

Romanian Advertising between Specificity and Globalization. A Comparative Analysis of Local and International Brands

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Advertising today has conquered national boundaries, reaching consumers everywhere; however, local commercials retain their cultural background, combining global and local features. This is the new “glocalization” phenomenon, or the specificity of globalization. During the past two decades, Romanian advertising developed spectacularly, making up for the time it was forbidden. Life-styles, consumer insight, economy and market dynamics changed the relationship between global and local advertising. Today, national advertising promotes surviving pre-Revolution brands, new, post-1990 brands, and international brands adapted to the local market. This chapter analyzes the local and global features of Romanian TV commercials for national and international brands according to the following criteria: positioning, visual/verbal identity, social/cultural background.

Keywords: *advertising, hybridization, local, specificity, globalization.*

Introduction

Market and media development raised the problem of standardization vs. adaptation in advertising at a very high, controversial level, especially concerning new countries that opened their borders to globalization. Even when brands belong to international corporations, their promotion still tries to be different, as Trout said in his book [1]. The way scientists and consumers perceive and understand global brands reveal the relationship between global

positioning and local relevance. Therefore, the keywords “homogeneity” and “heterogeneity” synthesize the main research areas of globalization, the main topic of research contention during the past decades. For example, Jackson [2] believes that globalization increases heterogeneity due to the challenge to preserve local cultures, accounting for brand circulation and competition. On the other hand, researchers such as Levitt [3] believe the global consumer culture expresses the process of market homogenizing. Balancing both opinions seems almost impossible, but glocalization may be considered as the main solution, because it weaves previous directions from a cultural viewpoint. The cultural capital cannot be globalized by ignoring consumers’ existing cultural perceptions. Understanding consumer culture implies discussions about global and local consumption and accepting the paradoxical marriage between homogeneity and heterogeneity. According to Arnould and Thomson [4, p.869], culture is made of “the heterogeneous distribution of meanings that culture and the multiplicity of overlapping cultural grouping that exists within the broader socio-historic frame of globalization and market capitalism”. Because advertising is a hybridized field which builds brand prestige from multicultural perspectives and persuades consumers of product qualities, commercials exploit local and global values differently, depending on the country where the campaign is launched. Therefore, it is not so relevant to associate a brand only with its origin country, but better with the distribution country, with the market, a fact that sometimes creates real confusions in the consumer’s mind. Mazarella [5, p.17] rightfully recognized that “the global is constructed locally just as much as the local is constructed globally”, emphasizing that brands act on different markets regardless of global or local features. Therefore, global brands cannot be perceived similarly all over the world and local brands try to cross their borders. Thus, joining a local culture preserves brand values, being accepted by consumers and facing the global and local brands developed on that market. Researcher Nigel Hollis supports expressing a global personality through local means because “being seen as a part of the national culture is important to driving purchase for both global and local brands. But local brands – not surprisingly – are twice as likely as global brands to be seen that way”. [6, p.136] In this situation, advertising standardization should be reconsidered according to the interest of successfully promoting a global brand on any type of market.

Researching standardization stages, Marieke de Mooij discovered six types of marketing communication strategies used for internationalizing

multicultural brand positioning:

1. “Fully standardized: one product or brand.
2. Semi-standardized: one brand, one advertising form and standard execution.
3. One brand, one form, varying standard executional elements.
4. One or different brand names, one advertising form, different executions.
5. One or different brand names, one concept, different executions.
6. Cultural segmentation: act global, think local” [7, pp. 283-284].

This classification only reveals one form of complete standardization, identified as a way of exporting advertising, because commercial strategy does not even change the original language. The last two forms obviously match a flexible way of regionally promoting global brands, explaining the title of this chapter. Cultural segmentation assumes the impossibility of standardising mental images and lifestyles, and its only solution is harmonizing global brands with local needs by finding the best way to manage a campaign given these two directions. Specifically, this regards the relationship between global and local and the entire process of brand harmonization to different distribution countries. When studying the cohabitation of global and local values researcher Sico van Gelder focuses on cultural sensitivity, system understanding, local talent, and common forum. Cultural sensitivity and diplomacy refer to understanding local brand management in order to “define what is core and what is peripheral to the global brand, and what aspects are left to the discretion of local management” [8, p.187]. The second item provides a general overview of the activities local brands are involved in and the aspects they’re responsible for. Local talent deals with finding the best way to efficiently communicate the advertising message given clues such as using English or local language, personalities, symbols, and traditional signs.

The last aspect of harmonizing brand categories is what van Gelder called “the common forum,” [8, p.188] which describes the collaboration between local and global brands as a result of helping each other understand similarities and differences that may be successfully exploited in ads due to cultural segmentation. Actually, this issue provides a homogeneous style of managing heterogeneity on a market by paying attention to brand insight regardless of their origins. The conclusion of van Gelder’s research is that global brands are locally managed to give consumers a familiar feeling. On the other hand, local or regional brands try to reach the same level of prestige

and reputation relying on similar strategies. Consumers usually trust national products of dairy, salami, sausages, wine, beer, or mineral water. In terms of cars, electronics, coffee and cosmetics, they remain faithful to international brands. Therefore, local brand campaigns overrate their values, associating them with already well-known global brands.

