



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

Università degli Studi di Padova

Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in
Lingue Moderne per la Comunicazione e la Cooperazione Internazionale
Classe LM-38

Tesi di Laurea

*The International Advertising of Italian
Food Products: An Empirical Study of the
Made in Italy Effects on English-Speaking
Consumers*

Relatore
Prof. Mauro Capestro

Laureanda
Giorgia Brusadin
n° matr. 2057617 / LMLCC

Correlatrice
Prof. Fiona Clare Dalziel

Anno Accademico 2022 / 2023

To everyone who supported me in this journey,
To those who are here and those who are not anymore.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Preface	1
1.2 Italy around the world	4
1.2.1 Italian as a cultural language	4
1.2.2 The Made in Italy in the last years	5
1.2.3 The perceived qualities of Made in Italy and its communication	7
1.3 Research purpose and goals	8
1.4 Research structure	10
1.4.1 Synthesis of the second chapter: literature review	10
1.4.2 Synthesis of the third chapter: purpose and methodology of the research	11
1.4.3 Synthesis of the fourth chapter: results	12
1.4.4 Synthesis of the fifth chapter: discussion and conclusion	12
CHAPTER 2. LANGUAGE'S INFLUENCE ON TRADE AND THE EFFECTS OF CULTURAL, PERSONAL, AND BRAND ELEMENTS ON CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOUR	13
2.1 Introduction to contemporary marketing	13
2.2 The role of communication in the international market	17
2.3 Two strategies: standardisation vs adaptation	22
2.4 Cultural factor influencing consumers' behaviour	24

2.4.1 The importance of culture	24
2.4.2 Hofstede's cultural factors	26
2.4.3 Uncertainty Avoidance Index	29
2.5 Consumer ethnocentrism influencing consumers' behaviour	32
2.6 Country-of-origin effect	35
2.7 Promotional strategies and perception of Italy abroad	39
2.8 The relevance of the brand	41
2.9 Consumer behaviour patterns	43
2.9.1 Intention to buy	44
2.9.2 Attitude towards the ad	45
2.9.3 Word of mouth	47
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY	49
3.1 The purpose of the research	49
3.2 Methodological approach	51
3.2.1 Description of the research	51
3.2.2 An Italian excellence: Gorgonzola DOP	55
3.2.3 The empirical research	58
3.2.3.1 The questionnaire	58
3.2.3.2 Sample	67
3.3 Method of analysis	74
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS	77

4.1 Presentation of the results	77
4.2 Results of cultural and individual factors	77
4.3 Product and brand evaluation results	81
4.4 Advertisement perception results	83
4.5 Results concerning consumer behaviour	84
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	87
5.1 Discussion	87
5.2 Conclusion	94
5.2.1 Theoretical implications	97
5.2.2 Marketing implications	100
5.3 Limits and future research	102
LIST OF FIGURES	105
REFERENCES	107
ELECTRONIC SOURCES	123
APPENDIX	127
RIASSUNTO	141
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	151

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

Italian food products have earned immense global appreciation for their exquisite flavours, rich culinary traditions, and meticulous craftsmanship. From the savoury depths of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese to the velvety indulgence of extra virgin olive oil, Italian food products are celebrated worldwide. The unmistakable aroma of freshly brewed espresso, the tender folds of homemade pasta, and the vibrant tang of San Marzano tomatoes all contribute to the allure of Italian cuisine. Traditional Italian food products, such as Prosciutto di Parma, Balsamic Vinegar from Modena, and Mozzarella di Bufala Campana, are treasured for their authentic regional origins and centuries-old production methods. The dedication to quality, authenticity, and time-honoured techniques has made Italian food products a culinary ambassador, embodying the essence of the Mediterranean diet and captivating taste buds with their irresistible charm. Whether it's the simplicity of bruschetta or the complexity of aged balsamic vinegar, Italian food products continue to delight and inspire food lovers across the globe, creating a delicious link to the heart and soul of Italy.

In this increasingly globalised society, however, Italian enterprises and food manufacturing companies encounter the challenge of effectively communicating the essence of “Made in Italy” - the passion and meticulous effort, over than the quality and food safety, invested in their products - to give these products importance and value in comparison to the imitations (Nicoletti et al., 2007).

Advertising of Made in Italy food products showcases a delightful fusion of culinary artistry, tradition, and quality. With vibrant imagery, captivating storytelling, and mouth-watering visuals, these advertisements aim to transport viewers to the picturesque landscapes and bustling markets of Italy. They highlight the authentic ingredients, time-honoured techniques, and regional specialties that make Italian cuisine renowned worldwide, celebrating the rich heritage and gastronomic treasures that the Made in Italy label represents. Whether it's the texture of handmade pasta, the aroma of espresso, or the flavours of artisanal cheeses and cured meats, the advertising of Made in Italy food products tantalises the senses and invites consumers on a culinary journey. These advertisements create a desire to savour the authentic tastes of Italy, invoking a sense of indulgence, sophistication, and the joy of sharing a delicious meal with loved ones (Bettiol, 2015).

However, we are unable to adequately appreciate the cultural complexity that underlies the Italian product. One of the main reasons is due to our inability to effectively communicate the elements that distinguish the Made in Italy. The mistake that our companies often make is to take for granted that the consumer is familiar with the cultural context that underlies the product, what it is called “cultural heritage”. It “represents a powerful tool to communicate the identity of companies and territories and has played a vital role in the process of enrichment of the reputational heritage of countries” (Cappelli et al., 2019, p. 32). Numerous studies in economic and managerial literature have consistently shown that cultural heritage plays a crucial role as a tool for ensuring the long-term viability and prosperity of companies. It significantly influences the creation of value and provides a competitive edge in the economic landscape (Cerquetti and Montella, 2012).

Four reasons are identified, for which is difficult to communicate the Made in Italy, to convey to consumers the Italian cultural heritage (Bettiol, 2015):

- 1) the so-called *trucchi del mestiere*: very often it is the producers themselves who do not want to reveal the production processes, the manufacturing, the ingredients in order to keep their product secret. This, however, does not help the consumer to create a deep contact with what he is buying;
- 2) working on the communication *ex-post*, instead of *ex-ante*, when it is still possible to capture the suggestions and interests of consumers;
- 3) the delay in the recruitment of new technologies;
- 4) the sales channel of the products: on-site distributors are often used, and they do not establish direct contact with the customer and therefore do not communicate the qualities and particularities of the Made in Italy product.

Not to forget, culture plays a significant role in shaping our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, including our response to marketing and advertising messages. It holds a profound influence on the way we perceive marketing stimuli - for example, texts, images, videos, colours. Therefore, crafting effective advertising messages necessitates a thorough understanding of the target market's culture and incorporating cultural considerations into the message development process (De Mooij and Hofstede, 2010).

In conclusion, the relationship between advertising, Made in Italy food products, and cultural influences encompasses various dimensions. While advertising plays a vital role in promoting food products and driving sales, it also has the potential to perpetuate negative cultural stereotypes and discourage consumers from exploring and purchasing foreign products, including those labelled as Made in Italy. As companies, it is crucial to be mindful of how advertising impacts consumers' food preferences and make informed

choices about how to promote the Made in Italy food products. Food businesses must acknowledge the cultural implications of their advertising efforts and strive to develop effective campaigns that enhance sales and revenue. Ultimately, this introduction sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the Made in Italy food industry, its marketing strategies, and its societal ramifications.

1.2 Italy around the world

1.2.1 Italian as a cultural language

Italian, a melodious and expressive language, resonates far beyond the borders of Italy itself. As a “cultural language”, defined by Merriam-Webster as “a language that is learned by many members of other speech communities for the sake of access to the culture of which it is the vehicle”, Italian is spoken and learned by people all around the globe, weaving its way into the cultural fabric of numerous countries (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). Italian's allure lies not only in its romantic charm but also in its historical and artistic significance: indeed, Italian is predominantly studied outside of Italy by individuals with a passion for history, art, music, and literature. Over two million people across 119 countries engage in the study of Italian (MAECI, 2019). Despite having fewer national funding resources compared to other countries, Italian cultural institutes maintain a significant presence on the international stage. Established by a national law in 1926, these institutes serve to strengthen diplomatic ties and maintain connections with Italian emigrants. As of 2019, there were 83 Italian cultural institutes spread across Europe, America, Africa, Oceania, and Asia. They actively promote Italian culture and language by organising cultural events and providing Italian language courses (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). Languages become a means to convey values, beliefs, customs, symbols and

images that become part of the advertised products themselves (Gurevich et al., 2021): in this way, Italian, the language of passion and tradition, serves as the perfect medium for expressing the love and reverence Italians have for their culinary heritage. When it comes to food, Italian is more than just a means of communication; it becomes an integral part of the gastronomic experience itself, bringing an extra dimension of flavour to the table. Through Italian, one can immerse themselves in the rich tapestry of culinary traditions. The language effortlessly conveys the joy and enthusiasm Italians have for sharing their meals, creating a sense of camaraderie and connection. Whether it's the rhythmic pronunciation of *buon appetito* or the exuberant exclamations of *delizioso* and *buonissimo*, Italian transforms mere words into a celebration of food and all its delicious wonders.

In the years, several Italian food brands have used Italian to promote their products. For instance, Coelsanus “suggest that surfers follow *l'onda del gusto* (the wave of *taste*) in Italian - even though the site is in English”, while Riso Gallo uses both an Italian word and an Italian slogan “Make creamy risotto, *pronto* - *RISO GALLO NUMERO UNO IN ITALIA*” in one of its abroad advertising campaigns (Chiaro, 2004, p. 322). These examples showcase how Italian food brands leverage the language to evoke emotions, convey authenticity, and establish a strong connection to Italian culture and heritage in their marketing strategies.

1.2.2 The Made in Italy in the last years

Made in Italy products have long been celebrated and sought after worldwide, contributing significantly to Italy's export industry. Renowned for their quality, craftsmanship, and design, Made in Italy products have carved a distinctive niche in

global markets. In collaboration with WPP and Kantar, BrandZ compiled a list of the Top 30 Most Valuable Italian Brands in 2019, revealing that the Made in Italy phenomenon continues to thrive, largely driven by the growth of the high-end luxury sector. From fashion and luxury goods to automotive, furniture, and food, Italian exports showcase a diverse range of industries. These products embody the essence of Italian culture, artistry, and tradition, captivating consumers with their elegance and attention to detail.

Due to the historical events of recent years (such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the War in Ukraine), Italian exports have shown a diverse sectoral trend influenced by the effects of inflation. However, concerning productions traditionally associated with the Made in Italy label, the food sector continued its expansion in 2022. It has consistently grown over the past three years, with a variation in value of +19.6% (compared to +12.5% in 2021 and +4.1% in 2020). If we consider the period from 2017 to 2021, it can be observed that in the agri-food sector - which is particularly significant due to its weight in the overall picture - Italy has shown a more dynamic trend in exports compared to the global average and other major EU economies (ISTAT, 2023).

The prestige that quality Italian products have acquired on the national and international market is the result of a long process that intertwines entrepreneurial innovation, territorial traditions, and strategies for the protection and enhancement of the natural and landscape heritage. Moreover, the Made in Italy quality food and wine sector ranks first among European Union (EU) countries in terms of the number of awards conferred by the EU. In particular, the agri-food sector counts, by 2022, 319 recognitions between *Denominazione di origine protetta* (Dop - 173), *Indicazione geografica protetta* (Igp - 142) e *Specialità tradizionale garantita* (Stg - 4) (ISTAT, 2023).

1.2.3 The perceived qualities of Made in Italy and its communication

Italy is renowned for its craftsmanship and design, and is often associated with luxury, style and authenticity (Bettiol, 2015; Temperini et al., 2016). Italian products are known for their elegance, sophistication, and attention to detail. Examples include fashion and luxury brands (such as Gucci and Armani), leather goods, and sports cars (such as Ferrari and Lamborghini). We cannot forget to mention the tradition for food and cooking that make Italian cuisine one of the most appreciated abroad. Indeed, in Made in Italy research, it is usually explained about the "4A", that are the 4 major fields in which Made in Italy is appreciated worldwide (www.delleconomia.it):

- *Abbigliamento* (Fashion): This refers to the fashion and clothing industry in Italy. The Made in Italy label is highly regarded in the fashion world, known for its exquisite craftsmanship, high-quality fabrics, and timeless designs. Italian fashion brands such as Versace, Armani, Dolce&Gabbana, Bottega Veneta only to mention a few, are renowned for their attention to detail, elegance, and sophistication.
- *Arredamento* (Furniture): It represents the furniture and interior design sector in Italy. Italian furniture is recognized for its craftsmanship, innovative designs, and use of high-quality materials. Italian furniture brands often prioritise aesthetics, functionality, and durability, creating pieces that blend beauty and practicality (De Fusco, 2014).
- *Alimentare* (Food): This refers to the food industry, which encompasses a wide range of products such as pasta, olive oil, wines, cheeses, and more. Italian cuisine is celebrated worldwide for its authenticity, regional diversity, and use of fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The Made in Italy label assures consumers of the quality and adherence to traditional production methods. This is the sector on which further

analysis will be carried out. According to a survey carried out by *BBC Good Food* in October 2003, Italian restaurants are the most preferred by their readers, followed by British food itself (Chiaro, 2004). This is a clear signal of how much the Italian food sector is appreciated abroad.

- *Automazione* (Automation): This represents the automation and machinery industry. Italian companies are known for their expertise in manufacturing advanced machinery and automation solutions. Italian-made machinery is recognized for its precision, reliability, and technological innovation, serving various sectors such as manufacturing, automotive, and robotics.

These four sectors — *abbigliamento*, *arredamento*, *alimentare*, and *automazione* — highlight the diverse industries in which Italy has a strong presence and is renowned for its excellence. Each sector contributes to the reputation of Italian products as being of high quality, innovative, and rooted in a rich cultural heritage.

Finally, studies on the Made in Italy brand have consistently shown its significant and widespread brand awareness across various countries. The brand evokes positive attributes associated with Italy as a country in the minds of consumers. These perceptions include crucial elements like image, reputation, and product quality. Additionally, consumers' behaviours are influenced, as they demonstrate a willingness to pay a premium price for products bearing the Made in Italy label (Cappelli et al., 2019).

1.3 Research purpose and goals

The main purpose of this master's thesis is to assess if the “adaptation” (in this case using a customized advertisement, with a mixed English and Italian message) of international advertising to the cultural characteristics of people receiving the ad may be

more effective than the standardization of the ad message, in order to demonstrate, through collected and analysed data, how it is now essential to consider cultural and verbal aspects when creating an effective advertising campaign targeted at a specific audience, in particular a foreign one. In today's globalised society, where we are constantly bombarded with advertising, the risk of creating misguided and ineffective advertisements has increased, consequently raising the risk of business failures and economic as well as reputational losses. The objective of this research is to study the influence of cultural values and of the Italian language on the perception of advertisements for Italian food products targeting an English-speaking audience. It seeks to understand and justify whether, in a world where Italian food culture is highly regarded globally, it is more effective to present communication and advertising that references Italy using Italian words and/or sentences or whether it is more effective to fully adapt the advertising to the language of the societies under consideration, specifically by conceptualising, writing, and/or translating the advertisement into English. More specifically, the analysis of cultural factors in the UK and the USA will help understand the extent to which the culture of these countries influences the perception of a particular product's advertisement.

The research presented in the following chapters will utilise Hofstede's model of cultural values to understand the behaviour of English and American culture, as well as the concepts of “consumer ethnocentrism” and “country of origin effect”. It will then present the results of a survey conducted, where respondents will be presented with an advertising image of a specific Italian food product, namely Gorgonzola DOP. The surveys will be two: one will contain an original advertisement of Gorgonzola, published on its Facebook profile page, fully translated by an original Italian advertisement. The

second survey will be perfectly the same, with the only difference of the text of the image: indeed, part of the English text will be replaced by the original Italian sentence.

1.4 Research structure

After this first introductory chapter, this master's dissertation will be structured into four additional chapters, corresponding to the research phases conducted.

- Chapter 2 provides a summary of the existing literature relevant to the various theoretical constructs upon which this research is based.
- Chapter 3 delves into the study's objectives, research methodology, and variables utilised in the survey.
- Chapter 4 is entirely devoted to presenting the results obtained from the analysis of the survey variables, along with their discussion and interpretation for the development of theoretical and marketing implications.
- Chapter 5 represents the final section, containing the conclusions drawn from the previously presented and discussed results.

Finally, the Appendix includes the questionnaire in English (with the two different advertising stimuli) administered to the respondents, so English-speaking people who took part in this quantitative study.

1.4.1 Synthesis of the second chapter: literature review

The second chapter offers an overview of existing research from a theoretical standpoint. It commences by introducing the modern notion of marketing, encompassing its experiential dimension, consumer-centric approach, as well as segmentation and targeting phases. The subsequent focus lies on exploring the interplay between language

and trade, with special emphasis on the language's role in advertising. The chapter is then structured into sections that delve into the theoretical elucidation of the central elements of this study. These sections are dedicated to dissecting the cultural, individual, product, and brand dimensions of marketing. The portrayal of diverse national characteristics and consumer types is facilitated by the differentiation of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, particularly the Uncertainty Avoidance Index, alongside the notions of consumer ethnocentrism and the Country-of-Origin effect. Subsequently, the exploration shifts to the concept of Made in Italy, including its perceived quality and distinguishing traits, examined to understand their influence on consumer behaviour. Integral to this, the roles of brand familiarity, brand image, and brand experience are highlighted as pivotal in shaping how advertising messages resonate with the audience. The concluding portion of this chapter undertakes a theoretical discourse on the marketing determinants that influence consumer behaviour. This encompasses factors such as consumers' purchase intentions, their attitudes toward advertisements and products, as well as whether they engage in discussions regarding the product and brand.

1.4.2 Synthesis of the third chapter: purpose and methodology of the research

The third chapter presents a comprehensive overview of the study's primary objectives and discusses the methodology employed to achieve them. With a clear focus on investigating how language-based marketing and advertisements for Made in Italy food products influence English-speaking consumers, the chapter aims to define optimal marketing strategies for capturing the target customers. It provides a detailed description of the experiment, including the specific advertisement under scrutiny, as well as the variables and questionnaire items incorporated into the research. The structure and

content of the questionnaire are explicitly outlined, encompassing the variables, sub-dimensions comprising them, and individual items associated with each.

Furthermore, the chapter delves into the sample composition and sub-samples, emphasising factors such as respondents' country of residence, age, gender, employment, and education. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a presentation of the chosen method of analysis.

1.4.3 Synthesis of the fourth chapter: results

Chapter four centres around the presentation and analysis of results, utilising graphs that depict each variable alongside their corresponding dimensions, as outlined in chapter three. The primary focus is on examining and highlighting the disparities between the two sample groups of respondents to the surveys, which feature distinct stimuli. The chapter emphasises noteworthy findings that exhibit significant statistical variations.

1.4.4 Synthesis of the fifth chapter: discussion and conclusion

The final chapter of this dissertation engages in a comprehensive discussion of the analysis results presented in chapter four. It specifically examines the variations observed in the questionnaires, finally paying close attention to the disparities between the previously mentioned sample groups of participants. The chapter emphasises the contribution of the current study and its theoretical implications, shedding light on the topics addressed in the second chapter. Additionally, this chapter identifies the limitations of the research and lays the groundwork for future investigations in this field.

CHAPTER 2

**LANGUAGE'S INFLUENCE ON TRADE AND THE EFFECTS OF
CULTURAL, PERSONAL, AND BRAND ELEMENTS ON CONSUMERS'
BEHAVIOUR**

2.1 Introduction to contemporary marketing

At its core, marketing refers to the activities, processes, and strategies employed by businesses to promote their products or services, create customer value, and ultimately drive sales. It encompasses a wide range of activities, including market research, product development, pricing, distribution, and promotion, all aimed at satisfying customers' needs and wants profitably (Blythe and Cedrola, 2013).

Marketing plays a crucial role in today's business landscape, enabling organisations to effectively reach and engage their target audience in the most effective way possible. The focus of modern marketing is undoubtedly the individual customers, their values, beliefs, and experiences. For this reason, great attention is given to the experience that a person, a customer, has in the awareness, purchase, and use of a good or service. Experiential marketing, through Customer Experience Management (CEM), seeks to make the most of the 5 Strategic Experience Modules (SEM), which align with the 5 senses: Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate (Schmitt and Ferraresi, 2018). For the customer, indeed, intrinsic product/service features are no longer sufficient: they pay close attention, for example, to how the product is presented, packaged, to the values shared by the company or brand, and how the product is advertised on social media. As Kotler summarises, “today’s successful companies have one thing in common: [...] they

are strongly customer focused and heavily committed to marketing” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012, p. 4). So, customer-focused and dedicated to marketing, successful companies prioritise the importance of satisfying customers and investing in effective marketing strategies. However, to effectively satisfy customers, it is crucial to understand and cater to their needs, desires and preferences.

“Marketing is about customers” (Kotler et al., 2005, p.5). This essential quote means that consumers are the lifeblood of any business, and therefore of every marketing strategy. Understanding customers’ preferences, motivations, and purchasing behaviour is fundamental to the success of marketing efforts. Through market research and analysis, marketers gain insights into consumers' needs, demographics, and psychographics, allowing them to tailor their strategies and offerings accordingly. So, segmentation becomes a fundamental concept. Firstly introduced by W.R. Smith (1957), it involves dividing a broad target market into distinct groups or segments based on shared characteristics or needs. Segments are often described as needing to be internally homogeneous while being externally heterogeneous, meaning that within each segment, individuals share similar characteristics or needs, but across segments, there are notable differences in these traits or requirements. By identifying these segments, marketers can tailor their strategies and offerings to better meet the specific preferences and requirements of each group, leading to more effective and targeted marketing campaigns (Blythe and Cedrola, 2013).

Market segmentation does not have a one-size-fits-all approach. Marketers must explore various segmentation variables, both individually and in combination, to identify the optimal way to understand the market structure. The major variables typically are four and they lead to these major segmentations (Kotler et al., 2005):

- Geographic segmentation: it involves partitioning the market based on different geographic units, such as nations, states, regions, counties, cities, or neighbourhoods. A company can choose to operate within specific geographical areas or expand its operations to cover all areas while considering the geographical variations in customer needs and preferences.
- Demographic segmentation: it consists in dividing the market into distinct groups based on variables such as age, gender, sexual orientation, family size, family life cycle, income, occupation, education, religion, ethnic community, and nationality. Demographic factors are widely used as the primary basis for segmenting customer groups due to their popularity. This is attributed to the close correlation between consumer needs, preferences, and usage patterns with demographic variables. Additionally, demographic variables are relatively easier to measure compared to other types of variables. Even when market segments are initially defined using alternative bases such as personality or behaviour, understanding their demographics is essential for assessing target market size and efficiently reaching the intended audience.
- Geodemographics: it is the field that examines the correlation between geographical location and demographics. Initially created by the CACI Market Analysis Group as ACORN (A Classification Of Residential Neighbourhoods), geodemographics utilises 40 variables derived from population census data to cluster residential areas based on similarities.
- Psychographic segmentation: it involves categorising buyers into groups based on their social class, lifestyle, or personality traits. It recognizes that individuals within

the same demographic group can exhibit distinct psychographic profiles, indicating variations in their attitudes, interests, and values.

- Behavioural segmentation: it classifies buyers into groups based on their knowledge, attitudes, usage patterns, or responses to a product. It recognizes that consumer behaviour plays a pivotal role in determining their purchasing decisions and preferences. Buyers can be categorised based on the specific occasions when they conceive the idea to buy, make their purchase, or utilise the purchased item, or based on the benefits they are looking for in a product, service or experience. Usage rate and loyalty status are variables used in this type of segmentation too. They show clearly how a customer behaves regarding a product, or a class of them.

Companies that embrace a market-oriented approach, guided by the concept of target market, undertake two additional key activities after segmentation: targeting, which involves selecting the specific segments to focus on, and positioning. Briefly, targeting entails the careful identification of the market to which a particular business initiative should be directed. Essentially, while segmentation divides the overall market, targeting narrows down and pinpoints the specific market segment that warrants attention. It is evident that segmentation and targeting are closely intertwined, as the segmentation process often provides valuable insights into which segments hold greater profitability potential or aids the company in discovering new pathways to achieve its strategic goals. Positioning, on the other hand, establishes the relationship between a brand and other brands that cater to the same segment. It is intricately tied to how consumers perceive the brand in comparison to its competitors, determining the brand's relative position in the market landscape (Blythe and Cedrola, 2013).

