of risk situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures. People in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. The opposite type, an uncertainty accepting culture, is more tolerant of opinions.
different from what they are used to; they aim to have as few rules as possible. People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and not expected by their environment to express emotions. In regard to advertising, high uncertainty avoiding cultures, such as Germany and Italy, value explanations, long copy and testimonials by experts.

- **Power Distance**: Respect for authority, hierarchy and status. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders. The respect for authority and status is typically more dominant in high power distance countries than in low power distance countries, where decisions from the top can usually be questioned and are typically based on reasoning and factual information. In applying this dimension to advertising, respect for old age and status should be reflected.

- **Long-Term Orientation vs. Short-Term Orientation**: Thrift and perseverance are the values associated with Long-Term Orientation, while values associated with Short-Term Orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations, and protecting one's 'face'. Hofstede (www.geert-hofstede.com) states that Short-Term Orientation is reflected in the sense of urgency, widely represented in U.S. advertising through slogans ‘Hurry’, ‘Don’t wait’, ‘Two full years full free credit now!’

### 3.2.1.2 High-Context vs. Low-Context Cultures

The next essential point in the comparison of cultures is the differentiation between High-Context and Low-Context Cultures. These terms, introduced by the cross-cultural researcher Edward Hall, deal with the “amount of sensing and extra information needed to make decisions versus just facts” (Busch, 2006:21).

A low-context culture requires independence and expects many relationships, but fewer intimate ones. Individuals in this culture are more likely to try and work things out on their own, without asking questions and spending time on developing relationships. Messages in this environment are characterised by their verbal explicitness and directness. In high-context cultures, professional and personal lives are often linked; people form close groups and rely on these groups permanently. Information here is a part of the context and very little is made explicit as a part of the message. Wells, Burnett and Moriarty (2003:521) proclaim that the major distinction lies in the fact that the meaning of a message within a high-context culture
can be understood only within a specific context, while a message within a low-context culture can be understood as an independent entity.

The Western world is an example of a low-context culture, while Japanese, Chinese and Arabic cultures are considered to be high-context cultures. The Western world has a long tradition of rhetoric and sees verbal messages as very important, “whereas advertising in high-context cultures is characterized by symbolism or indirect verbal expression” (De Mooij, 1998:66). Therefore,

Advertising messages constructed by writers from high-context cultures might be difficult to understand in low-context cultures because they offer too much detail to make the point clearly. In contrast, messages authored by writers from low-context cultures may be difficult to understand in high-context cultures because they omit essential contextual detail.

(De Mooij, 1998:66)

It is very important for advertisers to understand the differences between high-/low-context cultures, as this implies different styles of communicating an advertising message, for example with respect to verbal and non-verbal communication, direct versus indirect advertising, as well as the use of symbols versus facts and data.

3.3 Summary

As discussed above, cultural values determine the way people think, process information, communicate and respond to things. They also influence our perception of other cultures and the way we see other societies. Having analysed the cultural dimensions and being aware of the diversity, international advertising agencies and copywriters would be able to recognise the use of direct and indirect communication, using more or fewer symbols and more or less copy text, and more or fewer facts and other information in particular countries/cultures. Müller (2002:89) points out: “International marketers, if they are to be successful in their efforts, must become culturally sensitive – that is, tuned in to the nuances of culture. Indeed, they must become students of culture.”
CHAPTER 4

CULTURE-SPECIFIC ITEMS IN ADVERTISING

In the previous chapter, values and dimensions of culture that influence our perception have been discussed. It was pointed out that each society or community has at its disposal a series of cultural habits and value judgements, or “the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community” (Newmark, 1995:94). At times, they differ considerably, but sometimes they do overlap. We also know culture “uses a particular language as its means of expression”, while “in a language everything is culturally produced, beginning with the language itself” (Aixela, 1996:57). Language and culture may thus be seen as being closely related. If a need arises to transfer these habits and values and their meaning into a different language and culture, it can cause problems. This applies to advertising texts as well as to other discourses. Raffield (1987, as cited in Müller, 1996:154) points out that seemingly harmless brand names and advertising phrases can take on unintended or hidden meanings when translated into other languages, and such errors can make a marketer look somewhat like a buffoon to foreign consumers.

Linguistic notions of transferring meaning are seen as being only part of the translation process; "[A] whole set of extra-linguistic criteria" (Bassnett, 2002:21) must also be considered. Bassnett (2002:30) further warns that even though "the translator must tackle the Source Language (SL) text in such a way that the Target Language (TL) version will correspond to the SL version ..." it can be dangerous “to attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture onto the TL culture.” Thus, when translating an advertisement, it is important to consider not only the lexical impact on the TL reader, but also the manner in which cultural aspects may be seen, and to decide on translation strategies accordingly. In other words, special attention must be paid to the translation of ‘culture-specific items’ that can be defined as following:

Those textually actualised items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text, whenever this problem is a product of the nonexistence of the referred item or of its different intertextual status in the cultural system of the readers of the target text.

(Aixela, 1996:58)
Culture-specific items (CSI) can be found in language, both spoken and written, as well as in the various forms of non-verbal communication. In the next sections, a detailed analysis will be given of CSIs at different levels of communication.

4.1 Non-verbal communication

We communicate with each other not only through language, but also use non-verbal communication to bring across our messages and intentions. In general, one refers to non-verbal communication when we speak “about the signals to which meaning will be attributed (encoding), not the process of encoding meaning” (Knapp & Hall, 2002:5). According to Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org), non-verbal communication is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. Non-verbal communication can occur through any sensory channel — sight, sound, smell, touch or taste. Argyle (1988:5) points out five primary functions in human non-verbal communication:

- Expression of emotions
- Communication of interpersonal attitudes
- Accompanying speech in interaction between speakers and listeners
- Self-presentation of one’s personality
- Rituals (greetings)

Non-verbal communication can also be used to elaborate on verbal messages: “When clarity is of utmost importance ... we should be especially concerned with making the meanings of verbal and nonverbal behaviour complement each other” (Knapp & Hall, 2002:14); or it can be used as the sole channel for communication of a message. “People learn to identify facial expressions, body movements, and body positioning as corresponding with specific feelings and intentions” (2002:16).

Non-verbal communication can be classified in a number of ways and can be divided into many categories. Here belong gestures and other bodily movements, posture, facial expression, gaze, clothes, smell and non-verbal vocalisations (Argyle, 1988). Because the subject of this treatise involves the analysis of printed advertisements, it seems appropriate to limit the term ‘non-verbal communication’ to visual symbols only in images/pictures, which include gestures, colours, numbers, as well as space usage. In the following sections, the most important aspects of non-verbal communication by the international marketer will be discussed.
4.1.1 Colours and numbers

“Emerging out of different times and places in human history and sometimes branching in opposite directions, similar images can mean very different things” (Miller, Brown & Cullen, 2000:6). Our interpretation is subjective and is based on our own personal and cultural understandings. Every symbol and sign implies “an emotion or thought in addition to its obvious and immediate significance when placed before a particular audience” (2000:7).

Among those symbols are colours and numbers, which can provoke different associations in different societies. For example, Western societies associate black with mourning and sorrow, while it is the colour white that is connected with death in Asian countries, such as Japan and India. Yellow flowers mean death in Mexico and Taiwan, while in the former Soviet Union yellow flowers were a sign of farewell to a woman. Thus, colour choice is more than an aesthetic decision. When designing and packaging products, international marketers need to know what associations in terms of colour the target culture has, in order to create or to translate the intended message for the target cultural circle. Ricks insists (1993:30)

…that the choice of package and product colouring is very tricky: Sometimes companies have failed to sell their products overseas and have never known why. Often the reason was a simple one; the product or its container was merely an inappropriate color.

Numbers can also mean different things in different cultures. “Remember that the number 7 is considered bad luck in Kenya, good luck in Czechoslovakia, and has magical connotations in Benin” (Glover, 1990:1); and in Japanese and Chinese the number 4 sounds like ‘death.’ Moreover, “in Asia numbers have significance unknown to Western cultures” (De Mooij, 1998:56).