The easiest way for cohabitation to succeed is the hybridization phenomenon that offers broader advertising flexibility and also affects brand identity. Pieterse defined it most concisely as making global culture a “global *mélange*” [9]. Cultural differences do not disappear, but seem relative and easily included in other contexts. Their mixture fuses local and global indices, establishing tolerance between them in terms of an affirmation of similarity. For this reason, ad framework may be similar (a story, a mythical root, same TV format), but creative execution suggests multiculturalism. Also, hybridization can include the same elements of territorial and trans-local culture even if commercials represent local or international brands. Obviously, dependence/independence in specific spaces is explained by a territorial aspect, regarding culture associated with a society/nation, and one of migration and value heterogeneity. According to Pieterse, translocal culture involves an “outward-looking sense of place, whereas the territorial one relies on an inward-looking sense of place” [9, p.85].

Positioning a brand on a market assumes cultural pluralism, because local brands do not rely on territorial values and neither do global ones on trans-local. Both categories develop this mixture according to market specificity and consumer culture.

This study aims to reveal two dimensions of market complexity: first, the way local and global brands (Romanian brands) construct specificity and, secondly, the way local and global indices could be equally identified in national and international commercials broadcast for Romanian consumers. Basically, this chapter exemplifies the concept of hybridization related to the cultural specificity demanded by the Romanian market.

Life without Media on the Romanian Market in the Communist Era

Before we scientifically analyze the relationship between global and local, the reader should understand the transition of the Romanian market from a life without media to media explosion, which justifies hybridization.

Regarding advertising, the answer is quite predictable: there were no advertising agencies as media was totally manipulated by the state. Although Romanian advertising was impressive before Communism, with the first agency founded in 1880 and the first industry regulations in 1886, the entire creative market ended after 1965. Except for ARTIS (The Advertising Agency of Painters' Union) and PUBLICOM (The Trade Advertising Agency), which worked for the state, no private initiative or boutique was allowed to exist. Their messages were only disseminated as simple announcements in the aforementioned newspapers, with no visual component. Romania was frozen while Ceausescu dreamed of his utopia. How did people survive without the media? First, they tried to escape censorship by listening to illegal radio channels such as The Free Europe at night-time and sometimes watching Bulgarian or Serbian TV. They risked death or imprisonment and torture, and were not allowed to communicate with friends and family from democratic countries. They broke this rule too, receiving and confidently sharing newspapers. Therefore, living without media meant being outside the real world and revolutionaries strived for this freedom more than other communist countries, because they were misinformed and manipulated for such a long time. Spiritual prohibition was added to their hard survival struggle, pushing people on the brink of abyss. Living in a post-communist country implies not completely ignoring the past, which influences media evolution for several decades. Advertising developed strategic ideas reflecting today's mentality towards communism, either by using satire or by celebrating brand history. Ceausescu's image became a sign of nostalgia for conservative consumers and a confirmation of brand values. Some campaigns remind the viewer of communist censorship and strongly compare it to the present to better value the respective brands. Altex electronics leads the Romanian market, due to its evolution since 1993 when it just came up and it was very welcomed by customers. They produced campaigns either comparing the present with Communism, dedicated to the new capitalist lifestyle, or discussing the economic crisis. For instance, a TV ad entitled "Disorder" presented two children playing very dangerously inside, with plugs and electric devices, and the message addressed to the parents is "Wouldn't they play better on the computer?" Another funny example reveals the way middle-aged and retired people excessively use new technology to supervise their families. A female character, Madame Multimedia, knows exactly when his husband tries to open a secret letter, because she installed a surveillance system everywhere. Finally, a male-character named "Chibzuitu" ("The Wise-

man”) retires to the countryside and saves money using only Altex products for everything: warming the house, doing laundry, taking care of his grand children. Given that Altex ‘s slogan is “the lowest price in Romania”, the brand addresses its offer to average-income consumers, so people can save money on TVs, computers, and other devices.

Even if it is hard to believe, the “brand” concept died during the communism and products were de-personalized, which represented the return to the beginning of advertising when the product-brand-consumer relationship was not established. Romania lost contact with the media and was forced to live primitively and painfully, aware of media manipulation. After the 90s, the media explosion integrated Romania into the world again. The relationship between global and local in advertising revealed the media impact on Romanian consumers and market, as the following research intends to emphasize.

Method and research hypotheses

The research method we used in the present chapter is the content analysis and the commercial sample consists of 120 ads broadcast on the Romanian market in the last few years, which were selected according to relevant criteria. First, the corpus is divided into two: half of it regards commercials created for local brands, while the other half is dedicated to global brands. The second criterion of selection is based on a very important condition: all the commercials analysed were produced by local and multinational advertising agencies active on the Romanian market. What we mean here is the fact that none of the commercials for global brands was adapted or simply translated because their campaigns were particularly promoted for Romanian consumers. The third criterion lies in selecting only audio-video commercials, because they add visual to verbal expressivity and, as a result, global and local features are brought to light in a better way.

The fourth aspect concerns the product categories to which the selected commercials belong. As you may notice in the **Table 1**, there is a balance between global and local brands from the point of view of the product categories.