Identifying and appealing to a specific target audience allows a company to tailor its products, services, and messaging to meet the unique needs and preferences of that audience. However, even the most well-defined target audience will remain elusive without effective communication. Effective communication bridges the gap between a company's positioning in the market and its intended audience, conveying the brand's value proposition and creating a strong connection. It ensures that the company's carefully crafted positioning resonates with consumers, ultimately leading to brand loyalty, increased market share, and long-term success.

2.2 The role of communication in the international market

Effective communication lies at the heart of successful marketing. In contemporary marketing, success extends beyond the development of a quality product, competitive pricing, and accessibility for target customers. Companies must proactively engage in effective communication with both current and potential customers, leaving nothing to chance. Just as strong communication is essential in establishing and nurturing relationships, it plays a vital role in a company's endeavour to cultivate and maintain customer relationships (Kotler et al., 2005). Communication involves the creation and dissemination of messages that resonate with the target audience, selected thanks to the already mentioned segmentation and targeting. A company's comprehensive marketing communication (or promotion) mix comprises a tailored combination of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing tools. This strategic blend of communication approaches enables the company to effectively pursue its advertising and marketing objectives. The goal is to convey a clear and compelling

message that informs, persuades, and influences consumers' perceptions and behaviours (Kotler et al., 2005).

According to Kotler et al. (2008, p. 737), advertising can be defined as “any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor”. Advertising serves as a powerful tool within the marketing mix, enabling businesses to reach a wide audience and create brand awareness. Its impact on consumers' behaviour is significant: well-crafted advertising campaigns can shape consumers' perceptions, generate interest, and influence their purchasing decisions. Through strategic use of visuals, persuasive language, and emotional appeal, advertisers aim to create a positive association between their brand and the desired consumer response (Rauwers et al., 2018).

However, the definition Kotler (2008) gave is very general and does not take into consideration a fundamental issue for all those companies that want to expand their horizons and enter new markets by exporting their products or services abroad. As the desire to expand beyond national borders and the necessity to ride the wave of globalisation become crucial, companies increasingly find themselves faced with the need to translate their advertising texts into languages other than the original, by preparing messages deemed most suitable for the type of market to which they are directed. This alludes to the fact that advertising, to be effective, must be adapted to the market, that is, to the people and culture it is targeted towards.

In recent decades, the trend of translation has reached unprecedented levels. With the rise of globalisation, an increasing number of companies, organisations, and brands have embraced the opportunity to expand into new foreign markets, extending their products and services beyond local and national boundaries (Calabrese et al., 2015; Ortiz-

Ospina et al., 2018). This process of internationalisation entails translating all written and non-written materials related to the company into the language of the target country or region, or at least into widely spoken languages such as English, French, Spanish, and now Chinese. This enables potential customers, whom the company identifies as the intended recipients of its offerings, to access and gather information about them. Consequently, the internationalisation of a company necessitates the translation of various components, including websites, brochures, catalogues, informational materials, promotional content, and advertising copy.

The translation of promotional and advertising texts is not an easy job at all. It necessitates the utilisation of techniques that, while varying depending on the specific type of text, all share the common goal of preserving their persuasive intent. Achieving this objective often entails comprehensive cultural adaptation and, at times, extensive rewriting (Smith, 2002; Torresi, 2021). Language plays a crucial role in everyday life, and in marketing too, since it can be acknowledged as both a code of communication and an important component of culture (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). Translating verbal elements in advertisements poses several challenges, also because language transforms into a medium through which suggestions and symbols are communicated, intertwining with the very essence of the products themselves (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). One major difficulty lies in capturing the cultural nuances and references embedded in the original text. Genres characterised by high persuasion and low information, such as many business-to-consumer texts, particularly advertisements, often rely on wordplay, idiomatic expressions, neologisms, and culturally specific references to engage the audience. Translating these elements requires not only linguistic proficiency but also a deep understanding of the target culture. Finding equivalent expressions or creating new

ones that convey the intended message and evoke the same emotions can be a complex task. Additionally, maintaining the brand's voice and identity across different languages can be challenging, as certain slogans or taglines may not have a direct equivalent in the target language. Striking the right balance between faithfulness to the original and adaptation to the target culture is key to ensuring the translated advertisement effectively resonates with the audience and achieves its intended impact (St.Amant, 2019).

Moreover, in addition to the verbal text, visuals and non-verbal elements play a crucial role in conveying information. Indeed, “communication is achieved not only, and not primarily, through verbal language, but also through other sign systems” (Torresi, 2008, p.63). Alongside descriptive pictures and photographs that offer insights into the target audience, product nature, and associated image, other elements like typography, layout (including font type and background colours), and website navigation structure also impact the transcreation process, providing both opportunities and constraints. Visual elements, much like language, in fact, communicate cultural values and stereotypes, often revealing distinct indexical and symbolic connections. For instance, various cultures assign different meanings to colours, with specific colours holding political, social, or even commercial significance within a particular community. In addition, visuals have the power to transmit the essence of a culture to other cultures. For example, when promoting agro-food products, advertisements aimed at capturing the essence of Italian culture, or "Italianicity", rely heavily on photographic techniques and lighting to evoke a sense of genuineness and authenticity (Torresi, 2008).

The transfer of advertising and promotional material across languages, cultures, and markets can be referred to by various terms. Some of these include “translation”, “adaptation”, “localization”, and “transcreation”, each highlighting different aspects of

the same process. While translation primarily involves the transfer of concepts from one language to another in written form, adaptation aims to fulfil the purpose of the source text. On the other hand, localisation, a more specific term often used for advertisements, websites, and software, highlights the cross-cultural aspect of the process. It emphasises the need to tailor the promotional text to the target market in order to maintain its persuasive effectiveness. This may involve transcreation, which involves reconstructing the entire promotional text to ensure it sounds and reads naturally and creatively in the target language and culture (Benetello, 2018; Diaz-Millon and Olvera-Lobo, 2023; Torresi, 2021). Often, in order to create a translation that fulfils the intended function of the original advertisement, the result can be very different from the source element. Indeed, most of the time, this process challenges traditional notions of accuracy and fidelity to the source text. To sum it up, in promotional texts, loyalty does not pertain to adhering strictly to the literal wording, original content, or message, but rather to fulfilling the intended function. The level of freedom in transcreation is typically determined by the information/persuasion ratio. When the persuasion aspect is stronger and the informational content is lower, there is a greater likelihood, and possibly a necessity, for transcreation to take place (Torresi, 2008; 2021).

In the era of globalization, the necessity to translate advertisements is unmistakable, as businesses strive to reach diverse international markets. However, this requirement gives rise to a critical dilemma in international advertising: should companies pursue standardisation, where a uniform message is maintained across all markets, or should they opt for adaptation, tailoring their advertising campaigns to resonate with the unique cultural and linguistic nuances of each target audience? This debate between standardisation and adaptation lies at the heart of international advertising

strategy, where striking the right balance can significantly impact a brand's success on the global stage.

2.3 Two strategies: standardisation vs adaptation

As we said, globalisation has fundamentally reshaped the landscape of business in the 21st century and companies around the world have felt the need and desire to export their products as a means of expanding their reach and tapping into new markets. Nonetheless, certain companies engage in passive product exportation, neglecting to delve into the understanding of external factors and international rivals that can impact market demand and competitiveness. This pursuit of global expansion typically follows two distinct approaches: internationalisation and localization. Internationalisation involves offering standardised products or services to global markets, aiming for consistency in branding and communication strategies across borders. On the other hand, localization adapts products and strategies to suit the unique preferences and cultural nuances of local markets (De Martino, Reid and Zyglidopoulos, 2006).

Looking at it from the perspective of marketing strategy, this dichotomy translates into two distinct approaches: standardisation and adaptation strategies, each with its unique implications and advantages. Standardisation entails maintaining a consistent and uniform marketing approach across different markets, emphasising efficiency and cost-effectiveness by using the same strategies and messaging globally. Nevertheless, there is a drawback to standardisation: it often leads to "generic" advertisements achieved by removing certain verbal elements, such as wordplay, or visuals that might not be effective in a specific cultural context, or because they are rooted in a global culture. In contrast, adaptation strategy involves tailoring marketing efforts to accommodate the specific

cultural, economic, and social nuances of each target market (Calabrese et al., 2015). This approach recognizes the importance of localization, ensuring that products and messaging resonate effectively within the local context. Adaptation is based on the idea that a product's concept consists of utility (technical characteristics), image (perceived value of the product), and symbolism (social value, associations, stereotypes), including the use of the language of the target country (Theodosiou and Leonidou, 2003). The fundamental principle behind the adaptation strategy is that, when tailoring advertising to resonate with a distinct culture, it goes beyond mere translation of text; the comprehensive communication strategy must also align with the specific audience (Calabrese et al., 2015).

The literature suggests that a well-balanced approach, often referred to as "glocalization" (Samiee and Roth, 1992), could be the way forward. Glocalization involves crafting a source text (ST) with global relevance, centred around a message that can resonate similarly across diverse cultural contexts. Buzzell (1968) later shifted his focus towards the selective standardisation and localization of elements within these messages. In essence, this strategy calls for minimal adaptation, particularly in terms of style. In summary, it encourages advertisers to think globally while acting locally, adopting a "glocal" or "multi-local" mindset that fosters flexibility.

These two strategies represent a fundamental choice that companies must make when navigating the complexities of global markets, with each having its merits and challenges. Striking the right balance between these approaches is crucial for companies looking to thrive in an increasingly interconnected global marketplace. However, in order to reach this goal — to create (or “transcreate”) an effective advertisement for the target culture — companies and brands need to know the targeted audience and its culture.

Understanding the target culture, those individuals whom the text seeks to persuade, is crucial as it guides us in making informed decisions regarding the appropriate language to employ.

2.4 Cultural factor influencing consumers' behaviour

2.4.1 The importance of culture

Culture is widely recognized as the collective lifestyle, encompassing the prevailing customs and beliefs, embraced by a specific community at a particular time. The concept of culture has been studied by various disciplines throughout history. Anthropology is frequently acknowledged as the pioneering discipline that extensively investigated the intricacies of culture. Eminent anthropologists like Edward Burnett Tylor and Franz Boas made substantial advancements in comprehending culture during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (www.britannica.com). These early anthropologists established the groundwork for the study of culture and facilitated subsequent scholars in delving deeper into its complexities.

Given what we have discussed so far, it is not surprising that in recent years, culture has rapidly emerged as a central point in consumers' behaviour research. This is because culture significantly influences individuals' attitudes, values, beliefs, and preferences: culture shapes how people perceive and interpret the world around them, including products, services, and marketing messages (Paul et al., 2006). Understanding the cultural context is crucial for businesses seeking to effectively connect with their target audience. Cultural factors such as language, traditions, social norms, and cultural symbols profoundly impact consumers' purchasing decisions, brand loyalty, and brand associations. By acknowledging and respecting cultural differences, businesses can tailor

their marketing strategies, product offerings, and customer experiences to align with the values and expectations of specific cultural groups (Holzmüller and Stöttinger, 2001). The study of customers' behaviour must consider culture as a fundamental lens through which consumers' motivations, perceptions, and actions are shaped, ultimately leading to more successful and culturally relevant marketing efforts (de Mooij, 2016). Analysing the characteristic cultural values of the target culture enables the advertising company and the translator, who physically translates and potentially adapts the text to the target language, to make informed decisions about which strategy to employ - whether to modify the message, create a new text from scratch, or linguistically adapt the existing text (Torresi, 2021).

Over the years, several models and frameworks have emerged for cultural analysis, providing the basis for creating personalised advertising campaigns for different countries. The most well-known and widely used models for the study of cultural values are (De Mooij, 2016):

- Hofstede's 6-D model (2001): This model correlates scores obtained by different countries across six dimensions with various manifestations of people's behaviour, including consumer behaviour in the process of purchasing a product or service. This model will be used and explained in more detail in the upcoming paragraph of the thesis.
- Schwartz (1992): This model primarily focuses on a social perspective, aligning with his interest in the social functioning of human beings. After analysing 200 samples across over 80 nations, Schwartz identified a set of eleven basic value types (Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Spirituality, Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Conformity, Tradition, Security, Power), which he grouped into four

broad value areas: Self-Enhancement, Openness to Change, Self-Transcendence, and Conservation. Schwartz assumed that actions stemming from specific values have practical, psychological, and social consequences. Thus, according to Schwartz, studying cultural values allows predictions about how people from that culture will behave (Schwartz, 2012).

- Project GLOBE (Global Leadership and Behavior Effectiveness): Involving 500 researchers in 150 countries, “[...] this study demonstrated the considerable influence of culture on societal leadership expectations and the importance of matching CEO behaviours to expectations for leadership effectiveness” (www.globeproject.com). The study relates dimensions to economic and social indicators to understand the role of culture in "effective leadership" and how matching cultural expectations predicts success in leadership positions. Countries can be grouped into nine cultural dimensions: Uncertainty Avoidance, Assertiveness, Gender Differentiation/Egalitarianism, Performance Orientation, Humane Orientation, In-Group Collectivism, Institutional Collectivism, Power Distance, and Future Orientation. However, it was found that sometimes "the cultural values (how things are expected to be) of a country do not match its existing practices ("how things are done")." The research ultimately led to the grouping of countries into ten clusters that showed significant similarities in various cultural aspects (www.globeproject.com).

2.4.2 Hofstede's cultural factors

One approach that can be useful for comprehending cultural differences is provided by Hofstede. Geert Hofstede is a renowned Dutch social psychologist and management scholar. He is best known for his extensive research on cross-cultural

differences and the development of cultural dimensions theory. Born on October 2, 1928, in the Netherlands, Hofstede has made significant contributions to the field of intercultural studies. He carried out one of the most extensive investigations into how culture influences workplace values: he meticulously examined a vast database of employee value scores collected within IBM from 1967 to 1973. This comprehensive dataset encompassed over 70 countries. In his initial analysis, Hofstede focused on 40 countries with the largest groups of respondents, and later expanded the study to include 50 countries and 3 regions (Zainuddin et al., 2018). The findings of this research led to the development of his influential cultural dimensions theory, which identified and defined several key dimensions that help understand and compare cultures.

Hofstede's research, particularly his identification of his cultural dimensions has had a significant impact on the field of cross-cultural studies, intercultural communication, and international business management. Geert Hofstede's work has been widely cited and his cultural dimensions theory continues to be used as a framework to understand cultural differences and their implications in various fields, including organisational behaviour, marketing, and international relations. His research has greatly contributed to advancing our understanding of the influence of culture on human behaviour and interactions.

The six dimensions of national culture identified by Hofstede (1983) in his influential cross-cultural studies are as follows:

- **Power Distance Index (PDI):** This dimension measures the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect unequal power distribution. High PDI scores indicate a greater acceptance of hierarchy and authority, while low scores reflect a preference for equality and a more egalitarian society.

- Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV): This dimension examines the degree of interdependence among individuals within a society. High IDV scores indicate a focus on individualism, emphasising personal freedom, autonomy, and self-expression. Low IDV scores reflect collectivism, emphasising group harmony, cooperation, and loyalty.
- Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS): This dimension reflects the extent to which a society values assertiveness, competitiveness, and material success (masculine traits) versus nurturing, cooperation, and quality of life (feminine traits). High MAS scores represent a more competitive and achievement-oriented culture, while low scores signify a greater emphasis on caring, quality of life, and work-life balance.
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI): This dimension measures the extent to which a society feels threatened by ambiguity, uncertainty, and risk. High UAI scores indicate a preference for structure, rules, and regulations to minimise uncertainty and anxiety. Low UAI scores suggest a higher tolerance for ambiguity and a greater acceptance of change.
- Long-Term Orientation vs. Short-Term Orientation (LTO): This dimension examines the orientation toward time, with a focus on the future versus the past and present. High LTO scores reflect a society that values perseverance, thrift, and long-term planning. Low LTO scores represent a focus on tradition, fulfilling social obligations, and maintaining face in the present.
- Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND): This dimension explores the degree of control over gratifying desires and impulses. High IND scores indicate a society that allows for gratification of basic human drives, such as enjoying life and having fun. Low IND

scores reflect a more restrained culture that suppresses gratification and emphasises self-discipline and strict norms.

These dimensions provide a framework for understanding cultural differences across countries and their impact on various aspects of society, including business practices, communication styles, and social norms.

2.4.3 Uncertainty Avoidance Index

We will now take a deeper look at the UAI, since it is central for the research work carried out in this dissertation. As we have already said, the dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance, as identified by Hofstede (1983), refers to the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and tries to avoid it by establishing strict rules, regulations, and social norms (Burton, 1998). According to Hofstede (2001, p. 148), “Uncertainty-avoiding cultures shun ambiguous situations. People in such cultures look for structure in their organisations, institutions and relationships, which makes events clearly interpretable and predictable”. In the author's analysis, a clear distinction is drawn between anxiety and fear. Fear is characterised by the presence of an object, whereas anxiety arises in the absence of any specific object. Similarly, the author differentiates between risk and uncertainty. Risk is associated with a defined object, whereas uncertainty lacks a specific object of reference (Burton, 1998). Hofstede (1983) introduced in his studies and works about UAI, as other things, Table 3 that summarises the Connotations of the Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension, in which readers can easily compare characteristics of countries with low and high UAI (p. 61).

Figure 1: Hofstede's Connotations of the Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension

Low UAI	High UAI
The uncertainty inherent in life is more easily accepted and each day is taken as it comes.	The uncertainty inherent in life is felt as a continuous threat that must be fought.
Ease, lower stress	Higher anxiety and stress
Time is free.	Time is money.
Hard work is not a virtue per se.	Inner urge to work hard
Weaker superegos	Strong superegos
Aggressive behavior is frowned upon.	Aggressive behavior of self and others is accepted.
Less showing of emotions	More showing of emotions
Conflict and competition can be contained on the level of fair play and used constructively.	Conflict and competition can unleash aggression and should therefore be avoided.
More acceptance of dissent	Strong need for consensus
Deviance not felt as threatening; greater tolerance	Deviant persons and ideas are dangerous; intolerance
Less nationalism	Nationalism
More positive attitude toward younger people	Younger people are suspect
Less conservatism	Conservatism; law and order
More willingness to take risks in life	Concern with security in life
Achievement determined in terms of recognition	Achievement defined in terms of security
Relativism, empiricism	Search for ultimate, absolute truths and values
There should be as few rules as possible.	Need for written rules and regulations
If rules cannot be kept, we should change them.	If rules cannot be kept, we are sinners and should repent.
Belief in generalists and common sense	Belief in experts and their knowledge
The authorities are there to serve the citizens.	Ordinary citizens are incompetent compared with the authorities.

Source: Hofstede, 1983.

The high UA culture “seeks clarity, structure and purity,” whereas the low UA culture “is comfortable with ambiguity, chaos, novelty, and convenience” (Hofstede, 2001, p.161). Individuals from cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tend to prefer structured organisations with clear rules and well-defined relationships. In uncertain situations where they cannot predict the outcome, they may opt to take risks and proactively address

issues instead of waiting passively to see what unfolds. The inclination to define concepts and have a sense of certainty to feel secure or reduce anxiety undoubtedly has implications for intercultural communication: indeed, this can be seen in attitudes toward physical matter, as in racism (Burton, 1998). Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance are often intrigued by differences and can adapt to encounters with the unknown by embracing a framework of relativism rather than absolutism. They are less threatened by the unfamiliar and are more open to exploring the unknown (Burton, 1998). In the business context, weak uncertainty-avoidance cultures are inclined to foster innovation as they are more accepting of deviance from the norm. On the other hand, strong uncertainty avoidance cultures excel in implementing production due to their meticulous attention to detail and emphasis on punctuality (Burton, 1998).

The consequences of uncertainty avoidance on consumer behaviour can manifest in several ways. Roozmand et al., (2011) in their essay, remind readers how several factors, such as culture and personality, influence consumer behaviour. The motivation behind their study is to understand why certain individuals are willing to take risks when purchasing new or unfamiliar products, while others adopt a more conservative approach in their buying decisions. The research introduces a decision-making process for consumer agents, which incorporates the uncertainty avoidance dimension of culture and four personality traits: Quality-Oriented, Novelty-Tendency, Risk-Aversion, and Price-Sensitivity. The consumer agent follows three key steps in making decisions: percept, evaluation of alternatives, and post-purchase. The findings reveal that consumers with a high uncertainty avoidance tendency are inclined to buy products with low ambiguity, while those with a higher tolerance for uncertainty take risks and purchase new and unfamiliar products. Indeed, societies with high uncertainty avoidance tend to have a

lower tolerance for risk and ambiguity. Consumers from these societies may exhibit a greater aversion to purchasing unfamiliar or innovative products or engaging in new and uncertain consumption experiences. They prefer well-established international brands, products with clear benefits and guarantees, and predictable shopping environments (Roosmand et al., 2011).

It's important to note that these consequences are not absolute and can vary among individuals within a society. Consumer behaviour is influenced by a multitude of factors, and the impact of uncertainty avoidance is just one aspect in understanding cultural differences and its effects on consumption patterns.

2.5 Consumer ethnocentrism influencing consumers' behaviour

These models, Hofstede's one in particular, as I mentioned, help identify the cultural values specific to each culture. These values can explain why a product, service, or accessory may be hugely successful in one country while failing to attract the interest of the population in another. Cultural values can also explain significant differences in sales of a product or service that cannot be explained by economic or demographic factors (De Mooij, 2016).

However, we must not underestimate the personal variable within different cultures. Culture, by definition, is the analysis of behavioural tendencies and beliefs within a population, which consists of millions, if not billions, of individuals, each different from the other. Within each culture, there are immense numbers of variables that create subcultures with distinct characteristics. Let's take Italy as an example: the cultural values of people living in Northern Italy or in metropolitan cities like Milan or Turin are very different from the cultural values of people living in Southern Italy or rural areas.

Age is also an essential variable: within different cultures, the elderly and teenagers do not share the same cultural values (Na, Huang, and Park, 2017). Advertising campaigns targeting a particular country must also consider the specific target customer group they are addressing. Consumer ethnocentrism is an example of how individual preferences and beliefs can make a culture very heterogeneous.

Consumer ethnocentrism refers to a consumer's belief or tendency to prefer products or services that are produced domestically rather than those from foreign countries (Ma et al., 2019). It is a concept rooted in ethnocentrism, which refers to the tendency of individuals or groups to evaluate and judge other cultures based on the standards, values, and beliefs of their own culture. It is a concept that often leads to the belief that one's own culture or ethnic group is superior or more important than others (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). In this sense, consumer ethnocentrism extends this notion to consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions.

Consumers with high levels of ethnocentrism tend to exhibit a preference for domestic products due to various reasons, such as nationalistic pride, concerns about quality or safety, loyalty to local industries, or a desire to support the local economy. They may view foreign products as inferior or perceive them as a threat to domestic industries and economy (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). From a functional perspective, consumer ethnocentrism provides individuals with a sense of identity, a feeling of belongingness, and, notably for our objectives, a comprehension of the acceptable or unacceptable purchasing behaviour within their own group. Indeed, consumer ethnocentrism can influence consumers' attitudes and behaviours, leading them to actively seek out and purchase products that are made in their own country or to have a negative perception of

foreign brands and goods. This preference for domestic products can impact international trade, market entry strategies, and global marketing efforts (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

This mindset can have several consequences, both positive and negative. Some of the key consequences of consumer ethnocentrism are the domestic market protection, leading to protectionism and favouring local industries, the nationalistic pride and the sense of cultural identity as consumers show loyalty to products and brands originating from their own country, the reduced global trade, since consumers may be less inclined to purchase foreign products, and consequently the missed opportunities, since this limits their exposure to innovative and diverse options, potentially hindering their choices and access to superior products or services (de Ruyter et al., 1998).

However, it is important to note that consumer ethnocentrism is not a universal trait, and individuals vary in their levels of ethnocentrism. Factors such as exposure to different cultures, global travel, international exposure through media, and personal values can all shape a consumer's level of ethnocentrism and their willingness to embrace foreign products (de Ruyter, 1998; Ma et al., 2019). Generally, individuals who exhibit higher levels of patriotism, conservatism, and collectivism tend to display stronger consumer ethnocentric tendencies (de Ruyter, 1998). Consumers who possess a heightened level of cultural sensitivity exhibit more positive attitudes and experience less threat towards other culture-ethnic groups. As a result, these consumers tend to show a greater preference for imported products compared to those with a lower degree of cultural sensitivity (Wang, 2018). In addition, consumer ethnocentrism is not universally negative or positive. While it can foster domestic economic growth and cultural pride, excessive ethnocentrism can hinder global cooperation, cultural exchange, and economic development. Striking a balance between appreciating one's own culture and embracing

cultural diversity is crucial for fostering a harmonious and interconnected global marketplace.