4.1.2 Gestures and body movements

People around the world use body movements or gestures to convey specific messages. Though the same gestures are used in different countries, they often have very different meanings. “Misunderstanding over gestures is a common occurrence in cross-cultural communication and misinterpretation along these lines can lead to business complications and social embarrassment” (Glover, 1990:2).
The following gestures and signs have dissimilar meanings in different cultures and societies (Jude, 1997:44-47):

- The thumbs-up gesture “OK” widely used in the United States and in South Africa, means “zero” in France, indicates the number five in Japan and carries vulgar connotations in Brazil.

- The thumb hitch, the gesture of extending the arm and wagging the thumb, is recognised in South Africa, the United States and many other countries as a signal used by hitchhikers, while in Greece a similar gesture signifies a sexual insult.

- The finger pull gesture is normally used to signal to the other person that we would like him or her to come toward us. Yet, in Japan, the same sign indicates that you assume someone is a thief.

- Beard or chin stroking indicates contemplation and is associated with a thoughtful expression in many parts of the world. In some parts of Germany and Eastern Europe, however, it is a deliberate gesture that signals boredom.

Cultural differences in the use of gestures and signs occur not only between different countries, but also within different cultural groups living in the same geographic area. South Africa is home to diverse cultures and population groups. Jude (1997:46) states that “perhaps the most significant differences exist between Blacks and Whites in South Africa.”

One of the areas where cultural differences are very obvious is that of eye contact. “Whites tend to maintain a stronger eye contact pattern than do Blacks” (Jude, 1997: 48). In White culture, direct and strong eye contact stands for ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘honesty’, while avoiding looking into somebody’s eyes is interpreted as ‘dishonesty’ and ‘slyness.’ In Black culture, on the other hand, a strong and direct eye contact is seen as a sign of ‘aggressiveness’ and ‘impoliteness.’

4.1.3 Space usage

Use of space also has different traditions or may be culture-bound. Based on the observations of North Americans, Hall (1966:110-120) has developed four categories of distance in human interaction:

- Intimate distance is used for personal contact, comforting, protecting and it ranges from intimate body contact to 18 inches (45 cm).
• Personal distance is from 18 inches to 4 feet (45 cm to 1.2 m) and depends on the
closeness of the relationship.

• Social distance is used by acquaintances and strangers in business meetings or
classrooms and goes from 4 to 12 feet (1.2 to 3.6 m).

• Public distance is the distance where recognition of others is not mandatory and
shades of voice, gestures and facial expression are lost; it ranges from 12 to 25 feet
(3.6 to 7.6 m).

Even so, not all members of different cultures prove these categories to be as true. In general,
Northern Europeans and North Americans (Knapp & Hall, 2002:96) “demonstrate a
particularly high level of territoriality when compared with members of other cultures.”
Comparing Japanese and American executive styles, one will notice that Japanese bosses as
group-oriented people prefer working shoulder to shoulder with their employees rather than
occupying private offices. Accordingly, proper usage of space must be thought of while
creating visual messages in advertising purposed for foreign markets.

As mentioned above, these differences occur sometimes within different cultural groups
living in the same area. In the case of South Africans, Blacks being nose-to-nose or only
about 40 cm apart is enough for feeling comfortable, whereas “the average White requires a
spatial zone of about 1,2 metres” (Jude, 1997:49). This is a cultural factor that comes from
Blacks having lived in crowded conditions “since spatial requirement is closely linked to
population density” (1997:49).

4.1.4 Image

There exist several assumptions regarding the origin of the expression ‘A picture is worth a
thousand words’. One hypothesis states that this phrase emerged in the USA at the beginning
of the 20th century. To be exact, Frederick R. Barnard who published a piece commending
the effectiveness of graphics in advertising in the journal Printer's Ink, in December 1921, is
claimed to be an author of this expression (www.phrases.org.uk). Similarly, the idea that a
picture can convey a story just as well as a large amount of text was voiced by a character in
Ivan S. Turgenev's novel Fathers and Sons, written in 1862: "The drawing shows me at one
glance what might be spread over ten pages in a book".

In the modern advertising world these statements are still regarded as true. Wells, Burnett &
Moriarty (2003:364) proclaim that
in most advertising the power lies with the visual, and its primary function is to get attention ... In general ... a picture in a print ad captures more than twice as many readers as a headline does ... People notice ads and remember those with pictures more than those composed of type. Furthermore, the bigger the illustration, the more the advertisement grabs consumers’ attention.

Besides drawing attention to an advertising message, images play another important role in advertising: they elicit a certain emotion and “give rise to some emotional disposition toward the product, politician, social cause, or whatever else the ad is about” (Messaris, 1997:34). Meyers (1994:136) also insists that the role of an image in an advertisement is not only one of a simple supplement that makes it look prettier. An image is always a representation of something. He adds a third reason for the use of pictures in advertisements: They “involve the audience in constructing for themselves a range of messages.” They even become representatives of various social groups, such as “gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, social class, occupation and region” (Goddard, 2002:79). Images play a crucial role in suggesting how interactions occur and who participants are, as well as being part of the way the text interacts with its readers.

The importance and effectiveness of images in advertising can be summarised from the perspective of art directors (people who are responsible for creating advertisement visuals). Wells, Burnett & Moriarty (2003:365) point out that

- Pictures communicate faster than words.
- Many people remember messages as visual fragments that can easily be filed in their minds.
- Visuals add credibility to a message as ‘seeing is believing’.
- Visual associations help to distinguish undifferentiated products.

The function of images in the field of advertising having been established, various possibilities of using pictures as an effective means of communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries will be discussed. Supporters of standardised advertising campaigns who maintain the view that “instead of seeking out and emphasising differences between countries and cultures, similarities should be looked at” (Pelser, 1996:105) see it as a possibility to use the same image for a different cultural group, even though this would be “at the expense of cultural sharpness”.

On the other hand, supporters of customised or adopted advertising claim different advertisements, with images as part of them, should be produced for different languages and
cultures. This viewpoint asserts that “members of a culture to which an ad is exported might actually find ... the images completely meaningless” (Messaris, 1997:92) because “there are significant cross-cultural differences in pictorial perception” (De Mooij, 1998:59).

Those differences are influenced by learned habits of interpretation. For instance, Western cultures follow a sequential thinking pattern, while in other cultures the concept of time varies. Directions of viewing also differ from culture to culture. Representatives of Western cultures tend to read from left to right, while in countries where Arabic is the language of communication, one reads from right to left. At the same time, the visual signs of the winking face and the handshake will have no meaning to a cultural group that does not have these signs in their communication system.

In Third World countries where literacy problems exist, pictures often substitute words in advertising. However, attention must be paid to keeping visual communication clear among illiterate and less educated people. Consumers from this range of the population may possibly misinterpret images created in the new age of computer graphics, find them mystifying or interpret them in a literal sense. This can cause confusion and misunderstanding in communicating the message (Green & Lascaris, 1990:100-101).

Taking into consideration both points of view, the researcher agrees with Messaris (1997:112-113) that there are several factors that can pose barriers to the “cross-cultural reception” of images in advertising. Among those factors are:

- References to local cultural practices (the American concept of jeans as casual leisure wear, while somebody dressed in jeans represents a working class and manual labourer in China; or women in Arabic advertisements having to be dressed appropriately in long, modest dresses and be depicted with their hair covered).

- Incompatibility of cultural values, such as collectivist orientation vs. individualism which results in using different types of advertising ‘hard-sell’ vs. ‘soft-sell’ tactics.

- A general attitude toward the advertisement’s country of origin, such as American admiration of French sophistication and dislike of Japanese economic success.