Table 1: Product Categories

No.	Product categories	Ads for global brands	Number of global brands	Ads for local brands	Number of local brands
1.	Food	10	10	11	9
2.	Non-alcoholic drinks	4	3	9	7
3.	Alcoholic drinks	8	7	12	8
4.	Mobile phones and communications	9	7	3	2
5.	Banks and insurance	8	7	4	3
6.	Cars and transportation	9	8	4	3
7.	Coffee and chocolate	6	6	3	2
8.	Cosmetics and hygiene	2	2	4	3
9.	Mass media	3	3	5	3
10.	Pet food	1	1		
11.	Drugs	0	0	3	3
12.	Domestic appliances	0	0	2	2
13.	TOTAL	60 ads	54 brands	60 ads	45 brands

Obviously, each product category is representative in the two investigated fields in a different manner. This issue is tightly connected with the evolution of the Romanian market that developed specific categories, such as alcoholic drinks (wine, beer), dairy (cheese, yoghurt), and food (salami, sunflower oil) and mass-media (TV channels, newspapers), but much less in case of banks, mobile phones and cosmetics. During our research, we discovered local brands can be distinguished especially due to their history, with the oldest before the 1989 Revolution when Communism was abolished, and the youngest afterwards. Our research sample contains both. Global brands became relevant because they either diversified the product categories already present on the Romanian market, for instance cars (the only surviving brand is Dacia, now associated with Renault), or filled gaps that local brands never completely covered or not at all, for example coffee, fast-food, special alcoholic drinks (whiskey), and cars. This doubtlessly happens to all markets whose local producers do not answer consumer needs. Welcoming global brands implies specialized consumers who can choose not only a product but a brand, according to emotional expectations. This sample is relevant for the validation of research results, given the number of brands involved, and the

nature of product categories.

Throughout this research, we will answer some important questions to organise the quantitative data by using the frequency criterion and, on the other hand, to verify these hypotheses:

- Global and local brands use similar means to advertise products on the Romanian market.
- There is a balance between local and global features regardless of the national or international character of the brand.
- Commercials broadcast in Romania emphasise consumer identity, making them recognize themselves due to local ad features.
- Global brands also emphasize Romanian specificity to properly appeal to consumers.
- Specificity is not at all connected with local ads because any product and brand are relevant regardless of the category they belong to.

Results

Answering the next questions implies obtaining quantitative results and supports their interpretation in qualitative manner.

What does verbal brand identity consist of?

In the beginning of this research, we intend to be more explicit regarding the Romanian identity in commercials broadcast on local channels. What we intend to find out now is whether verbal issues identified in the commercials focused on local features strongly support Romanian consumers, regardless of the brands they represent.

After the December 1989 Revolution, local consumers were very excited about global brands and they started learning English quickly as a second language. Therefore, Romanian advertising encouraged this addiction to the West and democracy to recover a gap of almost 50 years, when many things were prohibited. After 22 years, the competition between local and global brands became very important for economic reasons. Advertisers often call into question history tradition, mentality in order to touch better both sides of Romanian target: the conservative one and the Facebook generation, very flexible and innovative. This preference for eco products, agrarian tourism and tradition supports very well not only the local identity, but also the European integration. In addition, the way global brands like McDonald's and Coca-Cola cover the world market and appeal to any type of consumer relies

on the hybridization process that implies the assimilation of local culture for promoting a global brand. The Figure 1 offers a generic description of the relationship between verbal and local indices involved in creating specificity.

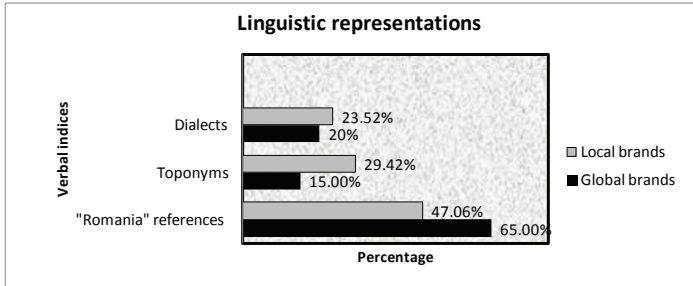


Figure 1: Verbal indices of local identities

Returning to the previous question, “Romanian” linguistic references predominate in both samples of local and global brands. First, we must clarify what landmarks hide under this name. Several linguistic clues refer to the Romanian identity by using keywords such as “Romanian”, “Romania”, (nouns) “national”, “traditional” (adjectives), “our” (pronouns). To be more specific, we chose several examples of obvious keywords:

- Noroc beer (made by Bergenbier; created only for the Romanian market): slogan “Our Romanian beer;” verbal message: “Beer to the liking of Romanians.”
- Timișoreana beer (Romanian brand) - message-“ the first beer factory in Romania.”
- Cabernet Sauvignon wine – slogan - “Rouge de Roumanie.”
- Murfatlar wine (Romanian brand) slogan-“the most appreciated wine in Romania.”
- Caroli salami - slogan “Keep Romanians moving.”
- Honda - verbal message- “3 years in Romania.”
- Petrom petrol (Romanian brand) - message “Because Romania will thrive through common sense and responsibility.”
- Unisol cooking-oil (Romanian brand) - message –“I like to cook the Romanian way”
- Adria juice (Romanian brand) - “sweetens you the Romanian way.”

Obviously, global brand commercials use the word “Romania” and its derivatives more often than local brands, maybe because they purposefully

emphasized the market.