While the term "ethnocentrism" had been discussed in the field of sociology and anthropology before (it was originally introduced by William Graham Sumner in 1906), the theoretical framework underpinning the concept of consumer ethnocentrism was initially introduced by Terence A. Shimp and Subhash Sharma in 1987, marking a pivotal milestone in the realm of marketing research (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Since then, consumer ethnocentrism has been extensively studied and expanded upon by various scholars in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour. For instance, more recently Sedki Karoui and Romdhane Khemakhem in their article "Consumer ethnocentrism in developing countries" (2019) have argued how their homeland Tunisia and other developing countries have a different approach to consumer ethnocentrism since, generally, people from these countries have a very low level of it.

After everything we have said of it, we cannot notice how consumer ethnocentrism is strongly linked to the country of origin effect. Indeed, the first refers to consumers' beliefs and attitudes towards purchasing foreign products, while the second examines how consumers perceive and evaluate products based on their country of origin. In fact, the COO effect is the marketing concept that encompasses the varied consumer attitudes and perceptions towards different nations (de Ruyter, 1998).

2.6 Country-of-origin effect

The country of origin of a good refers either to the country, so the geographical location, in which the product is manufactured, produced or grown, or the home country of the brand (Lee et al., 2009). A certain country of origin has specific characteristics

commonly associated with it (Schaefer, 1995). For example, Germany is known for precision engineering and high-quality manufacturing, products made in Germany are often associated with reliability, durability, and engineering excellence. Examples include automobiles (such as Mercedes-Benz and BMW), machinery, and consumer electronics. Japan is recognized for technological innovation and efficiency, and products made in Japan are often associated with advanced electronics, reliability, and cutting-edge technology. Examples include electronics (such as Sony and Panasonic), automobiles (such as Toyota and Honda), and consumer appliances. France, on the other hand, is celebrated for its artistry, elegance, and culinary heritage, products made in France are often associated with luxury, refinement, and gastronomy. Examples include fashion and luxury brands (such as Chanel and Louis Vuitton), wines and champagnes, and perfumes. In the same way, the perceptions about Italy and Made in Italy products are equally strong.

Many companies strategically communicate the country of origin (COO) of their company or products to customers, aiming to leverage the patriotism of domestic customers or capitalise on positive stereotypes held by foreign customers about products from that particular country. Depending on the product category and target market, a robust COO can provide a competitive edge for companies and assist in capturing new markets. The COO of products is commonly conveyed through phrases such as "Made in ..." or through the use of origin labels. However, companies employ various explicit and implicit strategies beyond these methods to ensure the origin of their products is effectively communicated to consumers (Aichner, 2013).

In academic literature, the influence of a product's origin on customers is commonly referred to as the Country-of-Origin (COO) effect (Aichner, 2013). Also known as the "made-in" effect, it refers to the influence that a product's country of origin

has on consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing decisions (Pappu et al., 2005; Andéhn and Decosta, 2016). In 1965, Schooler initiated research on the impact of a country's image on product evaluation processes and purchasing behaviour. Since that time, this phenomenon has become one of the most extensively studied topics in scientific research within the realms of international marketing and consumer behaviour (Magier-Lakomy and Boguszewicz-Kreft, 2015).

The COO-effect suggests that consumers associate certain qualities, characteristics, and stereotypes with products originating from specific countries, and these perceptions influence their evaluation and preference for those products. The country of origin can impact consumer perceptions of quality, authenticity, trustworthiness, and cultural associations associated with a product. Consumers often use the country of origin as a cue to evaluate the product and assess the quality, reliability, and performance of it. If a product is associated with a country known for excellence in a particular industry or product category, consumers may have a positive bias and attribute higher quality to that product. Conversely, products from countries with a perceived lower quality image may be viewed less favourably (Schaefer, 1995; Magier-Lakomy and Boguszewicz-Kreft, 2015; Andéhn and Decosta, 2016). These stereotypes, cultural attitudes and images perceived of products with a certain country of origin can shape consumers' expectations and preferences and have implications for a brand's reputation. Brands that leverage the positive image and reputation of their home country may benefit from a halo effect, where consumers perceive their products as more desirable and of higher quality. On the other hand, brands from countries with negative associations may face challenges in overcoming those biases (Andéhn and Decosta, 2016).

The Country-of-Origin effect is not only significant in research but also holds great importance for companies. It serves as a fundamental aspect of marketing and branding strategies used by companies to capitalise on the positive associations and reputations linked to particular countries. By strategically aligning their products with specific countries known for excellence in certain industries, companies can harness the power of positive country associations to strengthen their marketing efforts and build a strong brand image (Hamzaoui and Merunka, 2006).

Generally, consumers are ready to spend more money for a branded product from a COO with a more favourable country image, even though the premium price varies across product categories (Cappelli et al., 2019). This can be explained because consumers often interpret the country-of-origin (COO) as a quality signal, which helps them navigate the purchase decision process and avoid information overload. By considering the COO, consumers can quickly filter through numerous options and focus their attention on products associated with countries known for high-quality standards. In this way, the COO acts as a valuable tool in streamlining the decision-making process and reducing the cognitive burden of evaluating multiple product attributes (Bilkey, 1982; Profeta, 2008).

As we have already stated, language and culture play a significant role in influencing the characteristics of traded goods. This is particularly evident in geographical branding or the "made-in" effect. In the case of goods that embody distinct cultural elements related to their country of origin, including linguistic forms, language and culture become defining factors in determining the nature and worth of the products. Having knowledge of the language and culture of the producing country proves advantageous in facilitating trade. It enables buyers in the purchasing country to better

comprehend the symbolic content and acknowledge the value of the goods being exchanged. Acquiring such knowledge through various means can, therefore, streamline the trading process (Maghssudipour et al., 2022).

Over the past years, several authors have analysed the country of origin effect by dissecting it into various dimensions. These dimensions highlight how each aspect can elicit distinct impacts on consumers' subjective perceptions when evaluating different options. For products, factors such as the country of assembly (COA), country of brand (COB), country of manufacture (COM), country of parts (COP) and country of design (COD) have been identified and delineated (Aichner, 2013; Vianelli e Marzano, 2012). For this thesis, however, we focus solely on the concept of "country of origin" as described at the beginning of the paragraph.

2.7 Promotional strategies and perception of Italy abroad

The iconic Made in Italy label stands as a prominent illustration of how geographical branding is becoming more and more valued and valuable. It effectively utilises symbols, stereotypes, and evocative cues deeply entrenched in particular locations, arousing consumer expectations and providing valuable information (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). The cultural essence embedded in Made in Italy goods transforms them into cultural artefacts, with the Italian language playing a pivotal role in this realm. Additionally, numerous instances showcase the use of Italian language and related symbols of Italian culture to promote these goods in international markets. Utilising Italian words reinforces the product's Italian identity and signals to potential international buyers that it stems from a rich and authentic tradition of artisanal

craftsmanship, elegant design, vibrant sensory elements, and more (Chiaro, 2004; Maghssudipour et al., 2022).

According to Delia Chiaro (2004), the foreign commercials of Italian products analysed can be classified into two distinct categories, each representing a different promotional approach based on how Italy is perceived by recipients outside the country. These categories are labelled as “traditional Italy” and “modern Italy”. In the case of the “traditional Italy” strategy, nine brands from the corpora taken into consideration highlight features such as tradition, naturalness of the product, and health benefits associated with consumption. These advertisements create a nostalgic ambiance of an ancient, rural Italy, evoking images of lush green hills, picturesque country spires, and housewives. The focus lies on the product's flavour, natural ingredients, authenticity, and its positive impact on health. To do this, the terms “flavour” and “taste” are employed in order to highlight the good flavour of the advertised product. The colours used are often those of the Italian flag: green, white, red. Conversely, the “modern Italy” strategy, emphasises elegance, taste, style, and, above all, modernity. It highlights Italy's reputation for chic design, sophistication, and a passion for the good life. This approach seeks to position the products in a contemporary and fashionable context, appealing to consumers' desire for stylish and refined experiences. Indeed, also the predominant colours change: here the most used ones are the shades of black and white, way more sophisticated. However, very often it is not possible to categorise the advertisement as “traditional” or “modern”. In fact, a single advertisement can use a series of different features, coming from both the strategies (Chiaro, 2004).

2.8 The relevance of the brand

In the realm of marketing endeavours, encompassing communication, the brand holds immense significance. In contemporary marketing, it transcends being a mere name (Wijaya, 2013); instead, it stands as a representation from a reputable source with the ability to cultivate connections of concepts within the minds of consumers (Kotler and Keller, 2015). Essentially, a brand represents a commitment from sellers or producers, consistently delivering a sequence of performance, advantages, and services to buyers (Wijaya, 2013). For this reason, one of the company's goals is to work towards enhancing its brand, shaping a strong, unique, and positive identity. Brands should be developed in a way that distinguishes them from each other; the connections they establish with consumers need to be unique, as only then can a lasting impression be left in the minds of consumers. Brand familiarity, image, and experience are integral components that significantly influence consumers' perceptions and choices during the process of choosing a product instead of another.

Brand familiarity indicates “the number of product-related experiences that have been accumulated by the consumer” (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987, p. 411). The level of brand familiarity a consumer possesses can shape their attitudes and preferences towards a product or service. A well-established brand with a strong presence in the market often evokes a sense of trust and credibility, making consumers more likely to consider it as a viable option. A certain level of brand familiarity directly impacts a consumer's trust in the brand, subsequently influencing their intention to make a purchase from the same brand. Confidence and familiarity represent the extent of certainty in the accuracy of consumers' evaluative assessment of the brand: indeed, a high level of brand knowledge would result in sentiments of increased contentment and trust (Ha and Perks, 2005; Laroche et al., 1996).

The brand image, on the other hand, encapsulates the emotions, associations, and values that consumers connect with a brand in time (Wijaya, 2013). According to Lee et al. (2014), the definition of brand image is “—the sum of a customer’s perceptions about a brand generated by the interaction of the cognitive, affective, and evaluative processes in a customer’s mind” (p. 1). A positive and resonant brand image can foster a deep emotional connection, leading to higher brand loyalty and advocacy (Biel, 1992). Complementing these aspects is the consumer's experience – the journey they undertake when interacting with a brand.

Over time, along with continuous communication, consumers would have had the opportunity to try the products or directly engage with the brand. This results in consumers developing specific experiences linked to the brand, which in turn create fresh meanings and emotions associated with the brand, further solidifying its image. This phase is known as brand experience (Beig and Nika, 2019). The amalgamation of a positive image and exhilarating encounters that offer positive significance and distinctive emotions ultimately bolsters the brand's position in consumers' minds and hearts. As a result, the brand gains substantial equity and tends to be preferred by consumers. A brand that garners favour and possesses strong equity tends to foster consumer loyalty, making it challenging for consumers to switch to other brands (Wijaya, 2013). Positive experiences, characterised by seamless interactions, exceptional customer service, and high-quality products, can leave a lasting impression that not only drives repeat business but also encourages word-of-mouth recommendations. In synergy, brand familiarity, image, and experience form a triad that shapes consumers' perceptions, decisions, and long-term relationships with brands.

The effectiveness of advertising for an already established brand significantly hinges on its ability to utilise the brand's positioning. The fundamental objective of successful advertising is to ensure that when consumers come across the product on shelves or online, they immediately comprehend the brand's commitment (brand promise) and hold trust in its quality and the company itself. The brand plays a role in aiding potential customers during their decision-making journey, particularly when they face challenges in fully assessing and comprehending a product's attributes. Consequently, the ultimate aim of a marketing strategy is to foster loyalty (brand loyalty), a mutually advantageous outcome: it streamlines the consumer's shopping experience and bolsters the advertiser's creation of brand value (brand equity), which encapsulates how consumers, distributors, suppliers, and competitors perceive a brand over a specific timeframe (Cebisa, 2007). This process nurtures a foundation of trust, steering consumers towards instinctively choosing products from the same brand.

As an integral aspect of their continuous strategy to build brand confidence, managers and marketers should vigilantly monitor the consumer landscape. Through a proactive approach, the potential for customers to favour a competing company, brand, and product can be foreseen and consequently averted (Ha and Perks, 2005).

2.9 Consumer behaviour patterns

After looking more in depth at the theoretical constructs behind this thesis, we can't forget how consumers' behaviour plays a pivotal role in shaping market dynamics and influencing business strategies. Understanding why individuals make certain purchasing decisions and how they interact with products and services is essential for companies aiming to thrive in today's competitive landscape. We have seen that a

multitude of factors come into play, including personal preferences, cultural background, and the perception of brands. Aspects of the consumer behaviour worth of mention are the intention to buy, the attitude towards the ad and the word of mouth.

2.9.1 Intention to buy

In marketing theory, the concept of “intention to buy” - or “purchase intention” - serves as a pivotal indicator of consumer behaviour and decision-making. It refers to an individual's predisposition or inclination to purchase a particular product or service in the foreseeable future. Studies have shown a robust connection between consumers' perceptions of a product and their intentions to make a purchase (Spears and Singh, 2004).

Intention to buy is regarded as a crucial precursor to actual purchasing actions and is influenced by a multitude of internal and external factors. These factors encompass personal preferences, perceptions of product quality, brand reputation, pricing considerations, and the broader socio-cultural context. In the evaluation stage of the purchasing process, the consumer ranks brands and forms purchase intentions. Generally, the consumer's purchase decision will be to buy the most preferred brand, but two factors can come between the purchase intention and the purchase decision: the attitudes of others and unexpected situational factors. If someone important to you thinks that you should buy an item instead of another, then the chances of you buying the suggested item are higher. On the other hand, the consumer may form a purchase intention based on factors such as expected income, expected price, and expected product benefits. However, unexpected events may change the purchase intention. Thus, preferences and even purchase intentions do not always result in actual purchase choice (Kotler and Amstrong, 2012).

Marketing scholars and practitioners place significant emphasis on understanding and analysing consumers' intention to buy, as it provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of marketing strategies and the potential success of new products or campaigns. By delving into the intricacies of intention to buy, businesses can tailor their efforts to align with consumer desires and expectations, ultimately fostering customer engagement and driving revenue growth.

2.9.2 Attitude towards the ad

Spears and Singh (2004) point out that dating back to 1936, Nixon acknowledged the logical connection that should exist between the attitude and the inclination to make a purchase decision or abstain from it. Indeed, personal opinions and attitudes are shaped through personal experiences and different kinds of education, subsequently influencing consumer buying decisions. Attitudes, as defined by Kotler and Armstrong (2012, p. 150), encompass consistent evaluations, feelings, and inclinations toward an object or concept. These attitudes determine preferences and inclinations, guiding whether individuals are drawn towards or repelled from something.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) put forth the notion that attitude represents the level of favourability or unfavourability - “a bipolar evaluative or affective dimension” - directed towards a particular object, action, or event (p. 2016). Fishbein and Ajzen's theory on attitudes and beliefs revolves around the idea that attitudes are shaped by an individual's beliefs and evaluations about a particular object or concept. They proposed that attitudes are formed based on the salient beliefs an individual holds at a given moment. These beliefs are subjective associations between different ideas. The strength and direction of an attitude depend on the individual's positive or negative evaluations of those beliefs. In

this framework, an attitude is essentially a reflection of the favourability or unfavourability of the beliefs associated with an object. This theory emphasises the crucial role beliefs play in influencing and shaping an individual's overall attitude toward something, and the subsequent intention to buy: indeed, marketing stimuli, like advertisements, initially impact how consumers perceive a product. Subsequently, the effect of marketing elements on attitudes is moderated by the adjusted salient beliefs. Attitudes, in turn, moderate forthcoming impacts on behavioural intentions (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

Mitchell and Olson (1981, p. 318), on the same wavelength, define brand attitude as an "individual's inner assessment of the brand." This is an exemplary definition as it encompasses two enduring facets of attitude, as highlighted by Giner-Sorolla (1999):

1. attitude is object-focused, as in Mitchell and Olson's case, towards a brand, and
2. attitude is characterised by evaluation, implying the attribution of a certain degree of positive or negative value to the object of attitude.

Notably, the third facet of Mitchell and Olson's definition – “internal evaluation” – adds to the significance. It suggests that attitude is an intrinsic psychological state.

Marketers are keen on understanding consumer opinions about specific products or services due to the significant impact on the purchasing process, both positively and negatively. The interconnected nature of personal viewpoints makes altering a single attitude challenging without influencing others. Thus, brands should generally aim to align their offerings with existing attitudes, rather than attempting to reshape opinions (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

2.9.3 Word of mouth

Word of mouth, a potent force in the realm of marketing, constitutes a pivotal factor impacting consumer purchasing decisions. It involves the transmission of opinions, recommendations, and experiences about products or services from one individual to another (Arndt, 1967). In general, consumers primarily acquire information about a product through commercial channels, which are managed by marketers. Nonetheless, the most impactful sources often have a personal nature. While commercial sources primarily provide information to the buyer, personal sources play a significant role in validating or appraising products for the buyer (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

Stemming from personal interactions, social networks, and online platforms, word of mouth operates as an authentic and impactful influencer in consumer decision-making. Unlike traditional advertising, which is often perceived as biased, word of mouth gains credibility due to its source being friends, family, or peers who share genuine insights. Recommendations and personal statements shared by reliable acquaintances, colleagues, and fellow customers often hold more credibility than those coming from corporate representatives (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

WOM serves as a conduit for positive, negative, or neutral sentiments. Positive WOM corresponds to favourable experiences and endorsements, while negative WOM encompasses critiques, adverse anecdotes, rumours, and private complaints (Anderson, 1998). Marketers often target opinion leaders, individuals within reference groups who possess the ability to influence others due to their knowledge, traits, or personalities. These influential figures garner consumer attention, giving rise to buzz marketing and brand ambassadors (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). In a digital age, where information dissemination is rapid and widespread, harnessing the power of positive word of mouth

has become a strategic imperative for businesses seeking to build trust, engage customers, and amplify their market presence.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 The purpose of the research

This dissertation has the purpose to investigate the impact of the Made in Italy phenomenon on English-speaking consumers. Emphasising the importance of culture and language, the study aims to uncover how Italian products are promoted in order to evoke a sense of luxury, elegance, tradition and artisanship globally. Conducting an empirical survey, the research examines consumer perceptions and emotional connections to the Made in Italy label. In doing so, in the present study, additional aspects have been taken into account, particularly the cultural backdrop, individual's attitudes and inclinations towards foreign products - i.e., consumer ethnocentrism and country of origin effect - with a particular focus on Made in Italy food products. Moreover, I've explored the potential to evoke a sense of “Italianness” in the consumers' minds through Italian language, emphasising its value. Additionally, we considered the level of engagement with the product and the overall experience customers have with the brand.

Cultural factors play a crucial role in comprehending how consumers perceive a brand or product and interpret advertising messages, as they are influenced by their cultural and societal backgrounds in doing so. In our study, this becomes particularly relevant due to the strong cultural connection between food and its country and culture of origin. Indeed, populations have a really strong bond with their culinary traditions and, in addition, have clear thoughts and perceptions of others' foods and recipes (Montanari, 2006). As a result, advertisers have the opportunity to incorporate key attributes of a

country into their campaigns, effectively enticing customers to make a purchase. Moreover, consumers' beliefs about foreign products imported in their own country play a pivotal role in shaping their purchasing choices. These beliefs are often influenced by a complex interplay of cultural, social, and economic factors. Perceptions regarding the quality, authenticity, and reputation of foreign goods can greatly impact consumer decisions. Positive stereotypes associated with certain countries' products might lead to a preference for those items due to the assumed superior craftsmanship or technology. Conversely, negative stereotypes might deter consumers from considering products from specific nations (Bilkey and Nes, 1982). Additionally, consumers' attitudes towards globalisation and the perceived impact of imported goods on local industries can further shape their preferences (Miguel et al., 2022). Therefore, understanding and managing these beliefs is crucial for businesses aiming to market foreign products successfully in a new market, as well as for policymakers seeking to foster balanced trade relationships and consumer satisfaction. Additional essential elements encompass those associated with the brand. Specifically, the exploration of brand experience delves into the emotions and sensations elicited from the instant a consumer encounters the brand or its promotional content, extending through to the post-purchase stage. A favourable brand experience commonly culminates in brand loyalty and a steadfast, enduring connection with the brand. A concluding significant aspect, possibly the most pertinent to this dissertation, pertains to the influence of language on the advertisement's perception, specifically focusing on the utilisation of the Italian language in the promotion of Made in Italy food products. This examination enables us to assess whether the perception of the advertised product varies based on the language employed for its promotion.

To reach the research purposes, a survey has been carried out on English-speaking consumers. The findings are expected to contribute to consumer behaviour and international marketing knowledge, providing valuable insights for businesses to capitalise on the allure of Italian products in English-speaking markets. Overall, the study aims to deepen the understanding of cross-cultural marketing and its influence on global consumer trends. To sum up, the following research questions are to be answered within this study:

RQ1: Does Italian language influence consumers' buying behaviour regarding Made in Italy products in international advertising?

RQ2: Does the use of Italian language in international advertising affect the perception of a Made in Italy food product?

3.2 Methodological approach

3.2.1 Description of the research

To achieve the research objectives, an online survey was distributed to a sample of English-speaking participants, mainly US-American and British respondents. To manipulate and, thus, assess the impact of the Italian language, two versions of the questionnaire were developed, both containing identical questions but differing in the stimulus (advertising message) presented. This approach allowed us to investigate the advertisement and language's potential to influence consumer behaviour and explore also the effects of other factors (i.e. cultural, brand, and product-related ones).

The survey employed a distinctive “between subject” approach in its design by incorporating both an original Gorgonzola DOP advertisement in one version, and an experimental version created by the researcher in the other one. This method was chosen

to investigate the nuanced impact of advertising variations on consumer perceptions. The utilisation of the original advertisement provided a baseline for comparison, enabling an assessment of how the modified version diverged from the established perception. The first version of the survey contains an original advertisement of Gorgonzola DOP posted on their English Facebook profile on the 17th February 2019 (Figure 2). It is, in fact, the literal translation of an advertisement written originally in Italian and published on the Italian Facebook profile on the 10th February 2019 (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Original ad in English used in the present study



Source: www.facebook.com

Figure 3: Original ad in Italian



Source: www.facebook.com

The two advertisements Gorgonzola DOP created differ only for the text. All the other elements are visibly the same. We can notice the predominant use of the colours of the Italian flag, both in the flag itself on the plate and on the food elements present: the green of the celery, the white of the cheese and the red of the cherry tomato. The universally recognized Italian flag not only symbolises national identity but also instantly evokes a sense of unparalleled quality and excellence inherently associated with Italy. The only other colour present is the blue of the writing, which relates to the colour of the brand itself. The role of advertising copy is crucial in both complementing and extending the visual message it accompanies. Within ad copy, messages are typically concise and straightforward, often recalling a single sensation or sense (sight, hearing, smell, taste or touch). For instance, when promoting food products, companies often create ads centred solely around the taste aspect (Krishna et al., 2016). As a proof, in this case too the message of the advertisement is concise and clearly refers to the “taste” etymological

area. Indeed, four words out of six (*good, sweet, spicy, taste*) are bonded to the taste experience. In the realm of food product advertising, the etymological dimension of “taste” delves into a complex interplay of sensory experiences, cultural influences, and linguistic nuances. Indeed, this advertisement can be considered a case of sensory marketing for this reason. According to Krishna et al. (2016), “sensory marketing can be defined as ‘marketing that engages the consumers’ senses and affects their perception, judgement and behaviour” (p. 142). Augmented cognitive simulation, consequently, amplifies the propensity to make purchases (Krishna et al., 2016). This multifaceted term - *taste* - not only refers to the sensation of flavour on the palate but also metaphorically extends to encompass preferences. It serves as a linguistic bridge, connecting the physical sensation of consuming food with broader concepts of desirability, quality, and national and personal identification. Indeed, the cheese is named as the “taste” of an entire nation, Italy, known and appreciated for the cheese industry. A final point to take into consideration is the orientation of the objects in the advertisement. Elder and Krishna (2012) demonstrate that if there is a match between handedness and object orientation, this facilitates the mental simulation of interacting with the object. Indeed, everything in the advertisement of Gorgonzola DOP is right-oriented, since the vast majority of people are right-handed.