In line with Messaris, Müller (1996:157) concludes that images destined for foreign markets “should either reinforce the local culture in adapted campaigns or remain neutral enough to be accepted in all markets for those campaigns employing a standardized strategy.
4.2 Verbal communication

Language is a key element in the realisation of the verbal act and it cannot be fully understood outside its cultural context. Moreover, “in a language everything is culturally produced, beginning with language itself” (Aixela, 1996:57). Maletzke (1976 as cited in Müller, 1996:90) agrees that the art and manner in which we understand the world is determined to a large extent by language. On the other hand, language is “an expression of a specific group-experiencing of the world, and therefore may itself be shaped by the Weltanschauung as well as the wishes, expectations and motivations of the group using it.”

In the next paragraphs elements that might become a translation challenge in verbal communication will be identified.

4.2.1 Culture-specific items

As pointed out above, culture-specific items (CSI) can be found in both verbal and non-verbal communication. It is difficult, however, to define exactly what can be classified in a text as culture-specific. A culture-specific item could be every feature in a ST which presents a problem for the translator because there is an intercultural gap between the SL and the TL. Such a gap exists where items in the ST such as “objects, ideas, symbols or habits ... specific to a given language community ...” (Fenyő, 2005) do not exist in the TL culture, or the TL has no word “to name these things or concepts ...”. CSIs can also be defined as “a social phenomenon of a culture X that is regarded as relevant by the members of this culture and, when compared with a corresponding social phenomenon in a culture Y, is found to be specific to culture X” (Nord, 1997:34). This does not mean, however, that the particular phenomenon exists only in the particular culture. It can be found in cultures other than the cultures compared. Aixela (1996:57) gives an example of the translation of the image of the ‘lamb’ from the Bible into languages whose cultures are not familiar with this animal or, if they are familiar, this image does not have same connotations of innocence and vulnerability. It will acquire the status of a CSI and will become a translation problem in the translation process, for example from Hebrew into Inuit. On the other hand, it will not be perceived as a CSI in translation into English, Russian or German, where this image has the same connotations as in Hebrew and is associated with a pure and sacrificial animal.
Aixela further suggests a distinction is to be found between two basic categories of CSIs from the point of view of the translator: proper nouns or names and common expressions, with the latter covering the “world of objects, institutions, habits and opinions restricted to each culture and that cannot be included in the field of proper names” (1996:59).

Newmark (1995:95), who defines a CSI as a ‘Source Language Cultural Word’, a word or an expression that is unfamiliar in the target language and cannot be literally translated, points out that “the difficulties of literal translation are often highlighted not so much by linguistic or referential context as by the context of a cultural tradition.” He also suggests the division of ‘cultural words’ into the following categories:


- Material culture, including food (Kaiserschmarren’, ‘sake’); clothes (‘anorak’, ‘sarong’); houses and towns (‘bourg’, ‘chalet’); transport (‘rickshaw’, ‘cabriolet’).

- Social culture, including work and leisure (‘Konditorei’, ‘charcuterie’, ‘pétanque’, ‘bull-fighting’).


4.2.2 Differences in terms of address

Advertising is designed for mass audiences. However, advertisers do not know in general who exactly forms these audiences. In order to determine the audiences and to construct the image of an advertisement, market research is conducted. An advertising message, which should encourage the targeted audience to pay attention to the product, is based on the results of market research as well as other factors. When establishing relationships with potential customers, advertisers use different terms of address, which include personal pronouns. They can speak to consumers through the use of direct address; they can personalise their companies by employing either the inclusive or exclusive ‘we’; or they can choose to speak through an intermediary, for example via celebrities, specialists or the products themselves.
Cook (1992:155) writes that “certain discourse types favour certain pronouns ...” One will find, for instance, examples of first person address in personal diaries, while scientific discourse prefers the third person. Cook (1992:155) also points out that “Ads use all three persons, but in peculiar ways”.

The inclusive ‘we’, for example, is used as a form of solidarity between the advert sender (either the advertiser or the narrator in the advertisement), and the readers, who are invited to join a group of like-minded people who use or might potentially use the advertised product. The major aim of using the exclusive ‘we’ is to present the “human and friendly voice of the manufacturer, retailer or public service, etc.” (Wales, 1996:164). According to Myers (1994:82), this exclusive use of ‘we’ is common and “personalises huge and impersonal corporations.”

A number of advertisements address the potential customer through an intermediary. The manufacturer recedes into the background and lets celebrities, specialists, fictional characters, characters from the past or ‘real people’ either use the product regularly or try the product for the first time. If intermediaries use direct speech, they would use the personal pronoun ‘I’, which represents the voice of “the potential customer, the endorser or the sceptic” (Meyers, 1994:83). When intermediaries do not address the receiver directly, they may be referred to as ‘he’ or ‘she’. This type of address typically refers to someone who is known by the reader of the advertisement: “either known through the ad, as with the person in the picture, or known because taken for granted as part of the reader’s life” (p82).

The pronoun ‘you’ “is the most striking and most frequent ... and most divergent from the uses of other discourse types” (Cook, 1992:156). Many companies choose the direct form of address “to emphasise the consumer as one of the most important parts of the advertising message. The consumer is individualized through the use of you” (Smith, 2004:285). ‘You’ is particularly popular as it suggests a one-to-one relationship between advertisers and addressees. Fairclough (1989:69) has termed this technique ‘synthetic personalisation’, or “a compensatory tendency to give the impression of treating each of the people ‘handled’ en masse as an individual.” The fact that advertisers prefer to use ‘you’, shows how anxious they are to create the illusion of a special bond between themselves and the readers.

However, the choice of a pronoun becomes a translation challenge if the languages compared differentiate between formal and informal address. For the purpose of this work, the researcher will use symbols T and V (from Latin ‘tu’ and ‘vos’) “as generic designators for a
familiar and polite pronoun in any language” (Brown, 1972:254). A T/V distinction exists between an intimate and formal second person pronoun, such as du/Sie and dein/Ihr in German, ty/vy and tvoj/Vash in Russian, tu/vous in French, tu/Usted/Ustedes in Spanish. In English, on the other hand, only the second person pronoun ‘you’ is used to express at the same time both informal and formal relationships between the sender and the addressee, allowing the voice of the advertisement to “simultaneously be one of friendship, authority and respect” (Cook, 1992:180). In general, the T-form is “an index of intimacy and equality, and of clear superiority and subordination ... the V-form indicates not only service and respect, but also distance” (1992:180).

The V-form in German, for instance, requires that a verb or an adjective used with it should be in the plural form, as in English, irrespective of whether one person or a group of people are being referred to. It is impossible to tell from the form only whether ‘Sie’ is being used to address a single individual or several individuals formally. “Therefore, further information about the addressees has to be gleaned from elsewhere” (Smith, 2004:286).

The differences between the meaning and use of second-person pronominal forms in English and other languages where a T/V distinction exists, mean that the transfer from English into other languages is not easy. Translators have to take many factors into consideration to make sure that they have made the socially appropriate choice for the situation in question. Although the T/V distinction seems complicated to English-speakers, its advantage is that it allows for higher levels of linguistic subtlety in social situations which are lost in English, and are entirely lost in English pronominal usage.

In addition, existing T/V distinctions, the form of address in different languages, can be influenced by the relevant culture, the nature of the product or the age of the targeted audience. Cook (1992:234) suggests that there is a preference of V over T in Russian as a reaction to the Communist slogans which usually addressed the reader as T. As regards the influence of the nature of the product on the form of address, one could expect someone who thinks of buying a car or a computer to be more serious than someone who wants to buy lipstick; and an advertisement for these types of products would use an appropriate form of address. Some languages tend to address more formally than others or use a V-form in an advertisement as a neutral means of expressing English ‘you’ (Smith, 2004:289).
4.3 Associative meanings and idiomatic language

Language is much more important than many international advertisers realise. Advertising copy that carries cultural values and incorporates words “that are labels of culturally meaningful concepts” (De Mooij, 1998:54) is difficult to translate. These words are, for instance, product, brand or company names that can carry different associative meanings in various cultures. According to Goddard (2002:60), “brand names are crucial for advertisers. They are economic, acting as little concentrated capsules of meaning.” Companies should examine foreign markets and study language differences before “a product’s domestically successful name is introduced abroad” (Ricks, 1993:39). When Rolls Royce decided to bring its new car model onto the German market, they first thought about keeping the English name, ‘Silver Mist’, for this model. Luckily, the company discovered before the launch of the model that the literal meaning of the word ‘mist’ was ‘excrement’ in German. ‘XXXX’, pronounced ‘four X’s’ is a very popular beer in Australia, while in the United States ‘Fourex’ is a brand of condoms. For this reason, the beer could not be exported to the US under that name (Meyers, 1994; Ricks, 1993).