The next landmark focuses on toponyms, including the geographical name of mountains, rivers, sea, and cities and very well-known places for Romanian identity, such as Bucharest, the capital, the Black Sea, the river Olt, the Carpathian mountains, Transylvania. Several examples are below:

- Milk products – Napolact (Romanian brand) - message “Napolact-good yoghurt - here in Ardeal, from the heart of nature, the way only Ardeal inhabitants know how to make it.”
- Toyota Yaris - “the Transylvania highway Romania”.
- The Grand Cherokee jeep – “populating Carpathian forests launches a 3,000 Euro price deduction for the Jeep Grand Cherokee breed.”

The third linguistic landmark is connected to particular characteristics of Romanian language that cannot be fully translated because they belong to regional dialects which advertisers use to personalise the market and consumer profiles. Romanian has three important dialects, Transylvanian, Oltenian, and Moldavian. They lend products authenticity, making consumers believe beer, milk, delicatessen, or wine are specially dedicated to them.

Does brand specificity rely on visual and verbal issues?

Dealing with this question we should remind ourselves that our corpus is made of TV ads, precisely because the information they provide is richer than that of any other channels, such as print, outdoor, Internet. Moreover, visual communication appeals to consumers' senses more than the other kinds, according to Martin Lindstrom's branding theory [10]. Lindstrom believes the Holistic Selling Proposition defines brands not only rooted in tradition, but also which adopt sensory and religious characteristics to approach consumers [10, p.5]. Therefore, the next step in our research is connecting visual and verbal messages and establishing their roles in sharing global and local values. As seen in Figure 2, there are only three possible combinations of communication types in commercials:

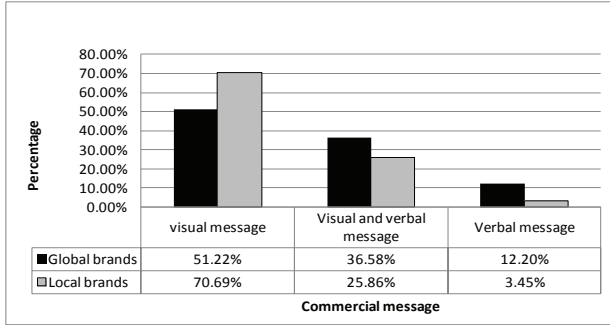


Figure 2: Verbal vs. visual indices in commercials

At first sight, the hierarchy of these levels seems to follow the rules that prove similar management of brand capital, because the above percentages specifically regard local features of global and national brands. We analyzed them thus to explain how global and local brands emphasize belonging to a culture/country of origin. In both cases, the visual message establishes brand identity, while the verbal message is represented to a lesser extent. The synchronic perspective of expressing brand values (simultaneously using visual and verbal messages) suggests increased concern about message credibility. Visual data are strongly connected to space, architecture, lifestyles, and mythical aspects –for global features of global brands–, and the city landscape, natural environment, and traditions for local brands. Even if linguistic aspects represent the majority in Figure 2, they are certainly related to a greater extent with visual message, and less independent for the message. As this chart obviously illustrates, there are only a few examples whose verbal message was not added to the visual one, which is only a background with no significance for global or local brands. Why is the visual message predominant? Many times, visual indices bring supplementary information and connotations, even if the verbal message does not visibly point out global or local features.

What is the balance between global and local features in the selected sample?

Before looking for an answer, we should explain how we investigated and organized the research sample. Our main goal regards the relationship between global and local features exploring both national and international

brands – therefore, we worked with a sample divided into commercials created solely for local brands and ads broadcast for global brands. Then, we looked for a connection between the entire sample and its segmentation. This method makes results more effective, being separately analyzed, and related to each other. This is a way to integrate particular results into a general approach, and exhaustive comparison involves research fragmentation.

The following chart provides an overview of the balance between global and local, without detailing specific features. At this research stage, the frequency criterion was individually applied for local and global brands, and, as a result, the corpus was divided to show the comparison between all broadcast commercials. To highlight results we organized everything according to two dimensions: the distribution of features individually counted for each sample (commercials for global and local brands), and the comparison between samples at every level.

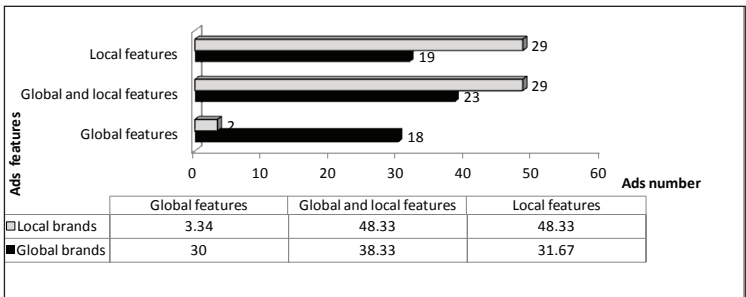


Figure 3: The balance between global and local aspects in the analyzed corpus

First of all, the hierarchy of global and local features reveals similar distribution, regardless of brand origin. Even so, commercials for Romanian brands seem to better represent the balance between global and local features by emphasising only two levels in the general hierarchy. Therefore, equally important are global and local issues identified in ads, each covering 48,33%. To clarify the terminology, we should say that local aspects are either individually represented, as we can see at the first level, or added to the global ones, as the second level of chart shows. Less important are the spots focused only on global clues which lead to no significance for this research. The placement of global features added to local ones helps us identify the globalization phenomenon often called hybridization. There doubtlessly exists very good

brand management that relies on a detailed research of local markets.