The second version of the survey distributed to the respondents contains a research-specific stimulus, created ad hoc to capture the differences on the perception of the advertisement. In particular, the only element modified in it was the text of the message: I decided to maintain the first line (Good. Sweet. Spicy.) as the original version of the English advertisement, while introducing the second line of the original version of the Italian advertisement (*Il sapore dell’Italia*) (Figura 4).

Figure 4: Experimental ad created for and used in the present study



Source: Author's elaboration.

3.2.2 An Italian excellence: *Gorgonzola DOP*

As it could be already noticed, the brand taken in consideration in this dissertation is Gorgonzola DOP, an example of an excellent Made in Italy product appreciated all around the world.

Gorgonzola, a beloved Italian blue cheese, has a rich and storied history that dates back centuries. Legend has it that Gorgonzola was accidentally discovered in the town of Gorgonzola, located near Milan (Italy), in the late ninth century. Its popularity quickly spread throughout the region, and consequently throughout the country. Over time, the cheese gained recognition for its unique flavour and creamy texture, becoming a staple of Italian cuisine. To protect its authenticity and ensure quality, Gorgonzola was granted Protected Designation of Origin (*Denominazione di Origine Protetta*, DOP) status by the European Union, guaranteeing that it is produced following strict guidelines within

designated regions of Lombardy and Piedmont. Indeed, the decrees of 1955 and 1977 delimited the exclusive production and maturing area for this cheese (www.gorgonzola.com). Today, Gorgonzola DOP continues, in both its versions, the younger, sweet version (*Dolce*) or the more mature, spicier one (*Piccante*), to be revered for its distinct taste, earning a place of honour on cheese boards and in culinary creations worldwide, as a testament to its enduring legacy and exquisite craftsmanship.

During the 1930s, Gorgonzola cheese production reached an impressive milestone amidst the national cheese industry, which had a total output of approximately 2 million quintals. Gorgonzola alone accounted for a record-breaking 270,000 quintals, equivalent to 13.5% of the entire national cheese production. Notably, more than 60% (162,000 quintals) of this Gorgonzola cheese was already being exported abroad. Its popularity soared on English and French dining tables, as evident from newspaper reports at the time. In fact, Gorgonzola surpassed other cheese varieties in consumption, even claiming dominance at the renowned House of Commons restaurant in London. Export-wise, around 36% (20,000 quintals) of Gorgonzola cheese is destined for international markets. Germany and France are the primary consumer nations, accounting for over 50% of the total exports. Subsequently, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, and Spain are prominent European destinations, followed by the United States and Canada (www.gorgonzola.com). Exports of Gorgonzola DOP grew by +1.9% in 2022 to a volume of 25,191 tonnes, equal to 2,099,250 exported cheeses, with an increase in value of about 178 million euro (+16.4% compared to 2021) (www.foodweb.it).

Over the past years, the demand for this creamy and flavourful cheese has been steadily rising and the export data of Gorgonzola DOP has shown a significant increase

in the United States (+29,80% in 2021, compared to 2020). American food enthusiasts have developed a strong affinity for this Italian cheese, incorporating it into various dishes, such as salads, pastas, and gourmet cheese boards. In the UK, however, the country's exit from the EU impacted the general exports data: Gorgonzola DOP specifically recorded a decrease of 42% in 2021, compared to 2020 (www.gorgonzola.com).

A note that is worth doing at this point, considering the two countries in which research will be carried out, is the difference between Gorgonzola DOP and blue cheese. Essentially, while all varieties of Gorgonzola cheese exhibit a characteristic blue hue, not all cheeses possessing a blue appearance can be categorised as Gorgonzola. Blue cheese represents a broad classification encompassing various types of cheeses produced from diverse sources of milk, including cow, goat, and sheep. In contrast, Gorgonzola is a distinct subcategory within the realm of blue cheese, exclusively crafted from cow's milk and with all the restrictions we made previously (www.wisconsincheese.com). Among the prevalent blue cheeses, notable examples include English Stilton, French Roquefort, Danish Danablu, American Maytag, and the focus of our current discussion, the Italian Gorgonzola. (www.eatingwell.com).

The popularity of blue cheeses extends beyond Europe, with significant sales in North America, Australia, and other parts of the world. This wide distribution can be attributed to the versatility of them, as they are often used in a variety of dishes, including salads, sandwiches, and dressings, catering to diverse culinary preferences.

3.2.3 The empirical research

3.2.3.1 The questionnaire

The survey utilised in the current study comprises a total of 15 key questions organised into five distinct sections. To initiate the questionnaire, a manipulation check question is incorporated to assess respondents' comprehension of the Italian language. The initial section, encompassing cultural factors, encompasses 8 items. The subsequent section, pertaining to individual factors, incorporates 6 items addressing consumer ethnocentrism, alongside 4 items linked to the country-of-origin effect. The third section, devoted to advertising and brand evaluation, encompasses 10 items concerning Made in Italy products, 3 items measuring brand familiarity, 3 items assessing brand image, 4 items delving into brand experience, and 8 items evaluating advertisement perception. Moving to the fourth part, which delves into marketing variables, participants are presented with 3 items measuring intention to buy, 3 items related to word-of-mouth, and 3 items exploring attitudes towards the advertisement. The fifth and final section centres on socio-demographic information, encompassing gender, age, educational level, current occupation, and nationality.

Both versions of the survey feature identical questions. This uniformity extends to the employed measurement scales, predominantly utilising the Likert scale format (ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). Additionally, the surveys incorporate a mix of single-choice and open-ended questions. Subsequent sections will delve into distinct variables, providing a detailed overview of each variable's associated items.

The first section deals with cultural factors, in particular the difference between countries with a low uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) and countries with a high

uncertainty avoidance index. The Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) holds a significant connection with the realm of marketing, particularly in the context of customers who display a higher propensity to embrace new and unfamiliar products. The UAI, a cultural dimension highlighting a society's tolerance for ambiguity and risk, plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviour. Lee et al. (2007) state that “the effect of Product Uncertainty on both consumer evaluations and choice depends on uncertainty avoidance (UA)” (p. 331). Individuals from low UAI societies, characterised by a greater willingness to explore novel experiences and products, are more inclined to venture into uncharted territory when it comes to their purchasing decisions. These consumers exhibit a heightened receptivity to unknown offerings, making them an attractive target for marketers aiming to introduce innovative products. On the contrary, customers from high UAI societies, who generally exhibit a preference for the familiar and established, might require tailored strategies to encourage them to embrace new products (Hofstede, 2001). Consumers often employ strategies aimed at diminishing the perceived psychological uncertainty associated with a novel product or brand. Enhancing familiarity with the product serves as a method to alleviate this uncertainty. Familiarity can be cultivated through formal learning channels, hands-on experiential learning like in-store demonstrations or trials, or by relying on external cues like brand name, price, or country of origin (Lee et al., 2007). The measurement of Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) for countries, as included in his original IBM surveys, relied on respondents' answers to three questions rated on a scale of 1-5 (Venaik and Brewer, 2010), and “the three questions refer to three components of uncertainty avoidance: rule orientation, employment stability and stress” (Hofstede, 2001, p.148):

1. *Company rules should not be broken* - even when the employee thinks it is in the company's best interests. (1. Strongly agree ... to 5. Strongly disagree).
2. How long do you think you will *continue working* for this company (or organisation)? (1. Two years ... to 4. Until retirement).
3. How often do you *feel nervous or tense* (at work)? (1. Always ... to 5. Never).

For the present study, the following three items reflecting cultures with high/low UAI were selected and adapted to the objectives of the research from the scale developed by Stull and Von Till (1995): (3) It is important to me to plan for the future very carefully; (5) I enjoy taking risks; (6) Change in my life is important to me. The other five items - (1) I feel uncomfortable in improvised situations; (2) I feel uncomfortable in situations where I am not in control; (4) I love surprises; (7) I am afraid of what I don't know; (8) I am intrigued by novelties - were written by the researcher based on the definition and explanation Hofstede gives of "Uncertainty Avoidance".

The second section concerns individual factors affecting consumers' behaviour. The first list of items refers to consumer ethnocentrism and, therefore, the personal opinions and beliefs about foreign products being imported in one's own country. Shimp and Sharma's article "Consumer Ethnocentrism: Construction and Validation of the CETSCALE", published in the *Journal of Marketing Research* in August 1987, focuses on definition of the concept of consumer ethnocentrism and on the development and validation of a "psychometrically rigorous" measurement scale called CETSCALE (Consumer Ethnocentrism Tendency Scale) to assess it. The CETSCALE is a widely used and validated measure of consumer ethnocentrism. It consists of 17 statements that individuals rate on a Likert-type scale to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with ethnocentric beliefs. The six items used in the present research were originally

produced by Shimp and Sharma (1987), and de Ruyter et al. (1998) re-proposed them. In detail, the following items were selected and adapted from Shimp and Sharma's essay: (1) People should always buy products manufactured in their country instead of imports; (2) Only those products that are unavailable in the country should be imported; (3) Buying products manufactured in your country keeps the country working; (4) It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it puts the country out of jobs; (5) Curbs should be put on all imports; (6) Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into our country. It is important to note that measuring consumer ethnocentrism is a complex task, and researchers often employ multiple measures and methodologies to capture its multidimensional nature accurately. For example, CEESCALE (*Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale*) and CES (*Revised Consumer Ethnocentrism Scale*) represent two of the latest proposals, alternatives to CETSCALE, both comprising a similar number of items. However, these scales differ in that they organise the items into distinct and well-defined dimensions, leading to more reliable and robust results than the CETSCALE, and easier to compare (Jiménez-Guerrero et al., 2020). Consumers' levels of consumer ethnocentrism significantly shape their purchasing behaviour and preferences. Those with high levels of consumer ethnocentrism tend to prioritise products and services from their own country, showing a preference for domestic goods over imported ones. This group believes that supporting local industries is crucial and that "buying imports is wrong because it is unpatriotic and detrimental to the domestic economy and employment" (Supphellen and Rittenburg, 2001, p. 908). For this reason, they may be sceptical about foreign offerings. On the other hand, consumers with low levels of consumer ethnocentrism exhibit more cosmopolitan tendencies. They are open to exploring and purchasing products from various countries, valuing quality and

innovation over national origin. These individuals are more likely to embrace global brands and seek out international products that align with their specific needs and preferences.

Connected to the origin of the products, for the present study, the country-of-origin effect was also used as indication for the consumers' behaviour. Consumers' behaviour in relation to the country of origin effect underscores the impact of a product's perceived origin on their purchasing decisions. The country of origin can influence consumers' perceptions of quality, authenticity, and value. Positive associations with a particular country can lead to increased trust and willingness to pay a premium, while negative perceptions can result in hesitancy or rejection (Pappu et al., 2005). COO information can be employed in two ways to mitigate perceived psychological uncertainty. First, consumers might exhibit a preference for products originating from their own country, as these tend to evoke a sense of familiarity, leading again towards the concept of favouring one's own country's products. Alternatively, they might lean towards products from countries renowned for excelling in producing that particular item, exemplified by Italian food, to capitalise on well-established stereotypes associated with quality and expertise (Lee et al., 2007). The items referring to the COO-effect in the present study are the following: (1) I carefully choose the goods I buy; (2) I pay a lot of attention to the country of origin of the products I buy; (3) I pay a lot of attention to the country of production of the products I buy; (4) I choose the products I buy according to their origin.

The third section includes several variables that refer to the product, the brand and the ad. In particular, the first part concerns Made in Italy products and their perceived quality, since the advertisement taken in consideration in the thesis is of a Made in Italy

product. The ten items are the following: (1) The goods with the label “made in Italy” arouse in me positive associations; (2) Italy offers products with excellent features; (3) Made in Italy goods are of high quality; (4) Made in Italy goods are reliable; (5) Made in Italy food products are tasty; (6) Made in Italy food products are healthy; (7) Italy is well-known to me for its dairy products; (8) Dairy products from this country are authentic; (9) When thinking about dairy products, this country comes to my mind immediately; (10) I trust dairy products from this country. Some items were selected and adapted for the present study from the questionnaire created by Pappu et al. (2005) for their research about consumer-based equity and country-of origin relationships. Others, instead, were thought by the researcher in order to investigate the associations that arouse in the mind of the consumers when thinking about Made in Italy products. The characteristics used in the created ad hoc items were, in any case, positive attributes that are commonly associated with Italian goods.

Then, brand familiarity, brand image and brand experience are taken into consideration. Brand familiarity measures how much a consumer has interacted with a brand directly and indirectly (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987). It arises through consumer exposure to advertising, prior shopping encounters, direct utilisation of the brand, or the acquisition of brand-related information through peer recommendations and assesses consumers’ brand knowledge structures or the associations that a person has with a particular brand in their memory (Gavilan and Avello, 2020). For the present study, we adapted the concept of familiarity to the brand to the products through the following three items: (1) I am very familiar with Gorgonzola DOP’s products; (2) I know Gorgonzola DOP’s products very well; (3) I have great experience with Gorgonzola DOP’s cheese. Given that a consumer's familiarity with a product has demonstrated a favourable impact

on perceptions of quality, and as perceived quality consistently influences purchase intentions, Lee et al. (2007) suggests that products characterised by lower Product Uncertainty are likely to be perceived as possessing higher quality, subsequently increasing the likelihood of purchase. In addition, the brand image encompasses the feelings, affiliations, and principles that individuals link with a brand over time (Wijaya, 2013). A favourable and impactful brand image has the potential to nurture profound emotional bonds, ultimately resulting in increased brand loyalty and advocacy. The three items I inserted in order to measure brand image are the following: (1) I perceive Gorgonzola DOP to be the best; (2) The image of Gorgonzola DOP is high for me; (3) Gorgonzola DOP has a great value for me due to its high image. Finally, the brand experience takes place when there is a direct or indirect encounter with the brand, that can be both expected or unexpected. Sometimes even if customers don't exhibit any interest in or a personal connection to the brand, experiences can nonetheless occur. They are the bodily sensations, emotions, thoughts, and behavioural reactions that a brand-related stimulus elicits. Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) developed a 12-item scale to assess the extent to which a consumer engages with a brand on a sensory, affective, behavioural, and intellectual level. These are evoked by brand-related stimuli such as colours, shapes, slogans, etc. According to Brakus et al. (2009), a brand's ability to evoke a variety of experience dimensions and get a higher overall score on the scale will increase consumers' level of brand satisfaction. For the present study, 4 items were selected from the above-mentioned scale: (1) I find Gorgonzola DOP interesting in a sensory way; (2) Gorgonzola DOP is an emotional brand; (3) Gorgonzola DOP results in bodily experiences; (4) Gorgonzola DOP stimulates my curiosity and my capacity in problem-solving.

The following list of items, instead, are related to the perception of the advertisement, the text message it contains, and the products it promotes: (1) I understand the text 100%; (2) I understand the message; (3) It conveys the message clearly; (4) It conveys the idea of Italianness; (5) It conveys the idea of Italian culture; (6) It conveys the idea of Italian tradition; (7) The product is of high quality; (8) The product is tasty. The survey comprises a range of items designed to capture and measure respondents' perceptions of the advertisement, its underlying message, and the promoted product. Notably, certain questions within the survey are tailored specifically to delve into participants' comprehension of the message conveyed. These inquiries are strategically crafted to probe how well the message resonates with the audience and to uncover any potential areas of confusion or misinterpretation. By including these tailored questions, the survey aims to provide comprehensive insights into not only the overall perception of the advertisement but also the effectiveness of its messaging strategy. In addition, the first three items of the section investigate the ability of distinction between grasping the literal words and unravelling the underlying message to fully comprehend the nuanced layers of meaning within communication. Finally, items were thought to grasp the perception of respondents to the concept of “Italianness”, Italian culture and quality of the promoted product after seeing the stimulus.

The fourth section of the survey consists of marketing variables, namely intention to buy, word-of-mouth and attitude towards the advertisement. These behavioural constructs are influenced by the factors mentioned above. The purchase intention referred both to the advertised product and consumers' willingness to buy other Made in Italy products of the same brand. According to Kotler et al., (2005), “one way to forecast what buyers will do is to ask them directly”. The items used to investigate consumers' intention

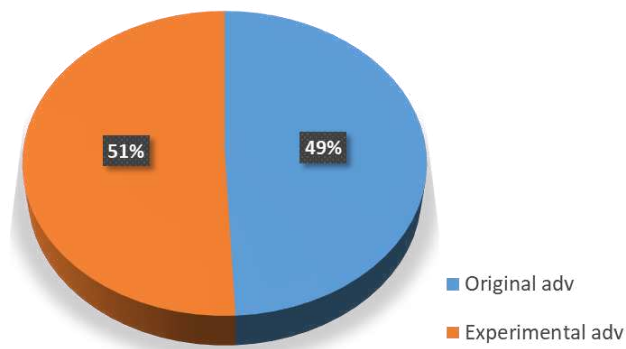
to buy in the present study were selected from the scale constructed by Wu et al. (2008): (1) I am willing to try Gorgonzola DOP; (2) I am interested in purchasing Gorgonzola DOP; (3) I will buy more Made in Italy products of Gorgonzola DOP. As far as word-of-mouth is concerned, the research took into consideration the willingness to share positive opinions and reviews about the product and brand with friends, family, and other people. The following items were used in the present study: (1) I am inclined to recommend Gorgonzola DOP to friends and relatives; (2) I am inclined to recommend Gorgonzola DOP to other people; (3) I am inclined to give positive reviews of Gorgonzola DOP. The relationship between advertising stimuli and brand attitude appears to be mediated by advertising attitude. As a consequence, the strong impact of ad stimuli on ad attitude is largely responsible for the increased brand attitude (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989). Moreover, studies show that consumers are more likely to recall an advertisement when they have a positive opinion about it (Donthu et al. 1993). The items used in the present research were provided by Baker and Kennedy (1994) who assessed the affective reactions to the advertisement through the following items: (1) the advertisement is very convincing, (2) the advertisement is easy to remember, (3) the advertisement caught my attention.

The fifth and final segment of the survey encompasses socio-demographic details, contributing to a more profound comprehension of the participants. Respondents were requested to provide insights into their gender, age, educational attainment (ranging from middle school to PhD), current occupation (student, employed in the private or public sector, entrepreneur, housewife/houseman, unemployed, pensioner), and nationality (UK, USA, or other).

3.2.3.2 Sample

During June and July 2023, the two versions of the questionnaire were administered online. To reach as many subjects as possible, the survey was distributed through a variety of social media channels. Some of the tools used were dedicated tweets with suitable hashtags, Facebook's university and food-lovers groups, WhatsApp university groups, messages sent directly to potential respondents and to people daily in touch with English-speaking people (for example, relatives and friends living in the UK or in the USA) and word-of-mouth, both online and offline. As shown in Figure 5, the total number of respondents for the survey version with the original advertisement is 49% (namely 63), whereas the total number of respondents for the survey version with the experimental advertisement is 51% (namely 65) (Figure 5).

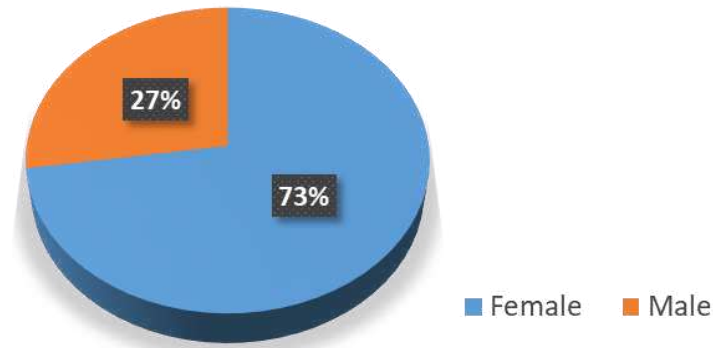
Figure 5: The total number of respondents for the two versions of the survey in comparison



Note: N=128; Original adv=63; Experimental adv=65

Regarding gender, a total of 73% (equivalent to 93 participants) across both survey versions are identified as women, while 27% (corresponding to 35 participants) are identified as men (Figure 6).

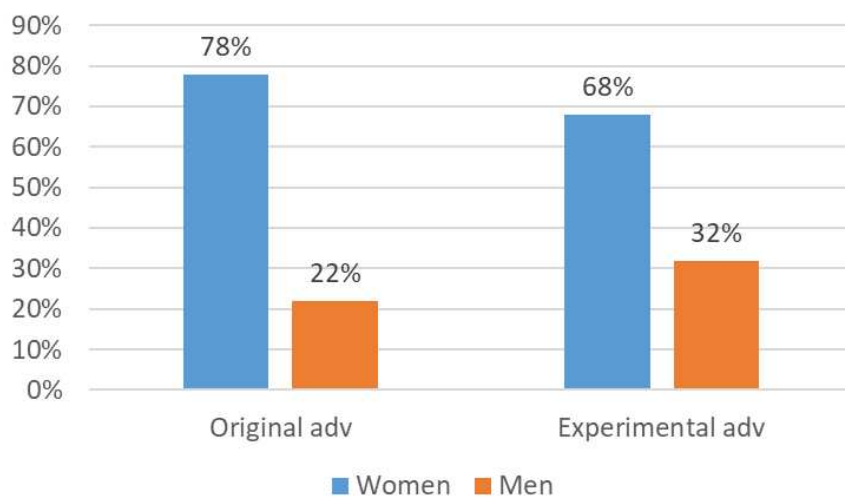
Figure 6: Gender of respondents



Note: N=128; Female=93; Male=35

Going into further detail, Figure 7 shows that 78% of women and 22% of men completed the survey with the original advertisement in English, whereas 68% of women and 32% of men answered the survey with the experimental advertisement in English and Italian.

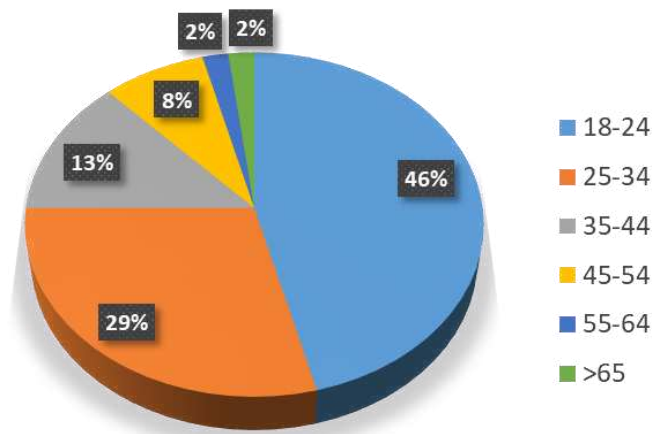
Figure 7: Gender of respondents sorted according to surveys



Note: N=128; Original adv=63; Experimental adv=65

Respondents' ages were divided into groups. More specifically, 46% of respondents are between 18 and 24 years old, 29% are between 25 and 34 years old, 13% are between 35 and 44 years old, 8% are between 45 and 54 years old, 2% are between 55 and 64 years old, and 2% is over 65 years old (Figure 8). It can be clearly seen that the distribution is not even, since the majority of the respondents are between 18 and 34 years old.

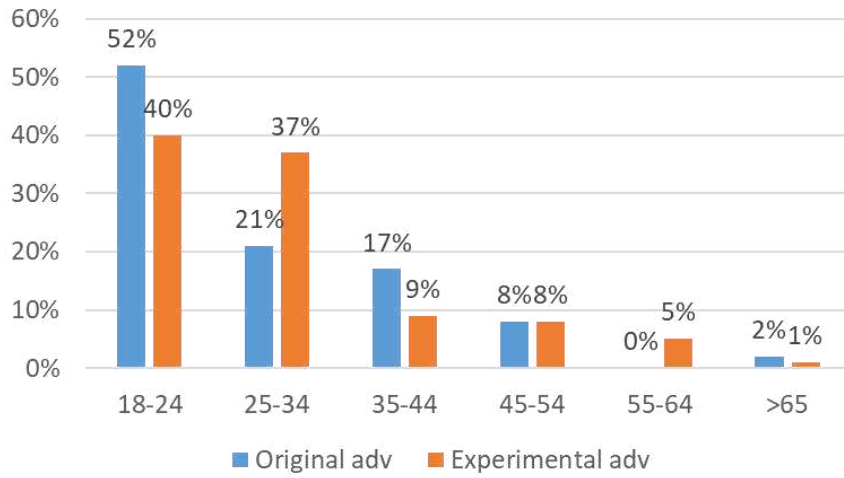
Figure 8: Age of respondents



Note: N=128

Additional insights into the age distribution across the two survey versions are depicted in Figure 9. Notably, while the distribution is not even in either case, participants in the survey featuring the experimental advertisement exhibit a more balanced age distribution compared to those in the survey containing the original advertisement. Notably, more than half (52%) of the respondents who engaged with the survey featuring the original advertisement fall within the age range of 18 to 24 years.