If the name of a product or a company contains some idiomatic expressions, in other words, “expressions where the overall meaning cannot be derived from the sum of the parts” (Goddard, 2002:63), there exists a danger that the given expression would be translated literally and thus a completely different meaning would be created. One such example is the original translation of the Pepsi slogan into Chinese: ‘Come alive with the Pepsi generation’ was translated as ‘Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead’ (p 63). The same slogan was literally translated into German with the result ‘Come out of the grave’ (Ricks, 1993:67).

Another translation challenge can occur while translating “a word that has several meanings” (Hatim & Munday, 2004:35), such as homonyms. The Parker Pen Company experienced problems with promoting its fountain pens in Latin America. The original text would read: ‘It won’t leak in your pocket and embarrass you.’ In Spanish the word ‘embarazar’ has multiple meanings. So, an alternative reading of the advertising copy was: ‘It won’t leak in your pocket and make you pregnant’ (Goddard 2002; Ricks 1993).

If a company name is misinterpreted or incorrectly translated, it can also have an offensive or even obscene effect. For example, Colonel Sanders (KFC) experienced problems in entering the German market. This was caused by the fact that the word ‘colonel’ is connected with the
US military and is not very popular with all Germans. In Brazil, the name had to be changed to ‘Sanders’ because the original name, ‘Kentucky Fried Chicken’, was too difficult to pronounce (Ricks, 1993:59).

Puns represent another challenge in translation of advertisements. “Pun is a play on words in which one word has two or more meanings, or one sentence structure can be interpreted in more than one way” (Meyers, 1994:211); or “two words with different meanings having the same sound” (in other words, homophones) (Goddard, 2002:127). Puns attract people’s attention and remain in their memories, yet they are difficult to reproduce in other languages. For example, an advertisement in South Africa for Brooks running shoes says: ‘I feel naked without my Brooks.’ The image depicts a naked man covered with shoes. Here the word ‘brooks’ is linked to the Afrikaans word ‘broek’, which means ‘shorts’ (Myers, 1994:101). This message works as a pun in the South African context and would not have the same meaning and connotation in other languages.

4.4 Intertextuality

Many advertisements achieve their objectives through interlinking with and borrowing from other discourse types, genres, and text models as “they quote them in a broad sense of the word, exploring their communicative potential, be it proverbs, popular sayings, idioms, or other culturally significant texts” (Čmejrková, 2006:77). Fowles (1996:91) adds that an advertisement does not stand alone but enters into a number of intertextual relationships and “each individual campaign takes on overlays of allusions from its relationship to other, competing campaigns ...” Cook (1992:33) even defines advertisements as parasites because they exist through other discourses and make use of well-known historical and even philosophical quotations, fragments of texts which have already been used for some other purpose, such as titles of books, songs or films. Myers (1994:4) notes that all advertisements, “even those making no explicit allusions, carry associations from other texts: ads, movies, novels, everyday talk. Language in ads comes to us used.”

Bassnett (2002:82) explains it by the fact that linguistic features in one text are interpreted in relation to those in other texts. In other words, all texts are linked to all other texts “because no text can ever be completely free of those texts that precede and surround it.” This phenomenon is known in linguistics as ‘intertextuality’ or “the way in which one text echoes or refers to another text” (Goddard, 2002:126). Intertextuality can operate at many different levels of the language, from phonological and lexical references in titles and slogans to visual...
aspects and images. This is where we as readers come across puns and connotations, parody and associative meanings represented in an advertisement.

That is why it is difficult for us to make sense of the text emerging from a different culture or subculture, or a different historical period. We need some background knowledge to be able to understand the references that are being made.

This knowledge is cultural knowledge, in that different cultures may well have different categories of texts and different rules about how they operate ... as well as having different structural rules about how texts work, different cultures bring different attitudes and values to the reading of any text (Goddard, 2002: 59)

A problem arises when advertisements created in one culture have to be translated for use in another culture. “It does not merely imply finding linguistic equivalents in the target language. A social frame of reference has to be recreated in another culture” (Bezuïdenhout, 1998:3). The translator has to be aware of what is culturally relevant and applicable in both the source and target languages and cultures.

4.5 Summary

Translation plays a central role in communication between people speaking different languages and sharing different cultures. Many different types of texts are translated, among them advertisements. The process of translating an advertising message does not only mean looking out for a linguistic equivalent, as there exist certain words, habits and traditions that are only present in a particular culture or only in one of the cultures compared. Cultural differences “are the most significant and troublesome variables encountered by the multinational company” (Ricks, 1993:2). Understanding and taking note of cultural variables is one of the most significant aspects of being successful in any international business endeavour” (Glover, 1990:7).

In this chapter, potential translation challenges that can arise in verbal and non-verbal communication have been explained and identified. The choice of a translation approach and different ways of rendering a message in a foreign language will subsequently be discussed.
CHAPTER 5
INTRODUCTION TO
TRANSLATION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

This chapter reflects on the pros and cons of standardisation and localisation of advertising, as well as addressing the definition of translation, discussing different theoretical approaches and identifying the most applicable methods of translation in the field of advertising in regard to appropriate cultural elements.

5.1 Standardisation vs. Localisation

The growth of international business and economic globalisation involve a growing need for communication with consumers in different countries. It has been shown that, in addressing this need, those who wish to sell their products and services have to take cognisance of the diversity of cultures in such countries. Two approaches can be identified in this regard.

On the one hand, followers of international standardised advertising support the view of using the same strategy of communication and the same basic advertising approach in all targeted countries. Their reasons (Levett, 1984:1; De Mooij, 1994:7) can be summarised as follows:

- Consumer behaviour can be standardised globally.
- The emergence of similar new categories of consumers on the international level.
- The introduction of international themes and icons due to the influence of television networks and popular music, for example through movie stars and supermodels.
- The economy of scales: high costs are involved in adapting advertising campaigns.
- Minimising and spreading of risk in adopting a global approach.

On the other hand, critics of standardisation contend that it cannot work for most products and services, because a global campaign would not be able to address each situation adequately. Pelser (1996:104) summarises a number of reasons for adapting advertising campaigns to local markets:

- Better fit with local markets: The globalisation approach might overlook local variations that affect buyer behaviour.
- Shorter response time: In a situation such as the appearance of a new local competitor, for instance, decisions must be made and implemented fast.
• Local management involvement and motivation: Individual countries may prefer to drive their own campaigns and prove their own creativity.

• Increased competitiveness: it can also be considered as a strategic asset with respect to competition, in the sense that it enables the company to stand out in a highly competitive market (Guidère, 2005: par. 1).

Guidère (2005: par. 3) claims that commercial communication and promotion become effective abroad only after the message has been translated or localised: “Without this prior translation, it is very unlikely to have an impact on the foreign consumer.”

It should be pointed out at this stage that the term ‘translation’ is used in a broad sense in this particular case and does not only mean translation of linguistic context, but includes ‘localisation’, which involves “taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale” (www.lisa.org). Pym (2004:23) adds a further dimension, namely that “localizations are responses to cultural differences.”