As for the other categories of commercials, those created for multinational brands, the chart distinguishes very well between the features of global and local. Global alongside with local features bring the biggest contribution to this research by reaching the highest percentage of the entire sample (38, 34%), very closely followed by individual local features (31.66%) and particular global features (30%). A real balance has been established between external and internal values strategically developed in Romanian commercials, to make consumers feel home.

The way multinationals relate to national brands is the next aspect we sought to explain. As the chart below reveals, local and global features predominate when it comes to samples of global or Romanian brands. Local features are better represented by percentage than global ones, because their image and history strongly relate to consumer mentality and lifestyles. The same observation is available for global features that are higher emphasized in commercials created for multinational brands than in the other corpus. Paying attention to the second issue, we realise how important the following aspects are: the relationship between global and local, on the one hand, and the specificity of the Romanian market, based on consumer profiles, on the other. The third axis faces a gap between two brand categories from the point of view of particular global features. In the national ad sample, only two examples exclusively rely on global issues, as opposed to 18 in the other corpus. At first sight, there's no contradiction in emphasizing the dominance of local features in commercials broadcast for local brands. What is more intriguing in this chart comes out from the reverse of the previous situation: multinational brands do not partially emphasize global features against local ones. As we already emphasized, global brands manage their campaigns carefully, and are more concerned about their target. Another explanation is positioning according to tradition, history, cultural values – i.e., specificity. Many Romanian brands cannot be advertised internationally and their values completely match local consumer profiles.

What global indices emerge from the entire video sample?

Answering this question implies enlarging the previous discussion while strictly focusing on global issues identified not only in international brand advertising but also in the local. Therefore, we only analyzed commercials

previously labelled as either glocalization or using a global brand strategy. Our research strategy follows the same method of data organization: first, using sample segmentation into global or local, and, second, comparing global issues registered in both categories. Our strategy follows the same data collection method as earlier, using simple segmentation based on global or local brand origin and comparing all global elements resulting from each corpus (local and global).

For the first data collection stage, we had to decide the size of our corpus, because we were only interested in commercials revealing global clues. In this case, our sample consists of 41 commercials (68,33% of the corpus represented by 60 ads for multinational brands), while the other sample of ads for local brands integrates 31 examples (51,66%). All percentages below should be analyzed from the perspective of global features, so we can better understand brand category differences.

We first aim to investigate the results that qualitatively provide us the global approach. Therefore, we identified these elements regardless of brand and classified them according to their general topic, acquiring the following indices: linguistic aspects, cultural products, mentality and lifestyles, space and geographical coordinates, personalities, globalization perspectives, history and politics, brand associations and, finally, mythical aspects (see Figure 4).

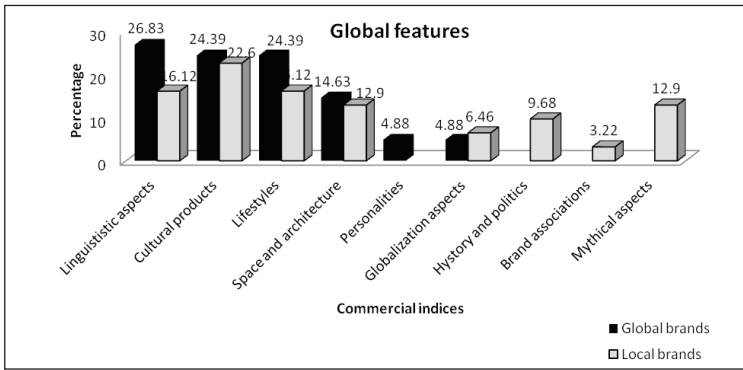


Figure 4: Global indices in local and global brands’ commercials

Before we start comparing these categories, we must briefly explain their meaning. Linguistic aspects means using foreign languages to express the verbal messages of commercials – mostly English; French and Italian as well. Sometimes, foreign influences reflect intertextuality, being woven with

the Romanian. The main linguistic characteristic of several commercials is bilingualism, represented either by a double message, or by the partial translation of foreign words such as *weekend*, *business*, *cool*, *sir*, *OK*, into the Romanian. Sometimes, Romanian roots are neglected to approach the global image of similar brands even in local ads.

Cultural products cover a generous variety of indices coming from different fields such as music, film, or literature. To clarify, some commercials appeal to Romanian consumers by using Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* or The Brothers Grimm's *Little Red Riding Hood* as symbols of easily recognizable cultural values. For instance, in a TV commercial for the Cosmote mobile-phone network, a father is angry with his daughter because her lover subscribes to another mobile-phone company. Obviously this echoes *Romeo and Juliet* with intertextuality and humour: the father reproaches, "No one in our family has ever left for a different network." Cosmote solves the problem, providing enough credits for any mobile network.