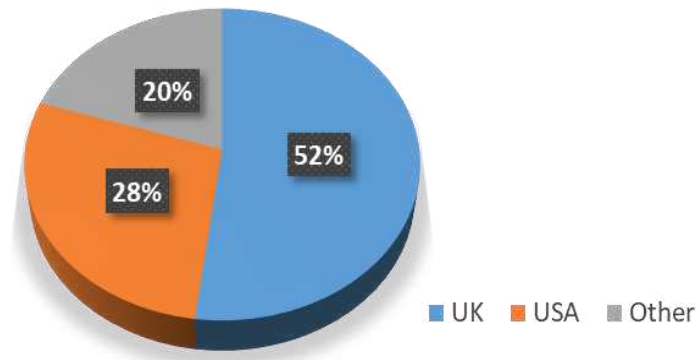
Figure 9: Age of respondents sorted according to surveys



Note: N=128; Original adv=63; Experimental adv=65

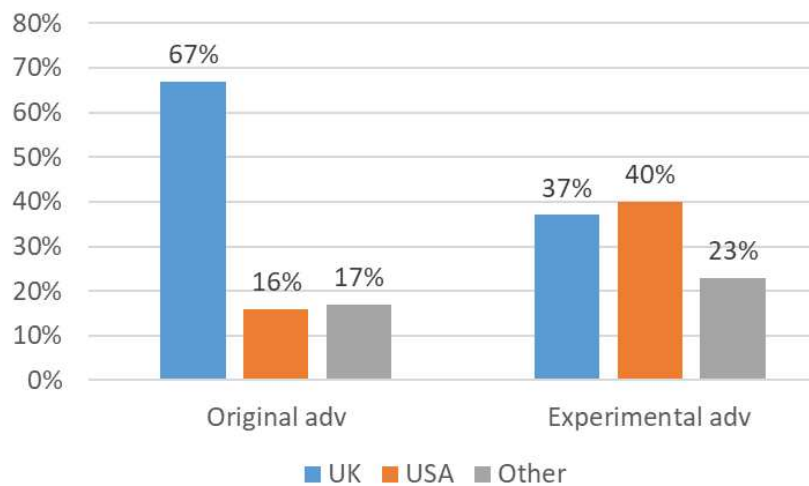
The predominant nationality reported by respondents is either the United Kingdom or the United States of America. Specifically, 52% of all participants indicated their origin as the UK, 28% as the USA, and only 20% from other countries (Figure 10). Figure 11 provides a more detailed breakdown of nationalities among the participants of the two distinct survey versions. It is evident that in the survey featuring the experimental advertisement, nationalities are distributed more evenly: 37% originate from the UK, 40% from the USA, and 23% from other countries. Conversely, the survey with the original English advertisement displays a significant majority (67%) of participants coming from the UK.

Figure 10: Nationality of respondents



Note: N=128

Figure 11: Nationality of respondents sorted according to surveys

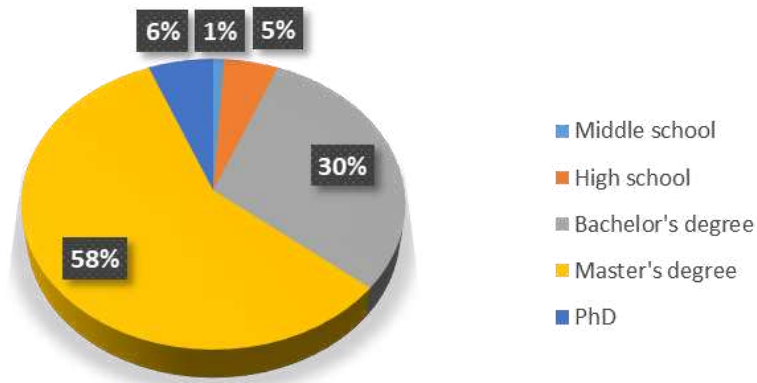


Note: N=128; Original adv=63; Experimental adv=65

An overwhelming majority, accounting for a total of 88% of the participants, possess a degree. Among these, 30% hold a Bachelor's degree, while 58% hold a Master's degree (Figure 12). In terms of nationality, the respondents in the survey featuring the experimental advertisement exhibit a more balanced distribution (Figure 13). The largest group of participants, totaling 61% (Figure 14), identify as students, followed by 34% employed in the public or private sector. Regarding respondents' current occupations,

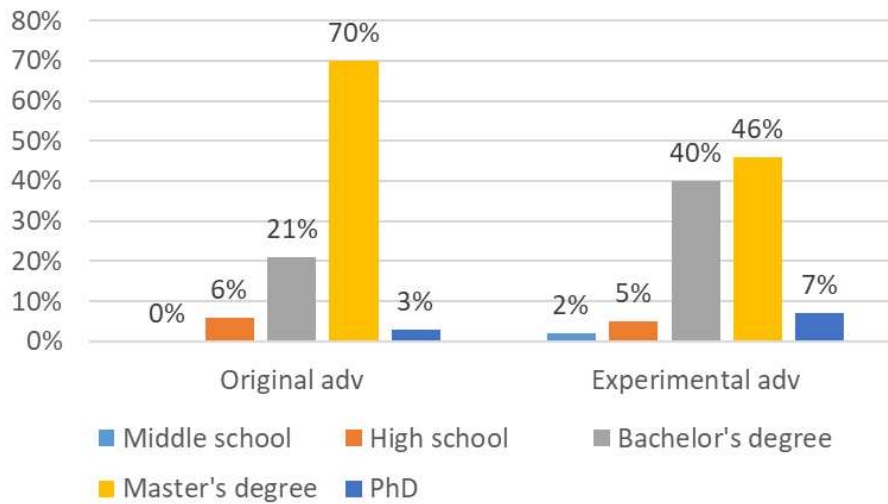
there are no noteworthy disparities in the percentages between the two groups (Figure 15).

Figure 12: Educational level of respondents



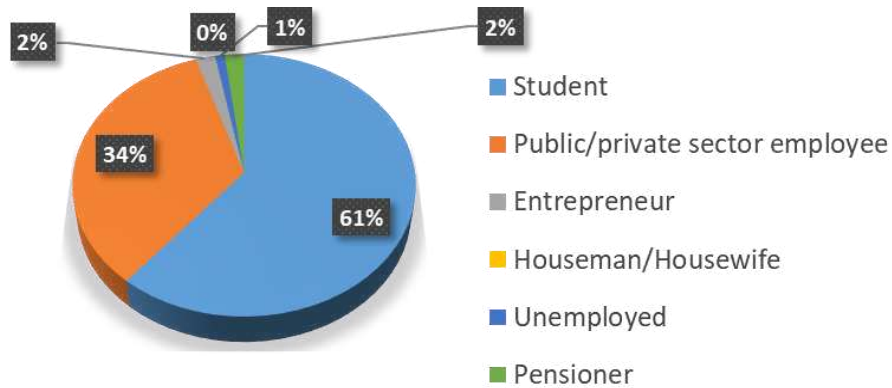
Note: N=128

Figure 13: Educational level of respondents sorted according to surveys



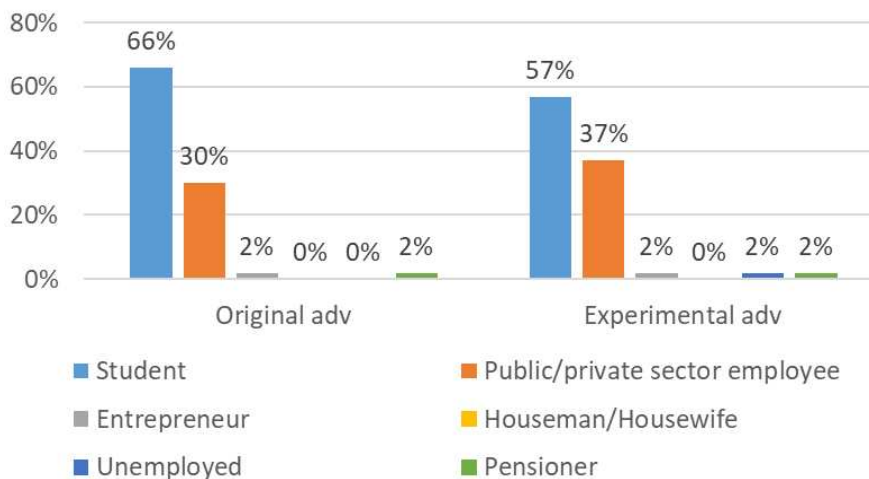
Note: N=128; Original adv=63; Experimental adv=65

Figure 14: Current occupation of respondents



Note: N=128

Figure 15: Current occupation of respondents sorted according to surveys

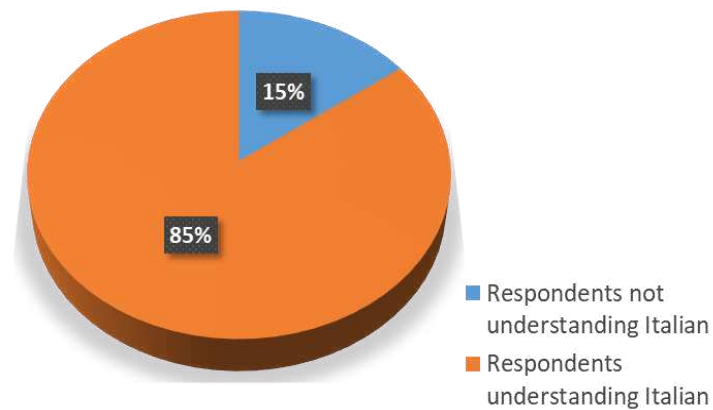


Note: N=128; Original adv=63; Experimental adv=65

To reach the objectives of this study, the participants were further divided according to their understanding, and presumed knowledge, of the Italian language. Therefore, those who didn't correctly answer the initial manipulation check question were excluded from the analysis of the data. Out of a total number of 128 respondents, 109 participants demonstrated understanding of the Italian language (Figure 16). In particular, 54 participants for the first version of the survey with the original advertisement and 55

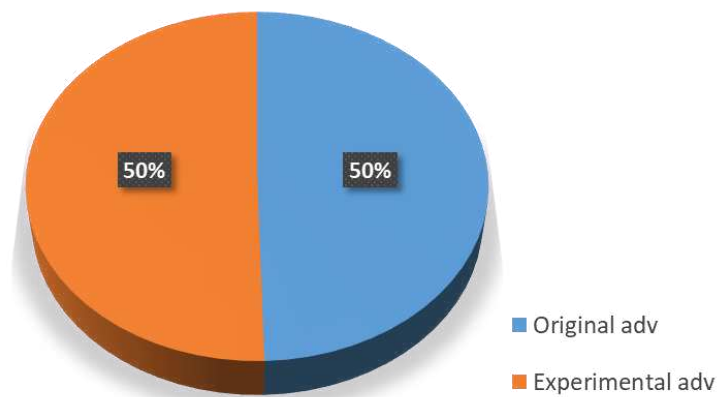
participants for the second version, so the one with the experimental advertisement (Figure 17).

Figure 16: Respondents understanding Italian language



Note: N=128

Figure 17: Respondents understanding Italian sorted according to surveys



Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55

3.3 Method of analysis

Following the data collection through administered questionnaires, the study progressed to analysis in pursuit of its objectives. A comparison was made between the responses provided by English-speaking participants for each variable in the

questionnaire. The focus was on comparing data from the surveys with the original and experimental advertisements. To interpret the data, the method of analysis of averages was employed. This technique necessitates the use of an independent variable, which, in this case, pertains to the groups being assessed, namely respondents to the survey with the original advertisement and respondents to the survey with the experimental one. In general, the following dependent variables were employed: cultural factors, personal beliefs about consumer ethnocentrism and country-of-origin effect, perception of Made in Italy products, brand familiarity, brand image, brand experience, and product involvement. Moreover, the study incorporated marketing variables, namely purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and attitude towards the ad.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Presentation of the results

The results from the analysis of the data gathered via two versions of the questionnaire will be presented below. This chapter's major goal is to show the considerable differences between English-speaking consumers who were shown the original (English) advertisement and the experimental (English-Italian) advertisement through the averages that were derived. It focuses, in particular, on examining and comparing these discrepancies. The first part of the chapter will consider cultural and individual factors between the two samples of respondents, so before seeing the stimulus. The second part of the chapter, on the contrary, will concern the results influenced by the stimulus and the comparison between the two sample groups of respondents.

4.2 Results of cultural and individual factors

Uncertainty Avoidance measures the extent to which a society feels threatened by ambiguity, uncertainty, and risk. High UAI (e.g. Italy, Belgium, Russia) scores indicate a preference for structure, rules, and regulations to minimise uncertainty and anxiety; low UAI (e.g. China, India, UK) scores suggest a higher tolerance for ambiguity and a greater acceptance of change.

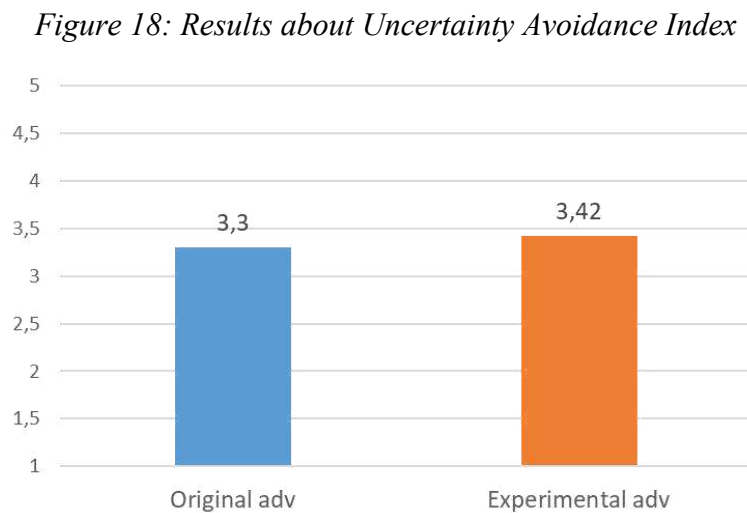
On one hand, when analysing English culture from the perspective of Hofstede's 6-D Model, it becomes evident that the United Kingdom, with a score of 35, demonstrates a low level of Uncertainty Avoidance. This implies that the nation is at ease when

confronting situations marked by ambiguity. While British society is not typically characterised by an abundance of regulations, the existing rules are diligently followed. Notably, an exemplary instance of this adherence can be observed in the well-known British practice of queuing, which also reflects the nation's commitment to principles of fair play. Moreover, there exists a tendency towards shorter planning horizons. Of particular significance is the juxtaposition of the UK's pronounced Individualism score (89) alongside its inquisitive nature, which results in a pronounced inclination towards creativity and a robust appetite for innovation. The English populace generally possesses an inclination to find allure in what is different from the norm. This characteristic manifests across the society, encompassing its humour, substantial consumerism pertaining to novel and inventive products, as well as the rapid and profoundly innovative industries in which it prospers, such as advertising, marketing, and financial engineering.

On the other hand, when considering the cultural attributes of the United States through the framework of the 6-D Model, it becomes apparent that the nation's scores fall below the average, notably registering a modest score of 46 on the dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance. This outcome implies that the manner in which Americans respond to their perceived environment will be influenced to a greater extent than if their cultural disposition had inclined either towards higher or lower scores. Consequently, this cultural tendency manifests in the subsequent manner: a considerable openness to novel concepts, pioneering products, and a willingness to embrace the unexplored or unconventional, spanning realms ranging from technology and business methodologies to culinary preferences. Americans exhibit a tendency towards embracing diverse ideas or viewpoints and upholding the freedom to express them, showcasing a heightened level of tolerance. Meanwhile, the cultural landscape is characterised by a relatively diminished

reliance on stringent regulations, and emotional expressions are less pronounced compared to cultures scoring higher on the relevant scale.

Examining the outcomes derived from the surveys, there is no statistically noteworthy distinction observed between the two sample sets. Both groups of participants exhibit a moderate level of Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), with corresponding mean scores of 3.3 and 3.42. The collection of respondents associated with the initial advertisement primarily comprises individuals of English nationality; nevertheless, these individuals do not mirror the prevailing inclination of the nation toward a significantly low UAI, as indicated in Figure 18.

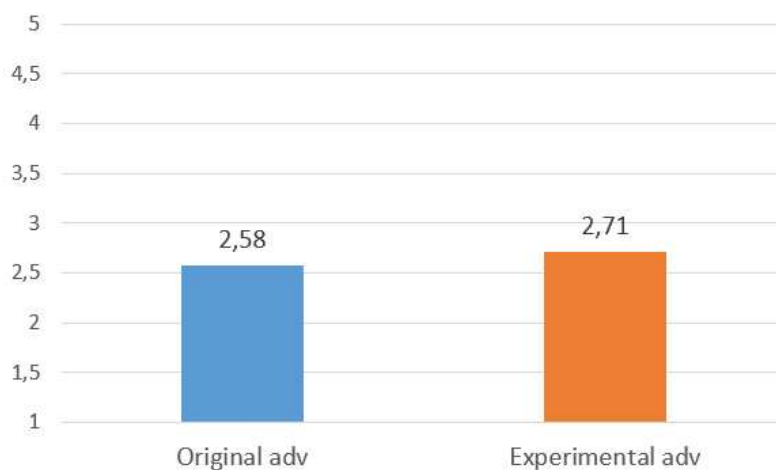


Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

The present study also assessed consumer ethnocentrism and the Country-of-origin (COO) effect as part of its analysis to capture consumer behavioural tendencies in relation to foreign products. While consumer ethnocentrism measures the degree to which consumers exhibit a preference for products and services originating from their own country over those from foreign sources, the Country-of-origin effect measures the

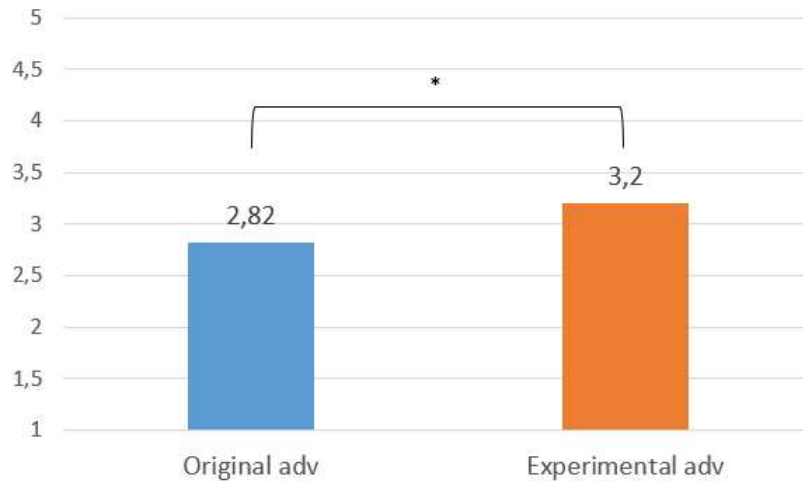
influence of a product's country of origin on consumer perceptions and preferences. Regarding consumer ethnocentrism, no statistically significant divergence was evident between the two sets of samples (as illustrated in Figure 19). The average scores of 2.58 and 2.71 indicate that both respondent groups hold fairly neutral opinions regarding imported goods within their respective countries. Nonetheless, the initial sample of respondents did exhibit a marginally more positive perception of imported goods compared to the other group. Conversely, when considering the impact of the COO effect, a significant statistical contrast was discernible between the two respondent groups. The subset of participants who responded to the survey with the experimental advertisement displayed a notably higher average (3.2) than their counterparts in the other sample, whose average stood at 2.82 (depicted in Figure 20). Consumers with a strong country-of-origin effect tendency tend to prioritise products and brands that hail from specific countries known for their quality, reputation, or cultural associations.

Figure 19: Results about consumer ethnocentrism



Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

Figure 20: Results about COO effect

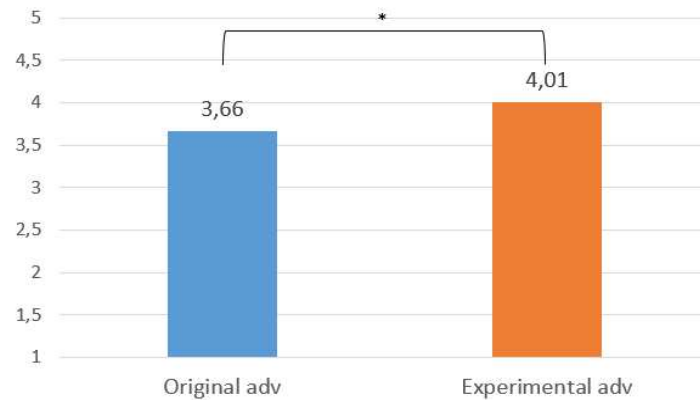


Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

4.3 Product and brand evaluation results

The subsequent part of this chapter delves into the collected data after the exposure to the stimulus. By adopting the perspective presented by the stimulus, the assessment of perceptions concerning products bearing the Made in Italy label was conducted. Findings reveal a substantial statistical differentiation between the two distinct groups of samples in relation to their viewpoints regarding Made in Italy items. Specifically, the subset of respondents who provided their responses subsequent to encountering the experimental advertisement exhibited an elevated perception level (4.01) of Made in Italy products (Figure 21). Importantly, the items posed to consumers pertained not solely to a general perception of Made in Italy products, but also extended to the domain of food and, to be more specific, dairy products. Perceived quality, reliability, taste, healthiness, authenticity, and positive associations with Made in Italy products were investigated.

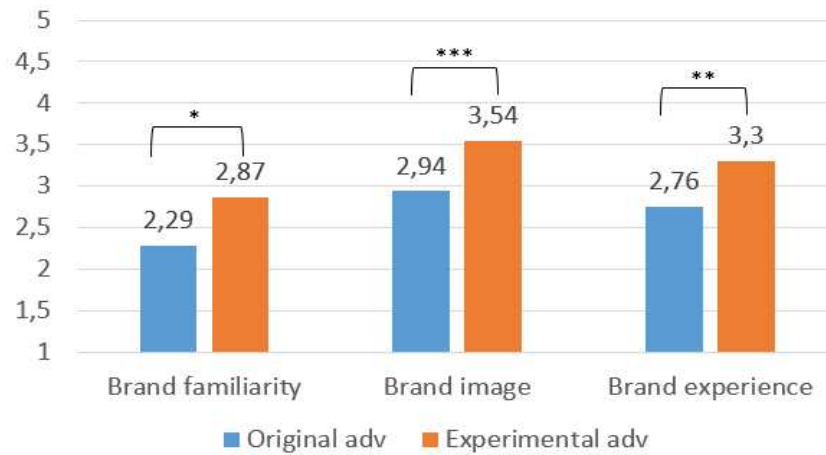
Figure 21: Results about perception of Made in Italy products



Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

The notion of brand familiarity centres on the brand's products and the extent of customer engagement with those items. The concept of brand image encompasses the sentiments, affiliations, and principles that consumers associate with a brand over time. On the other hand, brand experience quantifies the physical sensations, emotions, thoughts, and behavioural responses evoked by stimuli related to a brand. Across all these brand-related variables, there appears to be a statistically significant elevation in the group of respondents exposed to the experimental advertisement containing the ad hoc created copy using English and Italian, with average scores of 2.87, 3.54, and 3.3, respectively (Figure 22). In contrast, the corresponding averages in the other participant group are 2.29, 2.94, and 2.76. Thus, exposure to the experimental stimulus resulted in an enhanced overall perception and evaluation of the brand.