It is also important to mention that adaptations do not only affect the linguistic dimension of communication, but can also entail other essential aspects of an advertisement based on socio-cultural differences, such as religion, traditions, ethnic attitudes and purchasing habits. In the Middle East, for example, it would be inappropriate to show all or part of a woman's body, except for the features of the face. As a result, conventions regarding images, layouts, colours, numbers and such features should be localised to make sure that an advertisement fits into the target culture. The legal component can also play a crucial role, since some products cannot be advertised in certain countries and/or there might exist a ban on a particular type of promotion, for instance, comparative advertising. Furthermore, the law may also regulate advertisement contents as well as their expression and their presentation. For example, in Russia and in France all advertisements must appear in the official language of the state.

The two above-mentioned approaches present entirely opposite views on advertising strategies. Each of them has particular benefits and disadvantages which continue to be debated by scholars and practitioners. From the researcher’s point of view, arguments in favour of the localising approach override the considerations in favour of globalisation because the global market “still consists of hundreds of nations, each with its own customs, life styles, economies, and buying habits” (Müller, 1996:146). This leads to the conclusion that marketers should take these differences into consideration if they want their products to become successful abroad.
5.2 Theory of translation

In the previous section, it was argued that advertising texts should be localised and adapted to the target culture and society in order to communicate their message. It has also been mentioned that localisation in this case is achieved through the translation of the verbal message with elements of non-verbal communication being affected as well. Cronin (2003:16) emphasises the importance of translation in our lives and in the new informational economy: “For many subjects in the informational economy, the language of (native) expression remains the preferred language of (individual) access.”

The next sections will give an overview of various definitions of translation and present an outline of different theoretical approaches in translation studies, while trying to establish the most appropriate method and type of translation for advertising texts.

5.3 Definitions of translation

Translation theorists define the concept of translation in different ways. Some definitions emphasise the linguistic aspect. Vermeer (as cited in Nord, 1997: 13), for instance, describes translation as a "complex form of action, whereby someone provides information on a text (source language material) in a new situation and under changed functional, cultural and linguistic conditions." He also classifies translation as “a type of transfer where communicative verbal and non-verbal signs are transferred from one language into another” (1997:11), although translation cannot be seen as a one-to-one transfer between languages due to different cultural contexts. Nida and Taber (1969:12) see translation as a reproduction “in the receptor language of the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message in terms of meaning and in terms of style.”

In line with Nida and Taber, Catford (1965:20) emphasises the equivalent-based linguistic vision of translation, which is presented as “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL).” These definitions concentrate on the SL text, its style and content, and recommend preserving the features of the ST as far as possible.

The 1970s and 1980s have been characterised by a move away from the linguistic view on translation and focusing on a functionalist and communicative approach to the analysis of translation. Reiss, for instance, builds her understanding of translation on the concept of equivalence, but “views the text, rather than words or sentence, as the level at which
communication is achieved” (Munday, 2001: 73). Holz-Mänttäri at the same time speaks about ‘translatorial action’ that incorporates concepts from communication theory and sees translation as “purpose-driven, outcome-oriented human interaction” (see Munday, 2001: 77) over cultural barriers that enables functionally oriented communication. The functionalist view on translation was developed further by Vermeer, and later by Reiss and Nord, within the skopos theory. The skopos theory views translation as a ‘translatorial action that has a purpose and a result’ (Vermeer, 1989/2000:221).

At a later stage, one can see translation theorists moving away from language and focusing on “interaction between translation and culture” (Munday, 2001:127). This view is followed by Lefevere and Basnett who claim that the traditional view in translation studies must be replaced by the approach derived from cultural studies that stresses the role of ideology in intercultural communication (Baker, 1998:280). Here translation is a form of rewriting of an original text, and “all rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology”.

The review of various definitions and views on translation shows that all of them point to the fact that both ST and the TT should have an invariant core. The researcher agrees with supporters of the functional view of translation that the meaning contained in the ST should be transferred into the TT, with elements of culture playing an essential role in translation because “translating means comparing cultures” (Nord, 1997:34).

5.3.1 Methods of translation

A discussion of some approaches to the theories of translation should provide the translator of consumer-oriented texts with the appropriate tools of analysis of the ST. It will also give him/her an idea of the type of information that should be conveyed in the TT and how the required goal could be achieved. The approaches in these theories differ; however, they share a common goal: producing in the TL a text of the same communicative value as the ST.

Although many different types and methods of translation have been featured in the literature on the basis of different criteria and approaches, “most traditional thinking about translation typology has been binary” (Chesterman 2000), an opposition which will be discussed below.
5.3.1.1 Dynamic equivalence vs. Formal equivalence

Nida’s theory of translation developed from his practical work of translating the Bible in the 1940s onwards. He underlines the importance of dynamic or functional equivalence over that of formal equivalence in his evaluation of a translation approach.

From Nida’s point of view (1964:159), formal equivalence

… focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content … One is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as close as possibly the different elements in the source language.

Dynamic or functional equivalence, on the other hand, is based on the extra-linguistic, communicative effect. The message in this case has to be “tailored to the receptor’s linguistic needs and cultural expectation” (Munday, 2001:42) and “aims at complete naturalness of expressions” (Nida, 1964:159).

This theory assumes that any TT that is not equivalent to the ST on these counts is regarded as a non-translation.

5.3.1.2 Semantic vs. Communicative translation

In the centre of the debate regarding semantic vs. communicative translation strategy is the extent to which the ST may be altered in the process of translation.

Newmark (1981:22) proposes a distinction between semantic and communicative translation, where the former is defined as a mode of text transfer that uses “the bare syntactic and semantic constraints of the TL to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the author.” The communicative translation is a mode aimed at “producing the same effect on the TL readers as was produced by the original on the SL readers” (1981:22).

Chesterman (2000: par. 5) describes semantic translation as being close to the original, a more literal translation: “It gives highest priority to the meaning and form of the original.” From his point of view, this type of translation is appropriate in translations of texts that have high status, such as religious texts and legal texts. Communicative translation, on the other hand, prioritises the effectiveness of the message to be put across. It focuses on factors such as readability and naturalness, and is appropriate to translations of ‘pragmatic’ texts. The actual form of the original here is not closely bound to its intended meaning. These are texts like advertisements, tourist brochures, product descriptions and manuals, although attention must be paid to the factual content of the text.
5.3.1.3 Covert vs. Overt translation

House (1997:29) proposes a similar binary typology: covert vs. overt translations. Her model is based on pragmatic theories of language use and requires that a translation has a function “equivalent to that of the original.” Thus it “provides for the analysis of the linguistic-discoursal as well as the situational-cultural particularities of the source and target texts” (House, 1998:199). Covert translations are those that are intended not to be recognised by target readers as translations. In other words, they do not seem to be distinguishable from non-translated texts of the same kind in the TL. Examples include advertisements, technical texts and newspaper texts.

Overt translations, on the other hand, are intended to be recognised as translations because they are more closely linked with the source culture. Examples are translations of political speeches, poems, sermons. Due to the existence of cultural presuppositions in the source and target language communities, House (1998:199) also suggests applying a ‘cultural filter’, i.e. “a set of cross-cultural dimensions along which members of the two cultures differ in sociocultural predispositions and communicative preferences”.

5.3.1.4 Skopos theory

The Skopos theory (Skopostheorie), introduced by Vermeer and followed later by Reiss, sees translation governed by the skopos or purpose of the translational action. Vermeer and Reiss speak of Funktionskonstanz (functional constancy) where the skopos or purpose is the same for both ST and TT. At the same time they recognise that there exist situations where the skopos differs, i.e. a change of function (Funktionsänderung) between the two occurs. In such instances the translator must aim for adequacy, or appropriateness to the skopos (Reiss, 1984:45).

The main factor that determines the ultimate form of the TT is the receiver or addressee. Therefore, the translator must start with a detailed analysis of the translation brief, which is presented by the initiator of the ST and should contain information about the intended text function, the target audience, the medium for text transmission, and similar requirements. Only after that can he or she make decisions on the appropriate strategy within the parameters of intratextual coherence (the TT should make sense to the target audience), and intertextual coherence (the TT should bear some meaningful relationship to the ST).
5.3.1.5 Documentary vs. Instrumental translation

Nord has developed her own functionalist typology based on the skopos theory. She makes a comparable distinction between types of translation by distinguishing between documentary and instrumental translation.