Lifestyles are revealed by food customs (pizza, fast-food, grill), time-spending habits (e.g., retirement means travelling and practicing sports) and importing behavioral models at work or with friends. Space and architecture are suggested by visual elements that help the audience associate brands and products with symbolic, geographic landmarks such as The Eiffel Tower, The Empire State Building, The Dodges' Palace in Venice. Architectural landmarks remind the commercial target the specificity of lifestyle in "the land of promise," such as the skyscrapers seen in campaigns for a Romanian chocolate-bar (Rom chocolate) bearing the title *Rom - The American Flag*. The old brand changed its package, borrowing the American flag as the symbol of a two-week promotion which was advertised by a New Yorker sitting at his desk and commenting on this change:

"Hi. What's this in my hand? It's the new Rom. It's not the same. It's better. The Romanian flag has been replaced with the American one. Why? For you! You can eat it anywhere in the world and be proud. Try the new Rom-, with the American flag, with the taste of coolness."

Positioning a brand through various personalities became an argument of historical credibility, with different types of personalities involved in commercials: musical, scientific, historical or sports-related. Elvis Presley, for example, has attracted consumer sensitivity for years. An entire spot for Cabernet Sauvignon revolves around Joseph Vile, a scientist specialized in viticulture who refreshed Romanian vineyards, homologating the brand.

The next landmark was the real surprise of our research, just because it may be assimilated with meta-globalization. Here we are trying to explore the relationship between global and local brands, and finding explicit landmarks is really helpful. Therefore, we identified several aspects directly oriented to globalization by highlighting the facility to share the same experience everywhere in the world either positively or negatively, as, for example, world crises are perceived (global warming, ecological disasters).

History and politics obviously reveal past events (objective data) that frame brands in a particular time. Nicolae Ceaușescu is one of the main characters who reminds consumers of Communism and lack of freedom, and scenes of national or world wars can easily be recognized (e.g., the war between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, at the end of 18th century). Brand associations emphasize the connections between two brands as a sign of enriching, improving their image, or re-positioning. The second situation is relevant in a commercial for the Romanian airline Tarom, whose image is associated with the international brand Sky by emphasizing the message, “Destination defines us, flight partners are important.” The automobile brand Dacia allied itself with Renault by creating a new brand that also implies repositioning – Dacia-Renault. Mythical aspects explain how advertising becomes symbolic, inspired by archetypes and old stories. In the research sample, we identified two such perspectives – a hero derived from old stories (a male fairy) and a mythical animal (the unicorn).

To answer the initial question, we must first compare the global features of international and local brands. The chart above provides an important observation about several brands that cannot be analyzed in the entire corpus because they belong to global or local brands. The criterion of personalities is only approached by global brands, while history and politics, aspects of globalization, brand association, and myth are exclusively specific to local brand commercials.

The highest percentage belongs to linguistic aspects, in case of global brands, and to cultural products for local brands. In our opinion, foreign words often appear in global brand commercials to emphasize brand origin. On the other hand, local brands use this type such landmarks either ironically, or to symbolize the young generation. Cultural products suggest value homogeneity regardless of brand origin.

What local indices emerge from the entire commercial sample?

This part of our research aims to offer the reverse of the previous question because, this time, we will consider local indices. Our final goal is to establish the emergence of global and local, encountered together or separately in the commercial message for international and Romanian brands. In addition, we are very interested in the hybridization phenomenon, which impacts both sides of our research, weaving global and local features. We organized the quantitative sample according to the same rules we used for global analysis. Of the commercials created for global brands, only 42 ads include visible local features, in comparison with 58 in the sample promoting Romanian brands. This percentage requires no other explanation, because it completely corresponds to local aspects and Romanian brands, as shown in Figure 5:

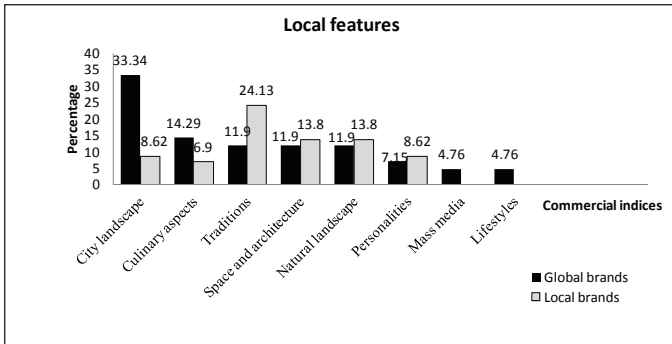


Figure 5: Local indices in commercials for national and global brands

Following our previous strategy, we will detail each category by giving examples and justifying their name. The urban landscape reveals aspects that characterize Romania, such as old Communist apartments, parks, parking places, public transportation, and crowded streets. In most spots, Bucharest is associated with busy young people or historical landmarks.

Culinary aspects refer to specific Romanian foods related to religious events, celebrations and preserving recipes in the family. Commercials providing this feature promote not only food categories, but also wine, beer, and mobile phones, because cooking relates to many contexts and consumer profiles. Tradition is essential for building local advertising identity:

commercials lend significance to rituals, agricultural aspects, religious and particular celebrations. Most ads that use tradition highlight the connection between brand history and past consumer experience, highlighting the taste of childhood, the smell of fresh vegetables, and the time spent with grandparents in the countryside. Protagonists wear folk dress and have a very healthy lifestyle. Some commercials describe the production of wine and beer according to ancient recipes. Space and architecture can reflect cultural or historical criteria, because ads mainly display representative Romanian buildings, especially in Bucharest (Ceausescu's house, The Revolution Market, the tall Intercontinental Hotel, old aristocrat palaces on Victoria Street, The National Bank, The History Museum, or The Arch of Triumph).