Figure 22: Overall brand familiarity, image and experience

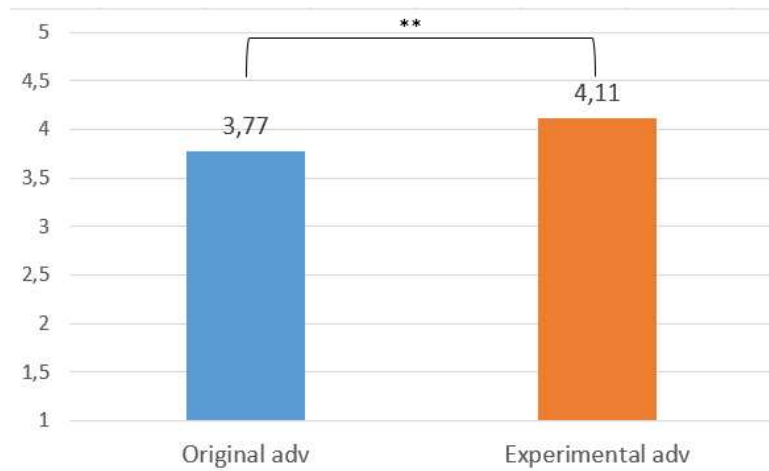


Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

4.4 Advertisement perception results

Following exposure to the advertisement, the set of participants that responded to the survey featuring the experimental advertisement displayed an enhanced perception of both the advertisement itself and the endorsed product. This is particularly noteworthy considering the facets explored within this survey section, encompassing the comprehension of the advertisement in terms of language and message, the effectiveness of the advertisement in communicating the intended essence of Italian tradition and culture, and the overall sentiment toward the showcased product. The respondents in the second survey attained a score of 4.11, significantly surpassing the score of 3.77 achieved by the other group (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Results about the ad perception

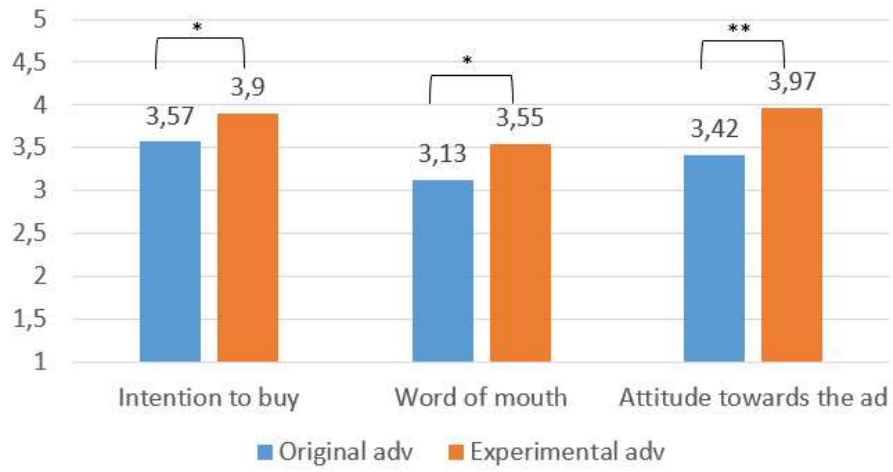


Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

4.5 Results concerning consumer behaviour

A marked statistical distinction is evident between the two respondent sample sets across the three analysed marketing variables within the ongoing investigation: Intention to purchase, Word of mouth, and Attitude toward the advertisement. The initial marketing aspect examined in this section encompassed not only the intent to purchase the featured product but also extended to other brand-related Made in Italy goods. As previously mentioned, respondents who encountered the experimental advertisement achieved an average score of 3.9, surpassing the 3.57 score of respondents of the first survey. In regard to word-of-mouth, the study's survey assessed consumers' willingness to positively share their opinions and write about the product and brand, both among family, friends, and the general public. Once again, the second group scored higher (3.55) compared to the first group of respondents (3.13). The final marketing variable examined within this study pertained to the attitude toward the advertisement itself. Reiterating the pattern, the respondent sample exposed to the experimental advertisement excelled over the other group in terms of the overall average (3.97 versus 3.42) (Figure 24).

Figure 24: Results concerning marketing variables



Note: N=109; Original adv=54; Experimental adv=55; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

This section aims to offer a comprehensive discourse on the outcomes obtained from the examination of data collected via the survey carried out. The questionnaire (showcased in the Appendix) assessed various constructs manipulating the advertising message variables to ascertain how English-speaking consumers perceive the promotion of a Made in Italy product when exposed to an experimental advertisement incorporating the Italian language. Furthermore, the incorporation of the Italian language broadens the scope of this study, delving into its potential impact on the behaviour of English-speaking consumers. This exploration aims to provide insights into how targeted marketing strategies, particularly those concerning the Made in Italy products, and if the Italian language can influence the consumer behaviour when considering the Italian products.

No significant concerns arose regarding the socio-demographic variables. The subject count remained nearly identical for both questionnaire versions. A higher proportion of women completed the questionnaire in both alternatives. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, the respondents of the survey featuring the experimental advertisement exhibited a more diverse distribution in terms of age and nationality compared to the other group. In relation to educational level and current occupation, the respondents displayed a relatively balanced distribution.

Seeing the results, the second group showed higher average in all the three aspects taken into consideration in the first section of the survey, namely the UAI, consumer ethnocentrism and COO effect. However, the only statistically significant result from this

part of the survey - the one not influenced by the sight of the stimulus - for the discussion is that, among the two groups of respondents, the second one exhibited a notably stronger inclination towards the Country-of-Origin effect. So, the distinguishing factor between the two sample groups prior to stimulus exposure appears to be the varying scores in the COO effect. This difference emerges as the significant contributor that sets the two groups apart, implying its pivotal role in shaping their distinct perceptions and responses to the further questions. The group who replied to the survey with the experimental advertisement demonstrated a more pronounced tendency to consider and be more influenced by the product's country of origin and production when forming purchasing decisions. Indeed, individuals with elevated COO effect scores tend to scrutinise the country of origin of products more attentively. This is because specific countries are linked to particular attributes, and these individuals actively seek (or avoid, if the country is associated with negative characteristics) those attributes in the products they are purchasing.

As previously stated, the outcomes regarding the association between UAI and consumer ethnocentrism lack statistical significance. For this reason, the results of this study suggest that culture, investigated through the UAI, is not a primary determining factor for what we have taken into consideration. Indeed, in this study, our primary focus lies on the language spoken by the survey respondents rather than delving into cultural aspects. We have directed our attention specifically towards “English-speaking consumers”, emphasising linguistic commonality as a key criterion for inclusion in our research. By narrowing our scope to language, we aim to gain valuable insights into a specific linguistic group's perspectives, transcending cultural variations that might otherwise impact our findings. Nevertheless, it is worth highlighting the potential

connection between the neutral score of consumer ethnocentrism and demographic information. Notably, past research has demonstrated that younger individuals tend to exhibit lower levels of ethnocentrism compared to their older counterparts (Josiassen et al., 2011). Interestingly, our study's participants primarily consist of individuals below 35 years of age. Taking all aforementioned factors into account, the findings imply that the surveyed sample prioritises the product's origin over its foreign status.

Regarding the study's stimulus, several communication strategies exist with the aim of transforming the Italian ethnic identity into a commodity and facilitating its symbolic consumption, which also include the extensive use of stereotypes and cultural associations (Girardelli, 2004). In our context, even if Gorgonzola DOP may not be universally recognized as a product or brand, the advertisement incorporates all the elements that render it identifiable as a representation of Made in Italy. As we highlighted in the preceding chapter, the advertisement chosen as the stimulus for this study meticulously evokes the quintessential features employed in conveying the essence of Made in Italy: the colours of the Italian flag, the presence of fresh produce to indicate authenticity and freshness, and the name "Italy" itself in the text that promotes the product. This serves as a prominent illustration of how marketing managers have the capacity (and indeed employ it) to leverage associations with a particular country to effectively capitalise on the COO effect. There is one element that is lacking if we want to consider the ad the perfect example. As Girardelli (2004) remembers, one of the most straightforward tactics for conveying the Italian essence of products involves incorporating Italian words or utilising terms that evoke an Italian sound. So, the primary focal point of this study centres around language, serving as both a means of communication across diverse populations and a conduit for transmitting symbolic and

cultural components (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). Consequently, the distinguishing factor between the two survey versions lies in linguistic variation — a sentence presented in a different language. The decision to incorporate Italian text within the survey, promoting a Made in Italy product, is rooted in the understanding that language possesses the capability to convey not just literal messages, but also cultural nuances associated with the context. In cases involving products that encapsulate distinct cultural attributes tied to their nation of origin, encompassing linguistic forms, both language and culture emerge as pivotal factors shaping the essence and value of these products. This interplay grants the promoted product an augmented worth, aligned with the affirmative associations linked to the country of origin and its language (Maghssudipour et al., 2022). Incorporating Italian terminology strengthens the product's Italian identity, sending a clear message to potential global consumers that it originates from a heritage steeped in artisanal mastery, sophisticated design, vivid sensory attributes, and other distinctive qualities (Chiaro, 2004).

The results obtained by this study suggest that language, and how it is used in promotional actions, is a determining factor on consumers' perceptions of the promoted product since they demonstrate that the language is able to communicate to the consumers the characteristics associated with the country, helping to increase the value of the brand and the product itself. Indeed, the group of respondents who replied to the items connected with the Made in Italy products after having seen the experimental stimulus showed a higher perception of the category, thinking about Made in Italy items as reliable, healthy, tasty, good and authentic.

The further theoretical constructs used to analyse consumer behaviour in response to the advertising stimulus were brand familiarity, namely the quantity of direct and

indirect consumer-related interactions with the brand (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987), brand image, so the emotions, connections, and values that individuals associate with a brand throughout its evolution (Wijaya, 2013), and brand experience, namely cumulative impact of a consumer's interactions, perceptions, and emotions evoked by a brand across all touchpoints and engagements (Schmitt et al., 2015). Brand experience encompasses a broader framework spanning multiple phases, commencing, for instance, from an advertisement and extending to the post-purchase stage. In this research, we assessed brand experience through four dimensions of experience: sensory, emotional, physical, and intellectual. All the overall scores were significantly higher in the sample group who saw the experimental advertisement with the English and Italian sentences. Previous research has proven how language plays a pivotal role in branding, with consumers frequently encountering brands through various linguistic avenues such as advertising, packaging, social media content, word-of-mouth, and even the brand names and slogans. These linguistic elements collectively convey the essence of a brand, shaping perceptions, memories, attitudes, and behaviours since language is how consumers learn about brands, process brand information and experience brands (Carnevale et al., 2017). Other than language, another reason for this may be, again, attributed to the fact that this group showed a higher level of COO effect. The country of origin of a product or brand, indeed, can influence the level of familiarity with the brand (Lee et al., 2007). The results, so, demonstrate that language is a determining factor on consumers' perceptions not only of the promoted product but also of the brand.

According to Kotler et al. (2005), the objective of an advertisement is to communicate a distinct and captivating message that informs, persuades, and shapes consumers' perceptions and behaviours. This aligns with prior research emphasising

language's fundamental role due to its structural properties, which considerably impact cognitive processes (Carnevale et al., 2017). The group of respondents who saw the experimental advertisement showed an average higher score in the perception of the stimulus, namely the advertisement, and its message. Assuming as a given that all the respondents understand the Italian language, thanks to the initial verification question, both the texts of the stimuli were comprehended. The Italian language, that is the only difference between one stimulus and the other, results in effectively enhancing the notion of “Italianness”, Italian traditions, culture, and the superior quality of the product under scrutiny. Consequently, the study's results unequivocally establish the superiority of the advertisement that integrates the Italian language, surpassing the original English ad of Gorgonzola DOP in terms of effectiveness.

Finally, consumer behaviour was taken into consideration in this study. Previous research states that it is always impacted by marketing factors (Noel, 2009). All three marketing variables introduced in the survey, namely intention to buy, attitude towards the ad and word-of-mouth, exhibited a higher score in the second sample group, which can be attributed to the higher COO-effect, the higher brand familiarity, image and experience. Nonetheless, all these variables scored a significant higher value on the sample group who replied to the survey with the experimental ad. Elevated perceived product quality, more favourable brand associations, and enriched experiential connections have the potential to amplify product appeal and exert an influence on consumer purchasing intentions (Bauer and Heinrich, 2007; Choi and Kim, 2013). Furthermore, of significance is the observation that employing the Italian language could be interpreted as an indicator of secure purchasing and contentment, as we commented when discussing the UAI and COO effect, rendering this strategy potentially efficacious.

Word-of-mouth is another fundamental marketing variable that showed the same results as purchase intention. It is particularly important because it is perceived by consumers as more trustworthy and legitimate compared to advertising or marketing messages. People often consider personal recommendations to be objective and sincere and to reflect the actual experience, so the way WOM goes into social and group dynamics makes it highly compelling. The group exposed to the experimental advertisement displayed a notably higher overall average of word-of-mouth, aligning with Acharya's (2021) notion of a link between brand familiarity and WOM. Acharya asserts that a favourable correlation exists between heightened brand familiarity and a propensity to share affirmative messages about the brand and its offerings. This stems from the fact that brand familiarity fosters a sense of psychological ownership among customers, leading those who feel more connected to the company to not only make purchases but also disseminate positive WOM (Acharya, 2021). The latest marketing variable assessed consumers' comprehensive perception of the message, particularly their attitude toward the ad. This sentiment is typically shaped by various factors including consumer evaluations, ad quality, message content, presentation context, demographic traits, personality attributes, and prior experiences. A well-designed advertisement that is interesting, memorable, convincing and captivating tends to foster a favourable viewpoint. Conversely, an inadequately executed, irrelevant, or offensive advertisement is more liable to generate unfavourable sentiments. Similar principles apply to content: when aligned with consumers' needs and desires, it generates a positive stance; contrarily, if perceived as misleading, it leads to negative effects. The study's findings emphasise the positive attitude engendered by the ad, particularly within the group exposed to the experimental stimulus. The advertisement featuring the Italian language garnered a more positive reception in terms of being

convincing, memorable, and captivating within this sample group compared to the first one.

5.2 Conclusion

After identifying and discussing the key elements of each variable used in the surveys, it is possible to validate how personal elements of the targeted consumers and the language aspects of the promotional actions are crucial factors that companies must always consider, especially when it comes to engaging and stimulating consumers from the point of view of the product and brand experience.

Cultural influences appear to hold minimal significance in this study, as evidenced by the lack of statistically significant differences between the two sample groups. We cannot definitively assess the influence of cultural factors on the study's outcomes because we have not conducted a cross-cultural analysis and, for this reason, there are no differences in this sense between the two groups of respondents. More significant and statistically relevant are the individual factors that shape a consumer's behaviour. Does this indicate a trajectory toward a global culture? The discourse surrounding this topic is currently quite open. As per certain scholars, in this era of globalisation, discussing cultural identities and their distinctions is becoming less pertinent (Arnett et al., 2011; Lieber and Weisber, 2002). Should we prioritise comprehending the individual factors that influence a person's behaviour, rather than attempting to view diverse individuals as a collective culture with uniform values? As evidenced by the results, this study establishes the significance of individual factors that influence consumer behaviour and shape perceptions of the chosen advertisement. Indeed, the distinguishing factor between the two groups lies in the individual aspect of the Country-of-Origin effect. This supports

the necessity for modern consumer-oriented marketing to comprehend their intended audience, their preferences, needs, and requirements, in order to strategize and craft effective marketing campaigns, efficiently leveraging and exploiting the Country-of-origin effect. However, it's not advisable to entirely disregard cultural factors when interpreting the results. The global community is, after all, composed of diverse cultural systems, which can at least be categorised based on regions where similar values and beliefs are shared. Many scholars, in fact, put much attention on the importance of local traditions and habits in this more and more globalised world (Hall, 1997; Arnett et al., 2011).

The results obtained by this study, moreover, confirm that, in an era characterised by globalised markets and an abundance of choices, consumers still attach significant importance to the country of origin of the products they purchase. Despite the proliferation of international brands and the ease of cross-border trade, the notion of a product's origin continues to have influence over consumer preferences. This enduring significance can be attributed to several factors. First and foremost, the country of origin often carries connotations of quality, craftsmanship, and expertise, with certain regions or nations being renowned for their specialised skills and traditions. Additionally, concerns about ethical and environmental practices, as well as a desire to support local economies, drive consumers to make informed choices based on the origin of goods. Thus, even in a world marked by globalisation, the country of origin remains a pivotal consideration for consumers, shaping their purchasing decisions and reflecting the enduring significance of place in the marketplace (Hornikx et al., 2020).

Based on prior research, it is reasonable to suggest that our findings indicating a higher Country-of-Origin effect score could be linked to a higher Uncertainty Avoidance

Index (UAI) score, as observed in the second sample group. This connection can be attributed to the idea that a product's origin functions as a reliable quality indicator, thereby helping to alleviate uncertainties surrounding the product's attributes and characteristics, ultimately leading to more informed purchasing decisions. This alignment would support the theory put forth by Roozmand et al. (2011), which posits that cultures characterised by high UAI scores tend to favour well-established international brands, products offering clear advantages and assurances, and shopping environments that are predictable. Indeed, both Bilkey (1982) and Profeta (2008) have also demonstrated that a product's country of origin significantly shapes how consumers perceive its quality, authenticity, trustworthiness, and cultural associations. Consumers frequently use the product's country of origin as a cue for evaluating its quality, reliability, and performance. This cue aids them in simplifying their purchase decisions and avoiding information overload. When consumers encounter uncertainty or have limited time for the decision-making process, they may lean toward products from countries renowned for their expertise in producing that particular item, leveraging established stereotypes associated with quality and proficiency (Lee et al., 2007).

Given these circumstances, discovering statistically substantial elevated scores for brand familiarity within the second sample group wasn't entirely unexpected. These results substantiate the idea that familiarity with a product or brand can be nurtured not solely through conventional educational avenues or hands-on experiential learning, such as in-store demonstrations or trials, but also by leaning on external indicators like brand name, price, or country of origin (Lee et al., 2007).

The inclusion of the language of the country of origin of the product in the advertisement not only led to no problems in the understanding of the message but also

significantly contributed to conveying the intended idea behind the advertisement more effectively. These results underscore the importance of using the language appropriately as it aids in communicating the product's origin, leading to a richer and more authentic consumer experience with both the product and the brand. This positive influence on consumer behaviour aligns with the findings of the study, which unequivocally demonstrate that the judicious use of language enhances the overall perception of the product's origin, fostering a stronger connection between consumers and the brand. Consequently, this strategic use of language can potentially lead to increased consumer loyalty, trust, and ultimately, a higher likelihood of purchase and brand preference, as the last results of the survey demonstrate.

In conclusion, the research questions can be addressed by affirming that the Italian language does indeed impact consumers' purchasing behaviour and overall perceptions of Made in Italy food products. Additionally, all the variables examined in the study, except for UAI and consumer ethnocentrism, exhibit significant differences between the sample group that responded to the survey with the original English advertisement and the group exposed to the experimental advertisement in both English and Italian.

5.2.1 Theoretical implications

Advertising is seen as a social and communicative activity influencing consumers. It stands as the most effective means of reaching out to clients. Through advertising, valuable information is conveyed to them, enlightening them about the diverse range of brands existing in the market and the multitude of products that cater to their needs (Kannan and Tyagi, 2013). It may use a foreign language as a tool of a strategy to attract attention and compel viewers to consider the ad's suggestion, such as the ad of the present

study did (Hornikx et al., 2020). The primary goal of advertisements is to sell consumer products and services and thus influence their decision-making behaviour. When dealing with the realm of the language conveying the country of origin of the promoted product, it becomes of fundamental importance to not only focus on the literal composition of words or sentences it constructs, but also to recognize the profound influence it has as a medium for communicating the intricate cultural nuances inherent to the society it embodies. Language can be considered as a COO marker, as Aichner (2014) defines it. A single word or sentence can impact (positively or negatively) how consumers see not only the product advertised, but also the brand to which it belongs. The issue is, so, to understand which values the cultural language conveys to the foreign consumers and to effectively exploit them. The associations may be of two fundamental types: good or bad. The Italian language, as we have extensively shown, is associated with positive values such as authenticity, craftsmanship, taste, elegance. This thesis did not explore the whole range of languages but, as far as the Italian one is concerned, it demonstrates that the use of it functions well, attracts consumers' attention and influences their behaviour.

A further big theoretical implication of this study are the personal factors affecting consumers' behaviour. Indeed, the way that customers react to marketing initiatives and the way they perceive a stimulus is significantly influenced by their own beliefs and opinions. For companies aiming to increase their market share in different locations than their original one or demographics, an understanding of cultural influence on individuals, social norms, personal values and beliefs is crucial. As a result, the personal beliefs a potential consumer has on foreign products or goods' country of origin have a significant impact on their purchasing habits. This was demonstrated by the study's findings as well,

as the second sample group, who showed a higher Country-of-origin effect, had a general more favourable perception of the ad, the product and the brand.

The advancement of the theory regarding the impact of advertisements employing a combination of languages, specifically integrating the language of the product's country of origin and that spoken by the targeted audience, has witnessed significant growth and attention in recent years. This innovative approach has unveiled profound insights into consumer behaviour, encompassing their intentions to purchase, word-of-mouth endorsements, and attitudes toward the advertisements. Studies in this domain have consistently revealed that the use of different languages serves as a powerful tool for marking the different perceptions of consumers of the promoted product (Hornikx, van Meurs and Starren, 2008; Lee, 2019). Moreover, the fusion of languages serves to bridge cultural gaps and establishing a sense of authenticity and relatability with the audience. Consumers tend to perceive such advertisements as more credible and trustworthy, enhancing their willingness to embrace the product and share their positive experiences with others (Kozlova, 2020). This evolving theory underscores the dynamic nature of advertising strategies and their ability to foster stronger connections between brands and consumers in an increasingly multicultural and globalized world.

Another theoretical implication could be the value of Made in Italy products around the world. This study sums with the many others that demonstrate the power of the Made in Italy effects on consumers' perceptions and behaviour. In the Best Countries Report 2022, relating to the year 2021, Italy is ranked 14th out of 85 countries. Italy holds the 1st place both for cultural influence and prestige, as well as the 2nd place for tourist attractiveness. These rankings reflect Italy's strong cultural impact and allure as a tourist destination (www.italiaindati.com). Also, clients are frequently prepared to pay a

premium for items that offer distinctive features or advantages, which can result in a rise in revenue and profitability. The capacity of the business to recognize client preferences and wants is one aspect that can affect the success of the product and the brand.

5.2.2 Marketing implications

At this point, it is interesting to discuss the business implications of the findings. The results of the experimental survey suggest that the use of the Italian language to promote Made in Italy products is an effective technique for connecting with and engaging English-speaking consumers. As far as Made in Italy products are concerned, an advertisement copy that includes the Italian language can raise brand awareness, create brand equity, and enhance consumers' engagement and loyalty.

In this regard, it is possible to apply the theories on language as a medium of cultural values (Torresi, 2008) to identify the product's country of origin and its associated characteristics. Language, serving as a Country of Origin (COO) marker, can assume a pivotal role in infusing the product with values recognized by consumers. Effective communication, naturally, necessitates meticulous consideration and tailoring, employing strategies that effectively influence consumer behaviour to comprehend and appreciate the significance of a foreign language in conveying the product's country of origin. The study, however, underscores the potential efficacy of employing a blend of languages in advertising: the language linked to the product's Country of Origin and the language spoken by the target audience. This principle extends beyond just Italian for "Made in Italy" products. For instance, Opel, the globally renowned German automotive manufacturer, consistently maintains its slogans in German within its video advertisements. Thus, at the conclusion of a promotional video that meticulously explains

all the technical aspects in Italian (to ensure full comprehension by the audience), Opel cleverly uses language to evoke the Country of Origin. Indeed, German is renowned for its reputation for dependable, high-tech, and trustworthy automobiles. Furthermore, the two instances provided - the present study employing a social media advertisement and the Opel radio and television commercial - serve to showcase the efficacy of this approach across various media platforms, highlighting its adaptability in engaging a broad and multifaceted audience, whether in the digital realm or through conventional channels.

Another marketing consideration is that personal factors of the targeted subjects, such as beliefs and opinion about relevant topics (the foreign products and the country of origin in this case), can be the key to success in foreign markets in order to analyse and influence consumer behaviour and eliminate potential mistakes. When the marketing manager succeeds in meeting all requests including the personal difference and the exploitation of language, the promotion of a product would be successful. To sum up, it can be said that this research may be a useful tool for Italian companies that aim to export their products abroad to organise, analyse, and use their knowledge of the consumers while using marketing techniques to efficiently exploit the advantages of the Made in Italy effects. Additionally, it can be used, just as it already is for other countries of origin and their associated languages, to convey the positive attributes associated with that specific country of origin.