A documentary translation of a text is described as a document of another text where “a source-culture sender communicates with a source-culture audience via the source text under source-culture conditions” (Nord, 1997:47). No special allowances are made for the target context.

Instrumental translation, on the other hand, functions as an instrument of communication in its own right and is judged on how well it expresses its message. The aim is to produce an instrument in the TL “for a new communicative interaction between the source-culture sender and a target-culture audience” (Nord, 1997: 47). A translation of a computer manual, for instance, is in general instrumental, because its main aim is not an accurate representation of the original text, but to ensure that the reader understands how to install and use the computer.

5.3.1.6 Choice of translation strategy

Translation is a form of communication, and translators make it possible for communication to take place between members of different cultural communities. Motjope (2005:12) posits the view that the translator’s main task is “to bridge the linguistic imbalances that occur in our countries by making information accessible ...”. Nevertheless, the translation process cannot simply be reduced to a linguistic exercise, since there are also other factors, such as textual, cultural and situational aspects, which should be taken into consideration during the process of translation. The question arises here: what type of translation to choose and what translation strategy to follow? This dilemma is strengthened by House’s (1997:24) characterisation of translation: “The fundamental characteristic of a translation is that it is a text that is doubly bound: on the one hand to its source text and on the other hand to its recipients’ communicative conditions.”

While deciding on an appropriate strategy, the translator has to make a fundamental choice regarding the extent to which extent the reader of the TT should be made aware that the ST has originated from a different culture. Various factors influence his/her decision on a translation strategy, including the genre of the TT, the translator’s perception of the TT audience, the translator’s own ideology or even possibly his/her political agenda.
This treatise concentrates on the language of advertising, and the peculiarities and challenges of its translation with particular emphasis on cultural elements. As it has been mentioned in previous chapters, the most important aspect in international marketing and concomitant advertising is conveying the intended message that will influence consumers in a positive way, in other words, that will predispose them towards the advertised product or service.

It may therefore be concluded that a communicative approach, with emphasis on functionality in translation, would be most successful in arriving at the intended interpretation of the original meaning and be “consistent with the principle of relevance for the target readers, while administering these in the correct context” (Gutt, 1998:48). This being so, the researcher would also agree with Snell-Hornby (1990:82), who emphasises the role of function, that is to say, a socio-cultural rather than linguistic concept of translation: “The translation per se does not exist, and neither does the ‘perfect translation’. A translation is directly dependent on its prescribed function, which must be made clear from the start.”

As translation is communication, it is optimally relevant (a) when it enables the target readers to find out without unnecessary effort the meaning intended by the communicator; and (b) when the intended meaning is worth the reader’s effort, that is, when it provides adequate benefits to the readers. (Snell-Hornby, 1990: 43)

Mason (1998:32) agrees that a communicative translation is the one that takes into account the status of the participants. He also mentions that purposes of interaction, norms and conventions of interaction should be considered in the translation process, since only when these factors are taken into account, can effective communication and the intended purpose be achieved.

5.3.1.7 Norms and conventions

As with any other discipline, translation can be seen as a norm-governed activity. Though in respect of the concept of translation norms, there exists no unity: "While the literature on the subject is substantial, there is no unanimity on terminology or on the exact distinctions as regards the cluster of concepts that includes norms, conventions, rules, constraints, and so on" (Hermans 1999: 80). Furthermore, Hatim (2001:70) writes "The literature on the subject was extremely confused, and many contradictory normative models were in circulation."
Despite criticism and confusion over terminologies and different models, it is not the basic idea of the concept that is being denied. It is essential to be aware of the concept of norms as many translation theorists now agree with Hermans (1999:63) that “the belief in equivalence is an illusion.” It is worth considering the concept of ‘norms’ when translating culture-specific items.

Schäffner (1999:5) speaks about norms in general and depicts them as the “internalised behavioural constraints which embody the values shared by a community” or the knowledge of what counts as correct or appropriate communicative behaviour within a particular society. In the context of translation, norms are identified by studying a corpus of translations and identifying regular patterns, including strategies regularly adopted by translators of those texts.

Toury (1995/2000:202-206) distinguishes between two larger types of norms, applicable to translation: preliminary norms and operational norms. Preliminary norms have to do with the existence of a translation policy and the directness of translation while operational norms direct the decisions made during the act of translation itself. Though both norm types are interconnected, preliminary norms have both logical and chronological precedence over the operational ones.

Hermans (1999:84) identifies three aspects of norms:

- The 'norm' as a recurring, i.e. general pattern in behaviour.
- The directive force, i.e. pressure exerted on individuals' behaviour.
- The content of a norm, i.e. a value, a notion of what is correct.

These definitions not only explain the concept of norms, but also correlate closely with Hofstede's observable patterns in behaviour in different cultures and his model of cultural dimensions which were discussed earlier. Norms here are those patterns that lead individuals to agreement about what comprises correct behaviour. What one section of the society or historical period considers correct may be quite different from what others, or some of us nowadays, may call correct. Applying this point of view to norms in translation, one comes to the conclusion that "correctness in translation is relative—linguistically, socially, politically, ideologically" Hermans (1999:85). In other words, the notion of 'correctness' is peculiar to a certain translation setting, from the translator’s or the audience’s point of view.
5.4 Summary

From the literature review, it is obvious that translation theorists have various definitions of the concept of translation and support different approaches in translation. However, the above-mentioned typologies all share the point of view that translation is communication and the suggested translation processes are motivated by a theory of communication. Mason (1998:33) points out that a communicative/functional approach in translation studies can be seen as an approach “which relates the circumstance of the production of the source text as a communicative event to the social circumstances of the act of translating and the goals which it aims to achieve.”

In this chapter, an attempt was made to show what translation method(s) and techniques exist and what issues must be taken into consideration while deciding on an appropriate translation strategy. In the next chapter, an analysis of advertisements from diverse magazines will be carried out. Types of localisation and the role of cultural dimensions in the translation will be discussed and supported by examples.
In the previous chapters, the researcher illustrated the significance of cultural dimensions and concepts for international advertising. In addition, the main elements of advertisements were identified, while investigating particular features of the languages under consideration in this treatise. Furthermore, advantages and disadvantages of standardisation and localisation of advertisements, respectively, were discussed, and certain translation challenges in the process of transfer from one cultural environment to another, both verbal and non-verbal, were illustrated. In this chapter, the discussion will centre on a comparison of advertisements for different products in German and English. Strategies and methods used in the localisation process to compensate for the possible loss of meaning with a view to adapting the target language text to the target language readership will also be discussed.

6.1 Corpus of advertising texts

An analysis of and a comparison between the thematic and compositional structure of the German and English advertisements for certain products are presented in this treatise. The German texts refer to products made in Germany or being sold in Germany and not in other German-speaking countries. The English language advertisements concentrate in general on the South African scene, but also include texts from international editions of the English-speaking magazines.

Before discussing the results of the study, the researcher would like to raise a topic on the differences in communication within South Africa. These differences exist not only between the multitude of languages, namely 11 official languages in the country, but also between people, representatives of different races and cultures. While English is still the predominant language used in advertising, particularly in the printed media, and to a large extent, also Afrikaans, radio advertising is also broadcast in nine different African languages (depending on the area), and television advertising is conducted in some of those languages. The SABC as South Africa’s public broadcaster commits itself to “being the voice and vision of every South African ...[to] maintain distinct and separate radio services in each of the 11 official languages and treat all the official languages equitably on our television services” (www.sabc.co.za). The use of African language advertising and broadcasting is likely to
increase in order to reach more black consumers. Examples in this paper, however, are based on English language advertisements appearing in South Africa.

Most of the advertisements analysed are magazine advertisements for automotive and beauty products, including cars, perfumes, make-up, lipsticks and luxury items such as watches and jewellery.