Landscape summarizes the traditional image of the Romanian village, featuring geographical and natural aspects familiar to consumers. Global brands thus adapt their image to consumers, making them comfortable. Spots include the most visited tourist areas, such as the Carpathian mountains, the Olt river valley, the Black Sea, and the Danube Delta.

Also, commercials display personalities from different fields, such as visual art (sculptor Constantin Brâncuși), film (actor Florin Piersic) music (Gheorghe Zamfir, George Enescu), history (Avram Iancu, Vlad Țepeș, Stephen the Great) and sports (tennis players Ivan Pațachin and Ilie Năstase). Their presence legitimizes the brand for Romanian consumers. Through mass-media, brands are associated with their target and style, and sometimes with the time magazines or broadcast stations were launched. Using a newspaper or a national channel to promote a brand, its values are better assimilated by customers. The view on local lifestyles has the same meaning as the one on global features, focusing on family, daily routine and particular time-spending habits.

What main positioning strategies do the brands taken into consideration use?

The theoretical framework of this concept started in 1972 and is based on a series of *Advertising Age* articles by Jack Trout and Al Ries metaphorically entitled *The Positioning Era*. This concept delivers the commercial message directly to the customer's mind, integrating the brand in his world of connections and similarities. The first approach of this meaning is not to bring something completely new, but to somehow control the consumer's mind.

Our research is based on Luc Dupont’s [11] approach on positioning reflected in the first pages of this book: “Let’s be honest. The difference is not in the toothpaste tube, the soft-drink bottle or the strength of the detergent. The difference is, in fact, in the personality of the consumer. We do not buy products, we buy positioning” [11, p. 13]. In his book, Dupont studied this problem, discovering 50 ways to position a product or service. The most important reason, from his point of view, to study positioning is that people often confuse brands and are satisfied to only use products without paying attention to their identity. Impacting this is brand invasion in the same product category. Every brand develops its category and product lines, and its main purpose is to extend the brand name and create sub-brands.

We analysed positioning types for both categories of commercials, the first one dedicated to global brands, and the second to local ones. We chose to combine positioning types to provide more data about researched brands and make their comparison easier. In our opinion, Dupont’s approach pays more attention to brand history, product origin country and subjective impact on the consumers. **Table 2** presents positioning types and the correspondence between local and global brands.

Table 2: Positioning Types

Positioning types	Global brands (percentage)	Number of global commercials	Local brands (percentage)	Number of local commercials
Product qualities	33,33%	20	23.33%	14
Symbolical aspects	10%	6	25%	15
Brand history	5%	3	26.67%	16
Consumer	16.67%	10	8.33%	5
Based on use	11.67%	7	3.33%	2
Opposition	10%	6	11.67%	7
Quality vs. Price	3.33%	2	1.67%	1
Leader	10%	6	0	0
Total:	100%	60 ads	100%	60 ads

First of all, the comparison highlighted a variety of positioning types for global brands. The highest percentage belongs to positioning through product qualities/services, while positioning through history tops the chart of

local brands. Brands born before the democratic era use their history to gain consumer trust. Their credibility relies on long-lasting market authority and the need to recover the past by revitalizing their image. Brands with notoriety are not concerned with this evolutionary aspect, most likely because they already rely on history through tradition and market priority. There is a big difference between the two brand categories, from relationships between brand, consumer and product. Global brands reveal objective positioning features on the first three levels of our scale, focusing on product qualities, consumers, and use, while local ones focus on subjective features such as history, symbolic aspects and consumers. Consumers occupy the third degree in both situations. The only type exclusive to global brands is leader positioning, developed by famous brands such as Avon, Vodafone, Coca-Cola, Lay's, Windows 7.

Price vs. quality does not seem so relevant in our present analysis regardless of brand category. Opposition or comparative positioning may be understood in a different way given its direction. Global and local brands generally use it to highlight the difference between Romania and other countries, which is sometimes conveyed through irony towards the national effort to integrate into the European Union. Second, this type of positioning compares two contradictory eras, communism and democracy. A Zapp commercial features a business-man insulting Nicolae Ceaușescu by leaving the conference-room to answer his mobile phone during the ex-president's demagogic speech. Another excellent example belongs to Rom chocolate and features a Ceaușescu university tour to meet future Communists. The President is accompanied by important dignitaries and children, and is shocked by a casually (attractively) dressed student who greatly contrasts her peers' depersonalized uniforms. She wears modern, capitalist clothes, becoming a fashionable but prohibited example. As a result, she is forcibly dressed in uniform except for her yellow socks, which remind of the contrast. Therefore, Rom, with the slogan "Hard sensations since 1964," not only survives in democracy, but develops a great brand platform based on its Communist history.