Finally, in the context of the brand experience factor, we previously discussed the evolution of traditional marketing into experiential marketing, highlighting the growing importance of the experiential aspect in consumer engagement. Such studies as this one can offer valuable insights into this realm, as they illustrate how language can serve as a powerful tool for evoking emotions and shaping distinct perceptions in consumers' minds.

This, in turn, contributes to the creation of a meaningful and memorable brand experience when consumers interact with the brand.

5.3 Limits and future research

Despite the many conclusions made based on the information presented up to this point, there are certain restrictions to the extent of the research. There are so many future improvements that can be applied to this research, starting with expanding the sample size and incorporating respondents from various linguistic backgrounds (such as Spanish, French, or German speakers) to enhance the interpretation and significance of the findings, thereby fostering more precise marketing strategies.

In the future, it could be valuable to analyse respondents hailing from entirely distinct cultures and possessing varying perceptions of the Italian culinary heritage. Additionally, a comparative study could explore how participants reacting to stimuli containing Italian language differ based on their respective languages.

Furthermore, an advanced phase of development might involve utilising an unfamiliar or specially crafted brand to eliminate any prior biases and gauge respondents' responses to the experimental advertisement involving both English (or another foreign language) and Italian, free from preexisting product or brand awareness. Moreover, the outcomes derived from this study are confined to the examination of a singular Made in Italy product, specifically a type of cheese, within the continually expanding market of Made in Italy food products. Consequently, future marketing research should extend its focus to other product categories, perhaps considering the other facets of Italian industrial excellence: Clothing (Abbigliamento), Furniture (Arredamento), and Automation (Automatizzazione).

Finally, an interesting avenue for future exploration lies in the utilisation of different advertising claims. This could serve as a captivating starting point for further investigations, which might involve television or radio advertisements, thereby introducing an audio (or audio-visual) component to the study.

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1: Hofstede's Connotations of the Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension</i>	30
<i>Figure 2: Original ad in English used in the present study</i>	52
<i>Figure 3: Original ad in Italian</i>	53
<i>Figure 4: Experimental ad created for and used in the present study</i>	55
<i>Figure 5: The total number of respondents for the two versions of the survey in comparison</i>	67
<i>Figure 6: Gender of respondents</i>	68
<i>Figure 7: Gender of respondents sorted according to surveys</i>	68
<i>Figure 8: Age of respondents</i>	69
<i>Figure 9: Age of respondents sorted according to surveys</i>	70
<i>Figure 10: Nationality of respondents</i>	71
<i>Figure 11: Nationality of respondents sorted according to surveys</i>	71
<i>Figure 12: Educational level of respondents</i>	72
<i>Figure 13: Educational level of respondents sorted according to surveys</i>	72
<i>Figure 14: Current occupation of respondents</i>	73
<i>Figure 15: Current occupation of respondents sorted according to surveys</i>	73
<i>Figure 16: Respondents understanding Italian language</i>	74
<i>Figure 17: Respondents understanding Italian sorted according to</i>	74

surveys

<i>Figure 18: Results about Uncertainty Avoidance Index</i>	79
<i>Figure 19: Results about consumer ethnocentrism</i>	80
<i>Figure 20: Results about COO effect</i>	81
<i>Figure 21: Results about perception of Made in Italy products</i>	82
<i>Figure 22: Overall brand familiarity, image and experience</i>	83
<i>Figure 23: Results about the ad perception</i>	84
<i>Figure 24: Results concerning marketing variables</i>	85

REFERENCES

- Acharya, A. (2021), "The impact of brand familiarity, customer brand engagement and self-identification on word-of-mouth.", *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, Vol.10, No.1, pp.29-48.
- Aichner, T. (2013), "Country-of-origin marketing: A list of typical strategies with examples.", *Journal of Brand Management*, No.21, pp. 81–93.
- Alba, J., and Hutchinson, J. (1987), "Dimensions of Consumer Expertise", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol.13, pp.411-54.
- Andéhn, M., and L'Espoir Decosta, P. (2016), "The Variable Nature of Country-to-Brand Association and its Impact on the Strength of the Country-of-Origin Effect", *International Marketing Review*, No.33.
- Anderson, E. W. (1998), "Customer Satisfaction and Word of Mouth.", *Journal of Service Research*, Vol.1, No.1, pp. 5–17.
- Arndt, J. (1967), "Role of Product-Related Conversations in the Diffusion of a New Product.", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 291–95.
- Baker, S.M., and Kennedy, P.F. (1994), "Death by Nostalgia: A Diagnosis of Context-Specific Cases.", *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 21, pp. 169-174.
- Bauer, H. H., Heinrich, D., and Martin, I. (2007), "How to create high emotional consumer-brand relationships? The causalities of brand passion." in Deans, K. R. (Eds), 2007

- Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference Proceedings*, Australian & New Zealand Marketing Acad., Sydney, pp. 2189-2198.
- Beig, F. A., Nika, F. A. (2019), “Brand Experience and Brand Equity”, *Vision*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 410-417.
- Benetello, C. (2017). “Transcreation as the Creation of a New Original: A Norton™ Case Study.” *Exploring creativity in Translation across Cultures*, pp. 237-247.
- Benetello, C. (2018), “When translation is not enough: Transcreation as a convention-defying practice. A practitioner's perspective”, *Journal of Specialised Translation*, No. 29, pp. 28-44.
- Bettiol, M. (2015), *Raccontare il Made in Italy. Un nuovo legame tra cultura e manifattura*, Marsilio, Venezia.
- Biel, A. L. (1992), “How Brand Image Drives Brand Equity”, *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol. 6.
- Bilkey, W., Nes, E. (1982), “Country-of-Origin Effects on Product Evaluations”, *Journal of International Business Studies*, No.13, pp.89–100.
- Blythe, J., and Cedrola, E. (2013), *Fondamenti di Marketing*, Pearson Italia, Milano-Torino.
- Brakus, J., Schmitt, B., and Zarantonello, L. (2009), “Brand experience: What Is It? How Is It Measured? Does It Affect Loyalty?”, *Journal of Marketing*. Vol.73.
- Burton, E. Q. (1998), “Geert Hofstede’s Dimensions of National Culture – An Introduction.”, *Insight Turkey*, No. 14, pp. 169–78.

Buzzell, R. (1968), "Can You Standardize Multinational Marketing?", *Harvard Business Review*, No. 46, pp. 102-113.

Calabrese, A., Capece, G., Costa, R., and Di Pillo, F. (2015), "Global Market and Commercial: Understanding Cultural Diversities", *Knowledge and Process Management*, Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 167-179.

Cappelli, L., D'Ascenzo, F., Ruggieri, R., Rossetti, F., Scalingi, A. (2019), "The attitude of consumers towards "Made in Italy" products. An empirical analysis among Italian customers", *Management & Marketing. Challenges for the Knowledge Society*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 31-47.

Carnevale, M., Luna, D., and Lerman, D. (2017), "Brand linguistics: A theory-driven framework for the study of language in branding", *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, Vol. 34, pp. 572-591.

Cebisa, Z. E. (2007), "The role of brands in the advertising of beauty products", The faculty of Management Studies, University of Kwazulu-Natal, June 2007.

Cerquetti, M., and Montella, M. (2012), "Paesaggio e patrimonio culturale come fattori di vantaggio competitivo per le imprese di prodotti tipici della regione Marche (Landscape and Cultural Heritage as Factors of Competitive Advantage for Agrifood Firms in Marche Region)", *XXIV Convegno annuale di Sinergie Il territorio come giacimento di vitalità per l'impresa* (Università del Salento, Lecce, October 18-19 2012), Referred Electronic Conference Proceeding, pp. 549-562.

- Chiaro, D. (2004), "Translation and Marketing Communication. A Comparison of Print and Web Advertising of Italian Agro-Food Products", *The Translator*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 313-328.
- Choi, E. J., and Kim, S.H. (2013), "The study of the impact of perceived quality and value of social enterprises on customer satisfaction and re-purchase intention.", *International journal of smart home*, Vol.7, No.1, pp. 239-252.
- De Fusco, R. (2014), *Made in Italy. Storia del design italiano*, Altralinea, Firenze.
- De Martino, R., Reid, D. M. H., Zyglidopoulos, S. C. (2006), "Balancing localization and globalization:exploring the impact of firm internationalization on a regional cluster", *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, Vol.18, No.1, pp. 1-24.
- De Mooij, M., and Hofstede, G. (2010). "The Hofstede model: Applications to global branding and advertising strategy and research", *International Journal of Advertising: The Quarterly Review of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 29 No.1, pp. 85–110.
- De Mooij, M. (2011), *Consumer Behaviour and culture: Consequences for Global Marketing and Advertising*, Sage Publications Ltd, London, UK.
- De Mooij, M., and Hofstede, G. (2011), "Cross-cultural consumer behaviour: A review of research findings", *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, Vol.23 No. 3-4, pp. 181–192.
- De Mooij, M. (2016), "Translating Advertisement: Painting the Tip of an Iceberg", *The Translator*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 179-198.

- De Mooij, M. (2022), *Global marketing and advertising: Understanding cultural paradoxes*, Sage Publications Ltd., London, UK.
- De Ruyter, K., van Birgelen, M., Wetzels, M. (1998), “Consumer ethnocentrism in international services marketing”, *International Business Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 185-202.
- Diaz-Millon, M., and Olvera-Lobo, M. D. (2023), “Towards a definition of transcreation: a systematic literature review”, *Perspectives*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 347-364.
- Donthu, N., Cherian, J., and Bhargava, M. (1993) “Factors influencing recall of outdoor advertising.”, *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp.64–72.
- Elder, R. S., Krishna, A., (2012), “The “visual depiction effect” in advertising: facilitating embodied mental simulation through product orientation”, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 38, pp. 988-1003.
- Ferraresi, M., and Schmitt, B. H. (2018), *Marketing Esperienziale. Come sviluppare l'esperienza di consumo*, Franco Angeli, Milano.
- Gavilan, D., and Avello, M. (2020), “Brand-Evoked Mental Imagery: The Role of Brands in Eliciting Mental Imagery” *SAGE Open*, Vol.10, No.4.
- Giner-Sorolla, R. (1999), “Affect in attitude: Immediate and deliberative perspectives.”, in Chaiken S. and Trope Y. (Eds.), *Dual-process theories in social psychology*, The Guilford Press, pp. 441–461.
- Girardelli, D. (2004), “Commodified Identities: The Myth of Italian Food in the United States.”, *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, Vol.28, No.4, pp. 307–324.

- Gurevich, T., Herman, P., Toubal, F., and Yotov, Y. (2021), “One Nation, One Language? Domestic Language Diversity, Trade and Welfare”, working paper, Economics Working Paper Series, No. 2021-01-B, U.S. INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION, Washington DC, January 2021.
- Ha, Y.H., and Perks, H. (2005), “Effects of Consumer Perceptions of Brand Experience on the Web: Brand Familiarity, Satisfaction and Brand Trust”, *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, Vol. 4, pp. 438-452.
- Hall, S. (1997), “The local and the global: Globalization and ethnicity”, *Cultural politics*, Vol.11, pp. 173-187.
- Hamzaoui, L. and Merunka, D. (2006), "The impact of country of design and country of manufacture on consumer perceptions of bi-national products' quality: an empirical model based on the concept of fit", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 145-155.
- Hofstede, G. (1983), “National Cultures in Four Dimensions: A Research-Based Theory of Cultural Differences among Nations”, *International Studies of Management & Organization*, Vol. 13, No. 1/2, pp. 46–74.
- Hofstede, G. (2001), *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*, Sage Publications, New York.
- Hofstede, G. (2011), “Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context”. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 8.
- Holzmüller, H. H., and Stöttinger, B. (2001), “International marketing managers’ cultural sensitivity: relevance, training requirements and a pragmatic training concept”, *International Business Review*, Vol. 10, No. 6, pp. 597-614.

- Hornikz, J., van Meurs, F., and Starren, M. (2007), “An Empirical Study of Readers' Associations with Multilingual Advertising: The Case of French, German and Spanish in Dutch Advertising”, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 204-219.
- Hornikx, J., van Meurs, F., van den Heuvel, J. and Janssen, A. (2020),” How Brands Highlight Country of Origin in Magazine Advertising: A Content Analysis”, *Journal of Global Marketing*, Vol.33, No.1, pp. 34-45.
- ISTAT, a cura di Rapiti, F. M. (2023), “Indagine conoscitiva sul Made in Italy: valorizzazione e sviluppo dell’impresa italiana nei suoi diversi ambiti produttivi”, *Commissione (Attività produttive, commercio e turismo) della Camera dei Deputati*, Rome. Available at: <https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/03/CommissioneAttivita-produttive6marzo2023.pdf>
- Jensen, L.A., Arnett, J.J., McKenzie, J. (2011), “Globalization and Cultural Identity.” in Schwartz, S., Luyckx, K., Vignoles, V. (eds), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 285-301.
- Jiménez-Guerrero, J. F., Pérez-Mesa, J. C., and Galdeano-Gòmez, E. (2020), “Alternative Proposals to Measure Consumer Ethnocentric Behavior: A Narrative Literature Review”, *Sustainability*, Vol. 12, No. 6.
- Josiassen, A., Assaf, A. G., Karpen, I. O. (2011), “Consumer ethnocentrism and willingness to buy. Analyzing the role of three demographic consumer characteristics”, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 28, No. 6, pp. 627-646.
- Kannan, R., and Sarika T. (2013), “Use of language in advertisements”, *English for specific purposes world*, Vol. 37, No.13, pp. 1-10.

Kotler, P., Wong, V., Saunders, J., and Armstrong, G. (2005), *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, England.

Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Wong, V., and Saunders, J. (2008), *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, England.

Kotler, P., and Armstrong, G. (2012), *Principles of Marketing*, 14th Edition, Pearson Education Limited, Essex, England.

Kotler, P., Keller, K. L. (2015), *Marketing Management*, Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, UK.

Kozlova, T. (2020), "Efficiency of business and intercultural communication: Multilingual advertising discourse." III International Scientific Congress Society of Ambient Intelligence 2020 (ISC-SAI 2020)

Krishna, A., Cian, L., and Sokolova, T. (2016) "The Power of Sensory Marketing in Advertising", *Current Opinion in Psychology*, Vol. 10.

Laroche, M., Kim, C., and Zhou, L. (1996), "Brand familiarity and confidence as determinants of purchase intention: An empirical test in a multiple brand context", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 115-120.

Lee, J. A., Garbarino, E., and Lerman, D. (2007), "How cultural differences in uncertainty avoidance affect product perceptions", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 330-349.

- Lee, J. K., and Lee, W. (2009), “Country-of-Origin Effects on Consumer Product Evaluation and Purchase Intention: The Role of Objective Versus Subjective Knowledge”, *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 21, pp. 137-151.
- Lee, J. L., James, J. D., Kim, Y. K. (2014), “A Reconceptualization of Brand Image”, *International Journal of Business Administration*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 1-11.
- Lee, J. S., (2019), “Multilingual advertising in the linguistic landscape of Seoul.”, *World Englishes*, No. 38, pp. 500-518.
- Lieber, R.J., Weisberg, R.E. (2002), “Globalization, Culture, and Identities in Crisis”, *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, No. 16, pp. 273–296.
- Ma, Q., Abdeljelil, H. M, Hu, L. (2019), “The Influence of the Consumer Ethnocentrism and Cultural Familiarity on Brand Preference: Evidence of Event-Related Potential (ERP)”, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, Vol. 13, Available at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2019.00220>
- MacKenzie, S. B., and Lutz, R. J. (1989), “An empirical examination of the structural antecedents of attitude toward the ad in an advertising pretesting context”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53, No. 2, pp. 48–65.
- MAECI (2019), “L’Italiano nel Mondo Che Cambia 2019”, report from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome. Available at: <https://www.sitocgie.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Rapporto-diffusione-italiano-2019.pdf>

- Maghssudipour, A., Bellandi, M., and Caloffi, A. (2022), "The role of language in international trade and the "made in Italy"", *Journal of Industrial and Business Economics*, No. 50, pp. 677-702.
- Magier-Łakomy, E., and Boguszewicz-Kreft, M. (2015), "Dimensions of the Country of Origin Effect and their Measurement", *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, sectio H, Oeconomia*, Vol. 49, No. 125.
- Maylath, B., and St.Amant, K. (2019), *Translation and localization A Guide for Technical and Professional Communicators*, Routledge, London, UK.
- Mitchell, A. A., and Olson, J. C. (1981) "Are product attribute beliefs the only mediator of advertising effects on brand attitude?", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 318–332.
- Miguel, L., Marques, S., Duarte, A. P. (2022), "The influence of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase of domestic fruits and vegetables: application of the extended theory of planned behaviour", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 124, No. 13, pp. 599-618.
- Montanari, M. (2006), *Food Is Culture*, Columbia University Press, New York, NY.
- Musté, P., Stuart, K., and & Trelis, A. (2015). "Linguistic Choice in a Corpus of Brand Slogans: Repetition or Variation.", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol.198. pp. 350-358.
- Na, J., Huang, C. M., and Park, D. C. (2017), "When age and culture interact in an easy and yet cognitively demanding task: older adults, but not younger adults, showed the expected cultural differences", *Frontiers in psychology*, Vol. 8, No. 457.

- Nicoletti, G., Platania, M., and Privitera, D. (2007), "Authentic and Fake Italian Food Products in the World", *European Association of Agricultural Economists, 105th Seminar*, March 8-10, 2007, Bologna. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23508852_Authentic_and_Fake_Italian_Food_Products_in_the_World
- Noel, H. (2009), *Basics marketing 01: Consumer behaviour., Vol. 1*, Ava Publishing, Worthing, UK.
- Ortiz-Ospina, E., Beltekian, D., and Roser, M. (2018) "Trade and Globalization", *Our World In Data*, Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/trade-and-globalization>
- Pappu, R., Quester, P., and Cooksey, R (2006), "Consumer-based brand equity and country-of-origin relationships: Some empirical evidence", *European Journal of Marketing*, No. 40, pp. 696-717.
- Paul, P., Roy, A., Mukhopadhyay, K. (2006), "The Impact of Cultural Values on Marketing Ethical Norms: A Study in India and the United States", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 28-56.
- Profeta, A., (2008), "A Theoretical Framework for Country-of-Origin-Research in the Food sector", discussion paper, Technical University of Munich, Chair of Environmental Economics, Munich, January 2008. Available at: https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/20540/1/MPRA_paper_20540.pdf
- Rauwers, F., Rimmelswaal, P., Fransen, M. L., Dahlén, M., and van Noort, G. (2018), "The impact of creative media advertising on consumer responses: two field experiments", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 37, No. 5, pp. 749-768.

- Roosmand, O., Ghasem-Aghaee, N., Nematbakhsh, M., Baraani-Dastjerdi, A. and Hofstede, G. J. (2011). "Computational Modeling of Uncertainty Avoidance in Consumer Behavior.", *International Journal of Research and Reviews in Computer Science (IJRRCS)*, pp. 18-26.
- Samiee, S., and Roth, K. (1992), "The Influence of Global Marketing Standardization on Performance", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56, No. 2, pp. 1–17.
- Sangwon, L., Zachary, J., and Xin H. (2009), "Brand Origin Or Product Origin? the Effects of Country of Origin Fit on Brand Evaluation", *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 36, pp. 1013-1014.
- Shavitt S. (Eds), *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 36, Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research, pp. 1013-1014.
- Schaefer, A. (1995), "Do demographics have an impact on country of origin effects?", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 13, No. 8, pp. 813-834.
- Schmitt, B. H., Brakus, Zarantonello, L. (2015), "The current state and future of brand experience", *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 21, pp. 727-733.
- Schwartz, S. (1992), "Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries.", in Zanna, M. P., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Academic Press, Vol. 25, pp. 1-65.
- Schwartz, S. (2012), "An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values.", *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 1.

- Sedki K., Romdhane K., (2019), "Consumer ethnocentrism in developing countries", *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 63-71.
- Shimp, T. A., & Sharma, S. (1987), "Consumer Ethnocentrism: Construction and Validation of the CETSCALE", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 24 No. 3, pp. 280-289.
- Smith, K. L., (2002), *The Translation of Advertising Texts: a Study of English-Language Printed Advertisements and their Translations in Russian*. PhD thesis, University of Sheffield, Department of Russian and Slavonic Studies. Available at: <https://theses.whiterose.ac.uk/3044/>
- Spears, N., and Singh, S. (2004), "Measuring Attitude Toward the Brand and Purchase Intentions", *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, Vol. 26, pp. 53-66.
- St. Amant, K., Edited by Maylath, B., and St. Amant, K., (2019), *Translation and Localization. A Guide for Technical and Professional Communicators*, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, New York and London.
- Stocking, G., W. JR. (1966), "Franz Boas and the Culture Concept in Historical Perspective", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 68, No. 4, pp. 867-882.
- Stull, J.B., and Till, B.V. (1995), "Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture as Measurements of Student Ethnocentrism: A Quasi-Experimental Study.", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western States Communication Association (Portland, OR, February 10-14, 1995).
- Supphellen, M., & Rittenburg, T. L. (2001), "Consumer ethnocentrism: When foreign products are better.", *Psychology & Marketing*, Vol. 18, No. 9, pp. 907-927.

- Temperini, V., Gregori, G. L., and Palanga, P. (2016), “The Brand Made in Italy: A Critical Analysis”, *Management Studies*, Vol. 4., No. 3, pp. 93-103.
- Theodosiou, M., Leonidou, L., C. (2003), “Standardization versus adaptation of international marketing strategy: an integrative assessment of the empirical research”, *International Business Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 141-171.
- Tylor, E. B. (2012), *Primitive Culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Available online at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/primitive-culture/30955C7CED270E1AF80CB7FEECF85010>
- Torresi, I. (2008), “Advertising: A Case for Intersemiotic Translation”, *Meta: Journal des traducteurs*, Vol. 53, No. 1, pp. 62-75.
- Torresi, I. (2021), *Translating Promotional and Advertising Texts*, Routledge, Oxon & New York.
- Venaik, S. and Brewer, P. (2010), “Avoiding uncertainty in Hofstede and GLOBE”, *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 8, pp. 1294-1315.
- Vianelli, D., and Marzano, F. C. (2012), “L'effetto country of origin sull'intenzione d'acquisto del consumatore: una literature review”, working paper, Working Paper Series, N. 2, 2012, Dipartimento di Scienze Economiche, Aziendali, Matematiche e Statistiche “Bruno de Finetti”, Università degli Studi di Trieste, Trieste.
- Wang, W. (2018), “U.K. consumers’ perceived risk of buying products from emerging economies: a moderated mediation model.”, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 326–339.

Wijaya, B. S. (2013), “Dimensions of Brand Image: A Conceptual Review from the Perspective of Brand Communication”, *European Journal of Business and Management*, Vol. 5, pp. 55-65.