### 6.2 Relationship between verbal and non-verbal elements

Any advertisement, as has been mentioned at the beginning of this paper, consists of verbal and non-verbal components. To the verbal components belong slogans, advertising text, and, obviously, the name of the brand. Non-verbal components are images, logos, colours, layouts and so on. Slater (1984:1) confirms that “advertising copy, in any language, usually is designed to catch the public eye and ear with appealing printed or spoken messages, sometimes together with attractive imagery.” It is essential to keep in mind the correlation between the text and the visual elements of an advertisement. If one pays attention only to the verbal part of the message, there is a danger that information contained in the non-verbal part of the advertisement will be missed. As pointed out in Chapter 2, visuals assist us with remembering verbal information and reinforce its impact on us. Messaris (1997:vii) further summarises three major roles that images can play in an advertisement:

They can elicit emotions by simulating the appearance of a real person or object; they can serve as photographic proof that something really did happen; and they can establish an implicit link between the thing that is being sold and some other image(s).

Thus, language and visuals complement each other and add to each other’s meaning in an advertisement and should represent a finely balanced blend of the offered information. These details are to be taken into consideration in the process of translation or localisation of an advertising message.

### 6.3 Types of localisation

It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that localisation of advertising messages has been gaining ground on the basis of the argument that “the relevance and the influence of the local culture are still very substantial in numerous countries around the globe including in Western Europe” (Guidère, 2005a;:1). The researcher has also tried to prove that the most appropriate type of translation of an advertisement is a communicative or functional translation, as it concentrates on the function and purpose of the advertising copy in the target
language and culture; or as Müller (1996:154) puts it, “the task of the advertising translator is to translate thoughts and ideas rather than words.”

In the next sections, examples of various advertisements or their essential elements will be discussed. The analysis will focus on strategies and methods of localisation.

6.3.1 Graphic adaptation

One of the examples of adaptation/localisation in international advertising is what one might call the ‘graphic adaptation’, where a transformation of the advertisement’s framework takes place. The image background or even the whole layout is adapted to the socio-cultural environment of the hosting country.

Example 1

In the advertisement for a new model of Volvo presented in the South African magazine Leisure Wheels, we find that one of the four images present in another Volvo advertisement (Appendix 1) has been replaced by a local image. To be precise, it depicts Table Mountain and the V&A Waterfront, world-famous South African landmarks. This substitution of an image is not insignificant, and as asserted by Guidère (www.translationdirectory.com), “it aims at adapting the semiotic elements of the original iconography to the imagination of the targeted ... consumers and to life scenes that are more common in the host societies.”

Example 2

The advertising copy of a private vehicle, published in the Oprah Magazine South Africa in February 2008 (Appendix 2) pictures a typical South African setting, featuring a young dynamic black lady in the driver’s seat of a sleek red Opel Corsa. In the background, there is a block of apartments with a branch of Sundance Gourmet Coffee Company, which is exclusive to Cape Town. Even though the researcher was not able to find an advertisement of the same product in the German printed media, it is obvious that these visuals would need adaptation when being translated into other languages. De Mooij and Keegan (cited in Müller, 1996: 157) explain the need for this type of adaptation: “Landscapes, buildings, traffic signs ... must all be neutral. Dutch, Danish and Belgian houses may look similar to the Japanese and Americans, but they look different to the Dutch, the Danish and the Belgians!”
Example 3

The following three advertisements have been combined into one example, since all demonstrate similar characteristics. These are advertisements for Mercedes, BMW and Audi, appearing in the South African magazines *Fair Lady*, *Glamour* and *Cars* in 2007 and in 2008 (Appendix 3). The striking feature of these visuals is, from the researcher’s point of view, a partial localisation of the images. Though the background pictures show us adapted images of the seaside scenery with South African flora and turquoise blue water to be found along the Garden route, for instance, the cars retain the same, or almost the same, image as known in Germany. Two of the cars have German number plates, and all of them have left-hand steering, and similarly, drive, or are positioned in the picture, on the right side of the road, unlike the custom in South Africa. One of the reasonable explanations for this phenomenon could be that those ‘preserved’ features hint at the allusion “Made in Germany”, which symbolises the quality and safety of the vehicle. Another explanation would be an instance of ignorance of the target culture, following the concept of standardisation in an international advertising campaign.

6.3.2 Verbal adaptation

It is not always possible to retain both the form and the content of the same copy in the translation. That is why a certain loss of textual meaning may occur. This phenomenon is evidenced in particular when puns and other source language bound features, such as allusions or metaphors require translation. The way we see and interpret these stylistic features suggests “the right kind of emotive association for the product” (Leech, 1966:182). The comparison between the English and German versions of an advertisement for the *L’Oréal* professional make-up remover (Appendix 4) shows that the English version manages to preserve the play on words:

*De-maq’ expert: “Every night, remove your make-up with an expert.”*

The German version, on the other side, states

*Demaq’ expert: “Perfekte Verträglichkeit für meine Haut, ohne zu reiben.”*  
(No side effects for my skin/Lack of side effects on my skin, without any need to rub.)

The non-verbal elements of the advertisements such as an image of the famous top-model Linda Evangelista, colours, images, have been preserved in both versions, English and German. The verbal communication has undergone complete translation, including slogan,
6.4 Translation of slogans

As pointed out before, a slogan is one of the verbal elements of an advertisement. Goddard (2002:123) sees it as “a phrase designed to be memorable, attaching to a product or service during a particular advertising campaign or throughout all its advertising, regardless of campaign.” As a part of a successful advertising copy, slogan encourages us to identify a certain brand with particular product(s); and they are very much about associations. These associations are based on the use of wordplay, alliteration, puns, metaphors, cultural beliefs and norms. Yet, it is not always possible to convey the same message in the translation.

The results of the present research show that not all slogans are generally translated into foreign languages. Firstly, there are short slogans in English that are preserved in all languages:

- *It’s a Sony!* (Sony)
- *... from Panasonic* (Panasonic)
- *Volvo. For life* (Volvo)
- *Feel the difference* (Ford)
- *Swiss Avant-Garde since 1860* (TAG Heuer)

Secondly, there are slogans that are retained in their original languages:

- *Vorsprung durch Technik* (Audi)
- *Un peu d’air sur terre* (Lacoste)
- *Das Auto* (VW)
- *Parfum de dépendence* (Opium from Yves Saint Laurent)

Thirdly, one comes across slogans that have been translated into the target languages:

- **Maybelline:**
  English: *Maybe she’s born with it, Maybe it’s Maybelline*
Another interesting finding of the analysis is the line “Made in Germany”, which is present in several original German advertisements. The national name is given not as Deutschland but rather in its international version, “Germany”. Piller (2001:154) explains this by the fact that German advertising now uses multilingualism, mainly in the form of English-German code-switching, to position consumers in various ways; and as everyone wants to be perceived as a global player, such a perception is best achieved through the use of English. English becomes the dominant voice of advertising. Besides, the common phrase ‘Made in Germany’ suggests “high quality, usually of technical and craft products, reinforces the connotations of ‘quality’, and, crucially, constructs the implied reader as someone who knows English” (Piller, 2001:154).

6.5 Examples of universal appeals in advertising

Some examples of advertising copy, which were published in German, South African and international magazines available in English, offer the same or very similar visual and textual content. Here are some examples: products of the Swiss watch maker TAGHeuer, elite watches from Rolex, luxury clothing and shoe items from Lacoste and Tod’s. World famous brands of perfumes and other designer items also belong in this category: Chanel, Dolce & Gabana, Giorgio Armani, and similar items (Appendix 6).
These types of advertisements are, in Cook’s opinion (1992:103), “ticklers with very short copy (typically around ten words, though sometimes no more than the brand name itself).” Fernandez (2003: par. 2) offers the following explanation for this phenomenon: These products symbolise what we call universal appeals of beauty, social prestige, luxury, and these, in their turn, awaken emotions that are universal and are independent of any culture.