Discussion

The first issue that deserves a discussion regards the way specificity emerges from the entire sample of commercials created for various brands. Using TV commercials, we tried to extend the research because some ads do not use verbal and visual communication at the same time, but even so

highlight brand identity. At that point, we were interested in all verbal or visual clues that reveal market and brand identity. Surprisingly, international and local brands emphasize consumer identity using visual and verbal Romanian aspects and, sometimes, completely ignoring their global origin. Returning to Pieterse's opinion [9, p. 85], we were faced with international brands relying on an inward-looking sense of culture. Visual messages identify market and consumer sometimes based on small, easily recognizable details such as urban buildings or landscape. The verbal message, delivered mostly in Romanian, invalidates standardization in the case of global brands, while using a foreign language (mostly English) by local brands claims to overestimate them. Some researchers concerned with this issue [12] believe English is highly appreciated by ad consumers because of its stereotypes and positive associations.

Returning to the debate about the relationship between global and local features in the sample chosen for this research, we can propose the following classification of commercials. The first model is represented by commercials where local issues predominate; for this reason, ads may be associated with the localization phenomenon. The second type weaves local and global features, highlighting hybridization. Finally, the third creative model is based on only developing global aspects, regardless of the brand origin which highlights the globalization strategy.

Concerning the relationship between global and local, we can certainly conclude international brands advertised on the Romanian market are more concerned with the cohabitation of identity and consumer profile compared to local brands. Therefore, the third hypothesis of our research is confirmed.

The comparison between international and national brands included in this research does not reveal any differences in global indices. Lifestyles are equally important, but even more so are global life-styles. Romanian consumers are very attracted by the American outlook on life, mainly because of Communist restrictions. The fact that global space and architectural style draw the audience's attention reveals the similarity of different indices. Therefore, quantitative results confirm the fact that global and local brands use similar means to advertise their products on the Romanian market.

In terms of local indices (**Figure 5**), we should put forth several ideas. First, city landscape and traditions reveal a considerable difference between global and local brands; other categories seem to balance brand categories due to their similar percentage. The urban landscape is the visual background for promoting international brands, maybe because of their authority and intention

to be connected with new lifestyles, regardless of product categories. The ideal consumer is dynamic, busy, efficient and pressed by time. Quite interesting, from our point of view, are culinary aspects, because they depict consumer insight regardless of brand type. People belonging to and living in a certain space feel integrated into the daily routine by eating and drinking specific products. This aspect really matters at Christmas- or Easter-time, when people traditionally celebrate values and family, like any other consumers on Earth. The fact that space and architectural features bring the same contribution to the local image as the natural landscape confirms one of the hypotheses of this research, that hybridization can best weave local and global influences to preserve brand image, sustain consumer needs, and balance international and national brands.

When it comes to finding the best place in the consumer's mind, the previous comparative chart strongly highlights the variety of positioning for global brands, which is quite understandable given their market authority and their belonging to so many different cultures and histories. Local brands focus on history and symbolical representation, because more than half of the researched ads follow this strategy. Romanian brands are still trying to recover their identity and the best way to do this is exploiting cultural issues and relying on the nobility given by time. Sometimes, commercials are created according to a simple equation – product qualities + cultural pluralism = symbolic positioning. The best way to imagine such a script is visually representing cultural influence and verbally emphasizing product and brand qualities.

In conclusion, the present chapter analyses the way global and local brands share the Romanian market by borrowing features from each other and being concerned about brand and consumer identity at the same time. Although Romanian advertising seems young on the European market (more dynamic after the 1989 Anti-Communist Revolution), our discussion highlights that local ads are not created to reveal the standardization of global brands. Everything concerns prioritizing consumers and acting locally, transforming a homogeneous brand strategy into a heterogeneous one, due to the characteristics of every market. Local brand management, regardless of national or international brands, values brand history and consumer cultural background. The main purpose of global brands is to become a part of consumers' lives, although neglecting their genuine values. We may thus speak about Romanian specificity in the case of broadcasting original commercials, and, furthermore, about using similar means to deliver an

impactful message. Basically, national brands borrowed a global brand aura to become more credible, while international brands preserve only their core image and develop very similar aspects of local identity. Positioning a brand on the Romanian market better reveals specificity and global aspects, because the creative strategy cannot be completely changed. The “global mélange” [9] mostly feeds on European myths and literary stories, on the one hand, and Hollywood stars and music, on the other. Obviously, old Romanian brands (e.g., Rom chocolate, Eugenia crackers) oscillate between globalizing values and preserving genuine identity.

Conclusions

To sum up, the Romanian market does not differ significantly from those of other ex-Communist countries, but, after Romania's integration into the E.U., campaigns focusing on national identity and global brands adopted the most representative features. Externalizing Romanian brands is based on brand association (e.g., Dacia and Renault, Tarom and Sky, BCR and Erste Bank), cultural hybridization and, sometimes, using foreign languages. Global brands construct new Romanian identities by creating local brands, naming them according to landmarks (e.g., geographical) and using cultural pluralism or mono-cultural (local) elements. Doubtlessly, media freedom influences the complementary relationship between the global and local features of Romanian advertising, which adjusts the specificity of a young market still in search for its identity.

Acknowledgment:

This work was supported by the strategic grant POSDRU/89/1.5/S/62259, Project „Applied social, human and political sciences. Postdoctoral training and postdoctoral fellowships in social, human and political sciences,” cofinanced by the European Social Fund within the Sectorial Operational Program Human Resources Development 2007-2013.

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