Zainuddin, M., Yasin, I., Md., Arif, I., and Hamid, A. B. A., (2018), “Alternative Cross-Cultural Theories: Why Still Hofstede?”, in *Proceedings of International Conference on Economics, Management and Social Study 2018*, Jakarta, Indonesia, pp. 4-6. Available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3309633>

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Ballis, S. (2023), “Blue Cheese vs. Gorgonzola: What's the Difference?”, available at: <https://www.eatingwell.com/article/8040797/blue-cheese-vs-gorgonzola/> (accessed 17 June 2023)

Bernardini, L. (2023), “Made in Italy: quali settori rappresentano ancora l’Italia nel mondo”, available at: <https://delleconomia.it/made-in-italy-quali-settori-rappresentano-ancora-litalia-nel-mondo-3848/> (accessed 16 July 2023)

Cambridge University Press & Assessment, “culture” in Cambridge dictionary, available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/culture> (accessed 20th June 2023)

Fishbein, M., and Ajzen, I. (1975) “Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research.”, available at: <https://people.umass.edu/aizen/f&a1975.html> (accessed 15 May 2023)

Foodweb, (2023), “GORGONZOLA, NEL 2022 ESPORTATI PIÙ DI DUE MILIONI DI FORME”, available at: <https://www.foodweb.it/2023/03/gorgonzola-nel-2022-esportati-piu-di-due-milioni-di-forme/> (accessed 25 June 2023)

Girardi, A. (2019), ““Made In Italy”: What Is Behind The Worldwide Famous Label?”, available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/annalisagirardi/2019/04/03/made-in-italy-what-is-behind-the-worldwide-famous-label/?sh=771c36f56556> (accessed 25 June 2023)

GLOBE Project (2020), available at: <https://www.globeproject.com/> (accessed 16 July 2023)

GLOBE Project (2020), “Study 2004-2007”, available at:
https://globeproject.com/study_2004_2007 (accessed 16 July 2023)

Gorgonzola DOP, “Le origini del Formaggio gorgonzola”, available at:
<https://www.gorgonzola.com/il-formaggio-gorgonzola-le-origini/> (accessed 25 June 2023)

Gorgonzola DOP, “Esportazione”, available at: <https://www.gorgonzola.com/esportazione/>
(accessed 25 June 2023)

Gorgonzola DOP, “Buono. Dolce. Piccante. Il sapore dell’Italia”, available
at: [https://www.facebook.com/gorgonzoladop/photos/pb.100064515947201.-
2207520000./2217911374938302/?type=3](https://www.facebook.com/gorgonzoladop/photos/pb.100064515947201.-2207520000./2217911374938302/?type=3) (accessed 13 August 2023)

Gorgonzola DOP, “Good. Sweet. Spicy. Taste of Italy”, available at:
[https://www.facebook.com/ConsortiumGorgonzolaCheese/photos/pb.100068561516506
.-2207520000./2259148777684864/?type=3](https://www.facebook.com/ConsortiumGorgonzolaCheese/photos/pb.100068561516506.-2207520000./2259148777684864/?type=3) (accessed 13 August 2023)

IMF Staff (2008), “Globalization: A Brief Overview”, available at:
<https://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2008/053008.htm> (accessed 16 July 2023)

Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “Culture language.”, available at: [https://www.merriam-
webster.com/dictionary/culture%20language](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture%20language) (accessed 6 July 2023)

Opel Italia, “Opel Astra GTC: lo spot ufficiale” (2012), available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1oJRKKqaJY> (accessed 15 September 2023)

Wisconsincheese.com, “The Cheese Lover’s Guide to Gorgonzola Cheese”, available at:
<https://www.wisconsincheese.com/the-cheese->

life/article/128/gorgonzola#:~:text=Blue%20cheese%20is%20a%20general,milder%20t
han%20other%20blue%20cheeses (accessed 17 June 2023)

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Premise

Dear interviewee,

I am a student of the University of Padua and for my dissertation in 'Modern Languages for Communication and International Cooperation' I am conducting marketing research on advertising for the promotion of Made in Italy food products.

To this end, I kindly ask you to take a few minutes to answer the following survey.

Furthermore, the anonymity of the answers will be guaranteed in accordance with privacy regulations, and the few personal data will only be processed for statistical calculations in aggregate form.

Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation!

Understanding of Italian

1. Indicate how you would translate the following sentence:

Antonio ama mangiare la pizza

- Antonio knows how to cook pizza well.
- Antonio doesn't really like to eat pizza.
- Antonio loves eating pizza.

Cultural factors

2. Think about the cultural aspect of the context in which you live and indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly	2. Disagree	3. Neither	4. Agree	5. Strongly
--	-------------	-------------	------------	----------	-------------

	disagree		agree nor disagree		agree
I feel uncomfortable in improvised situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel uncomfortable in situations where I am not in control.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important to me to plan for the future very carefully.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I love surprises.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoy taking risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change in my life is important to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am afraid of what I don't know.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am intrigued by novelties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Individual factors

3. Now, focusing on the origin of the products available on the market, indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
People should always buy products manufactured in their country instead of imports.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only those products that are unavailable in the country should be imported.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buying products manufactured in your country keeps the country working.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is not right to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

purchase foreign products, because it puts the country out of jobs.					
Curbs should be put on all imports.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into our country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Now think about your purchasing habits and indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
I carefully choose the goods I buy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I pay a lot of attention to the country of origin of the products I buy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I pay a lot of attention to the country of production of the products I buy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I choose the products I buy according to their origin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Advertising and brand

Now, please, read the following text carefully and pay attention for a few moments to the following image.

GORGONZOLA DOP has posted a series of advertising images on its Facebook profile in recent years to promote its product. Emphasizing the Italian origin of Gorgonzola and describing its taste, GORGONZOLA DOP reminds users of the social channel that it is a 100% Made in Italy product.



5. Considering Made in Italy products, indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
The goods with the label “made in Italy” arouse in me positive associations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Italy offers products with excellent features.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made in Italy goods are of high quality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made in Italy goods are reliable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made in Italy food products are tasty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made in Italy food products are healthy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Italy is well-known to me for its dairy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

products.					
Dairy products from this country are authentic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When thinking about dairy products, this country comes to my mind immediately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I trust dairy products from this country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Reflect on your level of familiarity with Gorgonzola DOP and its products and indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
I am very familiar with Gorgonzola DOP's products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Gorgonzola DOP's products very well.					
I have great experience with Gorgonzola DOP's cheese.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Think about your personal impressions of Gorgonzola DOP and its products and rate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale ranging from 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree).

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
I perceive Gorgonzola DOP to be the best.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The image of Gorgonzola DOP is high for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gorgonzola DOP has a great value for me due to its high image.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Think about your personal experiences with Gorgonzola DOP and its products and indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
I find Gorgonzola DOP interesting in a sensory way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gorgonzola DOP is an emotional brand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gorgonzola DOP results in bodily experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gorgonzola DOP stimulates my curiosity and my capacity in problem-solving.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Focusing your attention to the GORGONZOLA DOP advertisement just seen, indicate, on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) to 5 (= strongly agree), how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree

I understand the text 100%.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand the message.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It conveys the message clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It conveys the idea of Italianness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It conveys the idea of Italian culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It conveys the idea of Italian tradition.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The product is of high quality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The product is tasty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Marketing

10. Finally, thinking one more time about Gorgonzola DOP, indicate on a scale of 1 (= completely disagree) to 5 (= completely agree) how much you agree with the following statements.

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor	4. Agree	5. Strongly
--	----------------------	-------------	----------------------	----------	-------------

			disagree		agree
I am willing to try Gorgonzola DOP.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am interested in purchasing Gorgonzola DOP.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will buy more Made in Italy products of Gorgonzola DOP.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am inclined to recommend Gorgonzola DOP to friends and relatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am inclined to recommend Gorgonzola DOP to other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am inclined to give positive reviews of Gorgonzola DOP.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The advertisement is very convincing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The advertisement is easy to remember.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The advertisement caught my attention.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Personal information

Gender

- Female
- Male

Age

Educational level

- Middle School
- High school
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD
- Other

Current job

- Student
- Public/private sector employee
- Entrepreneur
- Houseman/Housewife
- Unemployed
- Pensioner

Nationality

- USA
- UK
- Other

RIASSUNTO

La presente ricerca mira a esplorare l'impatto dei valori culturali e della lingua, in particolare dell'italiano, sulla percezione della pubblicità per i prodotti alimentari italiani rivolti a un pubblico di lingua inglese. Nello specifico, cerca di determinare se l'uso di elementi linguistici in italiano o l'adattamento completo delle pubblicità in inglese sia più efficace. Inoltre, verrà analizzato l'impatto della cultura, dell'esperienza, dell'immagine e della familiarità del marchio, delle opinioni personali riguardo al "Made in Italy" e i prodotti ad esso correlati, delle immagini e sensazioni stimulate dalla pubblicità, della comprensione del testo del messaggio e del coinvolgimento con il prodotto sul consumatore in termini di intenzione d'acquisto, passaparola e gradimento della pubblicità. Per raggiungere gli obiettivi della ricerca è stata condotta una indagine quantitativa attraverso la distribuzione di un questionario online a un campione di intervistati parlanti la lingua inglese. Per analizzare la funzione della lingua italiana, sono state create due versioni distinte del questionario, ciascuna con le stesse domande ma con uno stimolo diverso. La pubblicità originale in lingua inglese utilizzata per la ricerca è stata selezionata dalla pagina Facebook di Gorgonzola DOP inglese, mentre la pubblicità sperimentale in lingua inglese e italiana è stata creata ad hoc per lo studio fondendo gli originali messaggi della stessa pubblicità in italiano e in inglese. La pubblicità mira a comunicare e promuovere il sapore del prodotto, legandolo intrinsecamente all'Italia, paese in cui viene prodotto.

Prima di focalizzarsi sull'aspetto pratico della tesi, è bene fare un'introduzione generale sulla percezione che il mondo ha dei prodotti *food* Made in Italy, sulla loro promozione e su quello che è il ruolo della lingua nel marketing e nella pubblicità,

focalizzandosi sulla promozione dei già citati prodotti, poiché saranno rilevanti per l'analisi successiva dei risultati.

I prodotti alimentari italiani sono celebrati a livello globale per i loro squisiti sapori, le ricche tradizioni e la meticolosa artigianalità. Essi incarnano la dieta mediterranea e catturano l'essenza del patrimonio culinario italiano. Tuttavia, in un mondo globalizzato, comunicare efficacemente il significato culturale e storico dei prodotti "Made in Italy" presenta molte sfide. La pubblicità svolge un ruolo cruciale nel mostrare questi prodotti, ma deve considerare le sfumature culturali e personali dei consumatori a cui intende rivolgersi. La lingua, in particolare l'italiano, serve come potente strumento per trasmettere l'amore e la reverenza degli italiani per il loro patrimonio culinario, arricchendo l'esperienza gastronomica dei consumatori, ovvero coloro che guardano e percepiscono lo stimolo pubblicitario. I dati di mercato mostrano che i prodotti "Made in Italy", compresi gli alimenti, continuano a prosperare, trainati dal settore del lusso. Il settore alimentare, infatti, è cresciuto costantemente, superando le medie globali degli anni passati. Inoltre, il settore alimentare di alta qualità e il vino occupano il primo posto nell'UE per il numero di premi ricevuti.

Andando più nello specifico, la lingua svolge un ruolo cruciale nella vita quotidiana e anche nel marketing, poiché può essere considerata sia un codice di comunicazione che un componente importante della cultura. Tradurre gli elementi verbali nelle pubblicità presenta diverse sfide, anche perché la lingua si trasforma in un mezzo attraverso il quale vengono comunicate associazioni e simboli, intrecciandosi con l'essenza stessa dei prodotti promossi. Una delle principali difficoltà sta nel catturare le sfumature culturali e i riferimenti incorporati nel testo originale, soprattutto per comunicarli a una cultura che ne ha di diversi da quella di partenza. La lingua italiana

all'interno dei testi promozionali, poi, è una delle strategie utilizzate per comunicare la provenienza italiana di un prodotto. Altre sono, ad esempio, i colori della bandiera nazionale, oppure nomi di brand che richiamano nomi che richiamano quelli italiani. Lo scopo, in ogni caso, è riuscire a comunicare l'autenticità, l'artigianalità, la bontà, la freschezza dei prodotti grazie all'associazione con l'Italia, a cui vengono costantemente attribuite queste caratteristiche.

Il questionario all'interno della presente tesi somministrato nei due paesi oggetto d'indagine può essere diviso in cinque grandi sezioni. Una prima sezione riguarda l'influenza culturale, in particolare il concetto di Uncertainty Avoidance Index (Indice di Evitamento dell'Incertezza) di Hofstede. La cultura, definita come "lo stile di vita, in particolare le usanze e le credenze generali, di un gruppo di persone in un determinato momento", influenza significativamente le attitudini, i valori, le credenze e le preferenze delle persone, plasmando la percezione del mondo, inclusi prodotti, servizi e messaggi di marketing. I fattori culturali come la lingua, le tradizioni, le norme sociali e i simboli culturali influenzano profondamente le decisioni d'acquisto dei consumatori, la fedeltà e le associazioni del marchio. Comprendere il contesto culturale è cruciale per le aziende che cercano di connettersi efficacemente con il loro pubblico target. Ad esempio, l'UAI misura la propensione di una società a evitare l'incertezza e l'ambiguità, influenzando la preferenza per regole rigide e strutturate. Hofstede spiega che le culture con un alto UAI possono essere più resistenti all'acquisto di prodotti innovativi o sconosciuti, preferendo marchi ben consolidati e prodotti con benefici chiari. D'altra parte, le culture con un basso UAI sono più aperte all'innovazione e all'ambiguità.

È importante considerare sempre che le conseguenze dell'UAI non sono assolute e possono variare tra individui all'interno di una società. La seconda sezione, infatti,

prende in considerazione due fattori personali che possono influenzare il comportamento dei consumatori. L'effetto paese di origine, noto anche come *COO-effect*, si riferisce a come i consumatori associano determinate qualità e stereotipi ai prodotti in base al paese di provenienza. I prodotti provenienti da paesi noti per l'eccellenza in un settore o categoria specifica spesso sono visti in modo più positivo, mentre quelli provenienti da paesi con una scarsa immagine di qualità possono essere visti meno favorevolmente. L'etnocentrismo dei consumatori, invece è correlato al *COO-effect* e si riferisce alla preferenza dei consumatori per i prodotti domestici rispetto a quelli stranieri. Deriva da un senso di orgoglio nazionalistico, preoccupazioni sulla qualità, fedeltà alle industrie locali e al sostegno dell'economia locale. Le persone variano nei loro livelli di etnocentrismo, influenzati da fattori come l'esposizione a diverse culture, le esperienze e i valori personali. Sia l'etnocentrismo dei consumatori che il *COO-effect* hanno implicazioni significative per le strategie di marketing e branding. Le aziende possono sfruttare le associazioni positive legate al paese per rafforzare l'immagine del loro marchio e attrarre le preferenze dei consumatori. Tuttavia, devono anche affrontare le sfide poste dagli stereotipi negativi sul paese.

La terza sezione parte con la visione dello stimolo. Prosegue, poi, con domande riguardo la percezione e pensiero riguardo prodotti "Made in Italy". L'iconica etichetta "Made in Italy" rappresenta un'illustre dimostrazione di come il marchio geografico stia diventando sempre più apprezzato e prezioso. Essa utilizza efficacemente simboli, stereotipi e segnali evocativi profondamente radicati in specifiche località, suscitando aspettative nei consumatori e fornendo informazioni preziose. L'analisi continua con l'esperienza del marchio, la sua immagine e la sua familiarità. Quest'ultima rappresenta le associazioni e i pensieri che i consumatori sviluppano riguardo a un marchio. Queste

associazioni possono derivare dall'uso diretto, da racconti di familiari o amici, da pubblicità passate o informazioni sul marchio. Considerando la trasformazione del marketing contemporaneo in esperienziale, ovvero focalizzato nel creare per il consumatore un'esperienza memorabile, le aziende devono cercare di creare esperienze coinvolgenti che abbraccino le diverse dimensioni delle strategie sensoriali, emotive, cognitive, comportamentali e relazionali. L'intensità dell'esperienza di marca varia in base a quanti di questi aspetti vengono attivati e quanto i sensi vengono stimolati. La familiarità con il marchio aumenta generalmente con esperienze positive ripetute. Infine, l'immagine del marchio comprende i sentimenti, le affiliazioni e i principi che le persone associano a un marchio nel corso del tempo.

La quarta sezione si concentra sull'indagare la percezione che gli intervistati hanno avuto della pubblicità a seguito della visione dello stimolo, soprattutto per quanto riguarda la comprensione del testo letterale e del suo contenuto, e sul valutare le variabili di marketing, ovvero l'intenzione di acquisto, il passaparola, l'atteggiamento verso la pubblicità. Per intenzione di acquisto intendiamo l'affermazione o la predisposizione di un individuo a comprare un prodotto o un servizio in un prossimo futuro. Per passaparola, invece, intendiamo la propensione dell'individuo di parlare del prodotto, o del brand, promosso con terze persone, quali amici, familiari, colleghi, sia in termini positivi che in termini negativi. L'atteggiamento verso la pubblicità, invece, è come viene percepito lo stimolo, ovvero se viene considerato interessante, accattivante, facile da ricordare e convincente.

La ricerca empirica è stata condotta tra giugno e luglio 2023, cercando rispondenti di lingua inglese, somministrando il questionario con le variabili sopracitate a 128 intervistati. Più precisamente, 63 hanno risposto al questionario con lo stimolo originale

in inglese e 65 hanno risposto al questionario con lo stimolo sperimentale. Per l'analisi dei dati, successivamente, sono state prese in considerazione 109 risposte (54 + 55), ovvero quelle di intervistati che hanno dimostrato, tramite una iniziale domanda a risposta chiusa, di comprendere l'italiano. Il metodo scelto per interpretare i dati è l'analisi delle medie. L'applicazione di questa tecnica richiede l'utilizzo di una variabile indipendente, che in questo caso si riferisce ai gruppi oggetto di valutazione, ovvero rispondenti di uno o dell'altro questionario.

Non ci sono stati particolari problemi per quanto riguarda le variabili socio-demografiche. La percentuale di donne che hanno completato il questionario è stata più alta in entrambe le versioni. Per il resto, gli intervistati erano distribuiti in modo abbastanza uniforme per età, istruzione e occupazione, nonostante fossero distribuiti meglio nel questionario con lo stimolo sperimentale in inglese e italiano.

Dai risultati ottenuti, il secondo gruppo ha mostrato una media più elevata in tutti e tre gli aspetti presi in considerazione nella prima sezione del sondaggio, ossia l'Indice di Evitamento dell'Incertezza (UAI), l'etnocentrismo del consumatore e il *COO-effect*. Tuttavia, l'unico risultato statisticamente significativo da questa parte del sondaggio, quella non influenzata dalla visione dello stimolo, per la discussione è che, tra i due gruppi di partecipanti, il secondo gruppo ha dimostrato una notevole inclinazione verso il *COO-effect*. Quindi, il fattore distintivo tra i due gruppi di campioni prima dell'esposizione allo stimolo sembra essere i punteggi variabili nel *COO-effect*. Nello specifico caso in esame, quindi, non possiamo stabilire se la cultura giochi un ruolo fondamentale nell'influenza del comportamento del consumatore e nella percezione dello stimolo. Al contrario, viene evidenziata l'importanza del fattore personale del *COO-effect*, ovvero dell'attenzione che i consumatori pongono nel Paese di origine dei prodotti che acquistano. Questo può essere

anche considerato come un segnale del fatto che si voglia evitare di commettere acquisti errati: il Paese di origine del prodotto viene preso come rapido indicatore di quelle caratteristiche che gli vengono attribuite, nel bene e nel male. Nel caso dell'Italia, elementi che richiamano il Bel Paese sono ben visti dai consumatori e considerati validi indicatori di qualità.

Come abbiamo detto, l'incorporazione di terminologia italiana rafforza l'identità italiana del prodotto, inviando un messaggio chiaro ai potenziali consumatori globali che il prodotto ha origine da una tradizione ricca di maestria artigianale, design sofisticato, vivide caratteristiche sensoriali e altre qualità distintive. I risultati ottenuti da questo studio suggeriscono che il linguaggio e il suo utilizzo nelle azioni promozionali siano un fattore determinante nelle percezioni dei consumatori riguardo al prodotto promosso, poiché dimostrano che il linguaggio è in grado di comunicare ai consumatori le caratteristiche associate al paese, contribuendo ad aumentare il valore del marchio e del prodotto stesso. Infatti, il gruppo di partecipanti che ha risposto agli elementi legati ai prodotti "Made in Italy" dopo aver visto lo stimolo sperimentale ha mostrato una percezione più elevata della categoria, considerando gli articoli Made in Italy come affidabili, salutari, gustosi, buoni ed autentici.

I risultati significativi per quanto riguarda anche la familiarità, l'immagine e l'esperienza con il brand dimostrano che il linguaggio è un fattore determinante nelle percezioni dei consumatori non solo del prodotto promosso, ma anche del marchio. Infatti, il gruppo di intervistati del secondo questionario ha mostrato medie più alte per tutte e tre le variabili prese in considerazione.

Inoltre, il gruppo di partecipanti che ha visto la pubblicità sperimentale ha ottenuto una media di punteggio più alta nella percezione dello stimolo, ovvero la pubblicità, e del

suo messaggio. Considerando come dato acquisito che tutti i partecipanti comprendono la lingua italiana, grazie alla domanda di verifica iniziale, entrambi i testi degli stimoli sono stati compresi. La lingua italiana, che rappresenta l'unica differenza tra uno stimolo e l'altro, contribuisce in modo efficace a rafforzare il concetto di "italianità", le tradizioni italiane, la cultura e la qualità superiore del prodotto in esame. Di conseguenza, i risultati dello studio stabiliscono inequivocabilmente la superiorità della pubblicità che integra la lingua italiana, superando la pubblicità originale in inglese del Gorgonzola DOP in termini di efficacia. Infine, il comportamento del consumatore è stato preso in considerazione in questo studio. Tutte e tre le variabili di marketing introdotte nel sondaggio, ovvero l'intenzione di acquisto, l'atteggiamento nei confronti della pubblicità e il passaparola, hanno mostrato un punteggio più elevato nel secondo gruppo di campioni, il che può essere attribuito all'effetto Paese d'origine più elevato, alla maggiore familiarità del marchio, all'immagine e all'esperienza. Tuttavia, tutte queste variabili hanno ottenuto un valore significativamente più alto nel gruppo di campioni che ha risposto al sondaggio con la pubblicità sperimentale. Una percezione elevata della qualità del prodotto, associazioni di marca più favorevoli e connessioni esperienziali arricchite hanno il potenziale per amplificare l'attrattiva del prodotto e influire sulle intenzioni di acquisto dei consumatori.

In conclusione, si può affermare che la lingua italiana influisce effettivamente sul comportamento d'acquisto dei consumatori e sulle percezioni generali dei prodotti alimentari Made in Italy. Inoltre, tutte le variabili esaminate nello studio, ad eccezione dell'UAI e dell'etnocentrismo del consumatore, mostrano differenze significative tra il gruppo di campioni che ha risposto al sondaggio con la pubblicità originale in inglese e il gruppo esposto alla pubblicità sperimentale sia in inglese che in italiano.

La ricerca presentata trae varie conclusioni, ma la sua portata si confronta con limitazioni. Miglioramenti futuri comprendono l'ampliamento della dimensione del campione e l'inclusione di partecipanti provenienti da diversi contesti linguistici (ad esempio, parlanti spagnoli, francesi o tedeschi) per rafforzare l'interpretazione dei risultati a favore di strategie di marketing mirate. Esplorare partecipanti provenienti da culture distinte con percezioni diverse del patrimonio culinario italiano e condurre un'analisi comparativa delle reazioni agli stimoli in lingue diverse potrebbe fornire utili intuizioni. L'avanzamento della ricerca comporta l'uso di un marchio sconosciuto per eliminare pregiudizi, valutando le risposte agli annunci sperimentali sia in inglese (o un'altra lingua) che in italiano. È da notare che lo studio si concentra su un singolo prodotto Made in Italy, incoraggiando l'espansione ad altre categorie come Abbigliamento, Arredamento e Automazione. Ulteriori possibilità risiedono nel testare affermazioni pubblicitarie diverse, potenzialmente incorporando componenti audio-visive attraverso annunci televisivi o radiofonici.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deep gratitude to all the people who have made the completion of this significant chapter of my life possible. My words will never be able to do justice to the appreciation I feel towards those who have supported me along this journey.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Capestro, for his invaluable guidance, constant support, and infinite patience demonstrated in guiding me through the writing of this thesis. His insightful advice and dedication to my academic growth have contributed significantly to the success of this work. Additionally, I would like to thank Prof. Dalziel for her unwavering availability in accompanying this thesis.

To my whole family, there are not sufficient words to express how much your unconditional love and support have meant to me. Thank you for always encouraging me to pursue my dreams and for sharing every challenge and success with me along the way. This achievement would never have been possible without you.

To Valentina, my best friend, adventure companion, and confidante in every moment of my life, I would like to say thank you for standing by my side with your unwavering support. The long study sessions, shared laughter, journeys and experiences will remain etched in my heart forever. Your words of encouragement and unending support have made each phase of this journey lighter.

Lastly, I want to thank all those who, in various ways, have contributed to my academic and personal journey. Every friend, family member, colleague, and professor has left an indelible mark on my path, and for that, I am grateful.

I am profoundly thankful to each and every one of you.

With affection,

Giorgia