6.6 Role of cultural dimensions in the translation process

In the previous chapters, the researcher has pointed to the differences in verbal and non-verbal communication in various societies based on different cultural dimensions. According to Hofstede’s and Hall’s models, one can divide societies into collectivistic and individualistic, feminine and masculine, high- and low-context cultures, and so on. All these differences affect our perception of the world and form our values and traditions. These differences obviously play a very significant role in advertising strategies in various cultures.

Example 1

In the selected examples of advertisements from the German language magazines such as Spiegel, Stern, Elle and others, the determining factors of an advertised vehicle are safety, newness, comfort, with aspects such as economy and environmental friendliness gaining more and more popularity. In the South African context (advertisements from Getaway, Glamour, Car and Leisure Wheels magazines), on the other hand, a car is presented as a luxury item. It demonstrates the social position/status and character of its owner. To own a private vehicle represents power and authority. The aspect of comfort and safety is present here as well, because it is not only a “luxury”, but also a means of transport. However, in comparison with the German advertising copy, a very important selling factor to some potential buyers would be the ability of the vehicle to overcome any obstacles that can occur on the road and its cross-country capacity.

It would be interesting to see if the underlined specifications of the vehicle would overlap in both cultures, depending on the potential customers. For instance, if a targeted consumer group represents young successful businessmen in any culture, the same criteria and features of a vehicle might be appealing to all of them.
Example 2

This advertisement is for a lengthening zero clump mascara from the American company *Maybelline*, introduced and presented in the German and South African printed media (Appendix 5).

In regard to the iconography, we find the same graphic elements in the English and German versions: the mascara is at the bottom of the page on the right; the advertising figure (a woman) is situated on the left-hand side of the image and we can see her silhouette depicting perfect eye lashes. She displays the same smile in the two advertisements and the background scene is the same in both images with the view of a big city. We can assume that the same scene has been shot from the same angle in both versions.

Regarding the verbal aspect, in both cases the brand name is clearly mentioned in the foreground (*Maybelline*). In other words, it reflects the identity of the product and guides the reading of the advertising message. However, the German version contains the addition of the word *Jade* since the brand is known in Germany as *Maybelline Jade*. This is due to the fact of the joint venture formed between two companies *Maybelline* and *Jade* in “an agreement to market and distribute exclusively some of the American firm's products in Germany. *Maybelline* already has similar deals with other firms in France and the UK” (www.encyclopedia.com).

The description of the product also differs in the two texts. Not only the presentation of the content itself, but also the sequence of the presentation is different. The English version speaks about a clump-free, sexier and more-refined look, while in German the aspect of sex appeal appears as the last point in the sequence. In addition to that, the explanation of sex appeal in German differs from the English version or, to be more precise, it takes the place of the “more defined” aspect of the product: So, the English reads:

*More refined: The new Lash length, perfectly defined.*

While in the German we find

*Sexier: Die neue Wimpernlänge, perfekt definiert (The new lash length, perfectly defined).*

These changes can also be attributed to the advertisements meant for dissimilar cultural surroundings where values and ideals differ from each other. Slater (1984:6) summarises that an advertiser must be mindful of the fact that each culture represents a different way of
coming to terms with life, thought, and a multitude of assumptions about social conventions and institutions, economics, politics, and the universe

6.7 Summary

Examples illustrated in this chapter show us several successful localisations of advertisements into other languages, even though they are not always seen as proper translations. For instance, Frost (2006, www.brandchannel.com) speaks about cultural adaptation in this case as “a very creative process that consists of finding an equivalent expression in the target language that conveys a similar message to the original.”

Anholt (2000:5) supports the view that a different advertising campaign must be created in each country to which the product will be introduced since

> Translating copy is like boiling lettuce. No matter how carefully you do it, the result is always disappointing… And you can call it what you like – I hear people using words like adaptation, transcreation, transculturation, transliteration … but it’s still a culinary felony and it’s still not going to make anyone’s mouth water.

He also points out the role of translation in an international advertising campaign where language is seen as consisting of words only, and translation only renders the literal meaning of words in the form of word-by-word translation (Anholt, 2000:5).

We should remember that the text of advertising copy is perceived not only as a verbal entity, but it also possesses a graphic identity that the translator should transfer: Whether it is the trademark, the brand name or the slogan, “the visual expression is as important as the verbal expression that underlies it” (Piller 2001:158). Anholt (2000:5) insists that it is not only words themselves that make an advertisement work, “but subtle combinations of those words, and most of all the echoes and repercussions of those words within the mind of the reader, as advertising is not made of words, but made of culture” (Anholt, 2000:5).
CHAPTER 7
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary of the research

Advertising has been a subject of research for many decades in various disciplines such as marketing, communication studies, social psychology, sociology, etc.. One aspect of advertising that has become of growing importance recently is cross-cultural advertising and analysis of its content. It is necessary “to gain insights into how cultural factors affect advertising strategies and expressions; how cultural values, norms and stereotypes are reflected in advertising (Niaz, 1996:11).

The main focus of this research was on the role of culture-specific elements in translation of advertisements and their influence on the choice of translation methods and techniques. Two main opposite techniques known as standardisation or localisation of the advertising message were discussed. After the discussion on advertising styles in Germany and in South Africa and an examination of characteristics, differences and similarities in advertising strategies, the influence of culture on advertising was considered. This cross-cultural analysis also compared cultural values and dimensions that lead to different perceptions and point of views.

At a later stage, particular samples of advertisements in the source and target language were studied; subsequently, most common translation techniques were summarised.

The main outcome of the treatise may be summarised as follows:

- Firstly, there exist significant differences in the way the above-mentioned cultures produce advertising messages, as well as different cultural values being reflected in advertising messages.
- Secondly, the presence of cross-cultural differences suggests that caution should be exercised when considering standardisation in advertising and other forms of promotional communication between different cultures. Localisation is the better option here.
• Thirdly, the existence of culture-specific elements in any advertising message, as a part of verbal or non-verbal communication, implies potential translation difficulties with cultural elements.

• Fourthly, the use of rhetorical devices, puns and associative meanings, or carrying “associations from other texts: ads, movies, novels, everyday talk” (Myers, 1994:4), makes it more difficult to understand advertising.

• Fifthly, after having discussed different theoretical approaches regarding translation of texts, the most applicable method of translation for this genre was identified as the communicative type of translation.

• Sixthly, no direct misrepresentations were identified in the translated texts, though certain elements of the text, either in verbal or non-verbal communication, could be interpreted as unchanged due to ignorance of the target culture, for instance, the standardisation of visuals.

7.2 Limitations of the study

The initial purpose of this research was to carry out a comparative investigation of advertising texts from different fields with German being a source language and South African English and Russian being target languages. Unfortunately, the scope of work appeared too vast for the purpose of this study. Firstly, the availability of magazines in South Africa in the above-mentioned languages was not sufficient for analysis. In the course of studying advertising samples, another challenge was identified, namely almost complete absence of identical or similar products in these three countries appearing on the market at the same time. It is worth mentioning, though, that advertisements for similar or identical products were indeed found in certain Russian and South African magazines.

7.3 Suggestions for future research

Cultural aspects present in most advertisements require special attention. They are embedded in the text (language) and context and are not always obvious at first sight. Newmark (1988:10) points out that translation is not only the transmission of knowledge and the creation of understanding, but also the transmission of culture. Future research could address the issue of combining the findings of this treatise with an attempt at answering the question whether it is possible to use the same strategies and expressions in international advertising,
and whether values, tastes and preferences of consumers around the world are converging. This could be achieved through a case study carried out with the assistance of both an international advertising agency and a translation agency or an individual translator.

Furthermore, an attempt could be made to compare advertising styles in the above-mentioned languages, German, Russian and South African English, and to identify possible differences in the use of terminology and glossaries.
Appendix 1


Appendix 2

Appendix 3


Appendix 4


Appendix 5


Appendix 6


Source: Stern, No. 48, November 2009.

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